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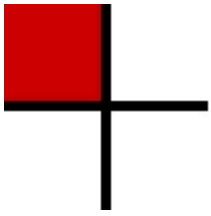
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O cursèd spite

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Welcome to the second issue of *ephemera*. We must admit that there is already something that feels a bit tired, a bit old about this issue. Its not quite the shiny new thing that it was last time – our first, virgin issue. And we’re late too. This issue should have been online on the first of May, not just because of the global significance of that day in terms of protest, resistance and revolutionary activity, but because that was *the* deadline. But we’ve broken rank. We weren’t quite organized enough. So we’re late, and we’re not that new anymore. Sorry.

In this issue we have tried to work with, and around, the twin themes of newness and resistance. And you will have noticed that there is something new, or simply odd (just plain stupid?) with how this/we present(s) itself/ourselves. But in playing with form, we do want to indicate something substantive. We want to pose some serious questions here about newness. We are not simply asking ‘What’s new?’, with the resonant shades of mindless greetings - “welcome to new *ephemera*, whassup?”. Rather, we want to resist newness a little and the far too easy,

I don’t think that there is any such absolutely novel and unified thing as *the* postmodern condition. It’s another version of that historical amnesia characteristic of American culture – the tyranny of the New. (Stuart Hall, ‘On Articulation’)

In the first paper in this issue Rolland Munro identifies the ways in which, by focusing on meaning many writers, both modern and postmodern, have ‘disposed’ of material objects such as the body. His paper operates in an unusual fashion, enacting as much as it explains itself. Indeed, it enacts a certain sense of misplaced time, being published here for the first time almost a decade after it was written. In his postscript to the paper, Munro explains the oddities and quirks of the paper, refusing to dispose of these ‘peculiarities’. Instead he lets it stand as is, hoping that the paper will make more sense now than it could then, in light of the developments in debates over (post)modernity, which are now far from new.

Following Munro’s questioning of certain all-too-presumptuous positions on the modern, John Armitage casts suspicion on the newness of the postmodern. He suggests a conception of *hypermodernization*, which involves an acceleration and amplification of the revolutionising tendencies of modernization. This process of hypermodernization is, therefore,

over-zealous embrace of the new which is so dominant today.

Newness is, presumably, something about change, about transformation, and about difference, but these themes seem to be far from new. Indeed, they are central to the *doxa* of neo-liberalism (which, it is now clear, is far from new), and even seems to be markers of our era. Isn't there a paradox at work in this idea of 'novelty-without-change'? There is both an emphasis on 'the new', as evinced by the hyper-, post-, and neo- (*etc.*), as well as the recognition that this 'new' is probably just more of the same-old. *Hypermodern*: the same as the modern only more so, faster, more efficient and bigger. So what of difference and monstrosity? Can we only imagine organised futures as an extension of the present? In what way might we be able to really think novelty – a transformation that is more than an extension of the present?

It seems clear that the new doesn't come 'out of the blue', so to speak. It is the result of forces acting upon a resistant present (and other oppositional forces). Our friend the manager bemoans the workforce's luddism, and its refusal to change with the times. A focus on resistance allows us to think about how change occurs; how novelty is produced. If the future is to be anything but a simplistic extension of the present, the present needs to be challenged, disoriented and knocked off course: in a word *per-turbed*. To create, the artist works

Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned. (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*)

The future can only be anticipated in the form of an absolute danger. It is that which breaks absolutely with constituted normality and can only be proclaimed, *presented*, as a sort of monstrosity. (Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*)

both continuous and discontinuous with modernization: rupturing the dynamics of modernity and inducing a qualitative change through quantitative intensification. Armitage analyses this hyper-modernization, through a series of project(ile)s – hypercapitalism, globalitarianism and militarization – that 'project' the present into the future, thereby accelerating 'change' and ensuring that nothing radically new or truly monstrous can ever happen. In the third paper, Iain Munro takes up that 'postmodern' technology *par excellence* – informa-

tion. Examining the emergence of the information society, he traces continuities from Joseph Goebbels to the Brave New World of Internet surveillance, whilst simultaneously recognising this very continuity constitutes a revolution – one that is being intensified by contemporary management fashions like Knowledge Management, viral marketing and mobile telephony. Rejecting the utopianism of a widely promoted informational democracy, Iain Munro considers the effects of information and communication technology on processes of subject formation and examines the ways in which informed identities are generating an 'interactive docility'. The result of this docility is to stifle and destroy creativity and novelty, producing more of the same, producing identi(cali)ty.

All of these papers share a questioning of the new and a debunking of narratives of progress, even (and especially) where that progress comes in

with, and often against, resistant matter – a material with its own forces of expression. Creation happens somewhere in-between these forces, at the points of their intersection. In this sense the future is by definition a contested terrain. But it is never a simple contest where one side of a dualism can win out. Its becoming is always monstrous and heterogeneous and potentially dangerous (for some at least).

But perhaps we have all had enough of change. Perhaps we are sick of the unceasing search for new novelty, struck down with a serious case of retro futuristic chronosemiitis. Perhaps we are bored with novelty and want to resist it. Following Benjamin, perhaps this boredom can manifest itself in (at least) two ways. On the one hand as the production of new (ephemeral) commodities to glut the market and accelerate consumption: ‘novel’ productions of the same old consumption. Or on the other hand by letting boredom manifest itself as an affirmative, critical flux: a boredom that cannot be assuaged and bought off with a shiny wrapper, low-fat dressing or two-for-the-price-of-one special effects/offer. A boredom with boredom – the remorse of the sugar junky coming down from yet another donut high and refusing the diet coke, antacid pill and exercise regime.

But what hope for a ‘critical boredom’? Or are we simply accelerating acceleration by dreaming of a *new* resistance? Are we prematurely heralding the death knell of the ‘old’

In cloning – this collective fantasy of a return to a non-individuated existence and a destiny of undifferentiated life, this temptation to return to an indifferent immortality – we see the very form of a repentance of the living toward the unliving. This repentance arises from the depths of a past time; we pine for a state that is long gone but that will be possible again by virtue of our technologies, becoming eventually an object of our fascination, our nostalgia, and our desire. This may well be the story of a deliberate project to put an end to the genetic game of difference, to stop the divagations of the living. Aren’t we actually sick of sex, of difference, of emancipation, of culture?

(Jean Baudrillard, *The Vital Illusion*)

Habit is the ballast that chains the dog to his vomit.
(Samuel Beckett, *Proust*)

the form of new grand theory (such as the postmodern’ rejection of ‘progress’...). In this sense, each of these papers enacts a resistance. They call for hesitation, a break, a rupture, an escape. This is more than the conservative resistance of slowing down or ‘back to basics’. If the archetypal metaphor of progress is the train, a conservative resistance at best acts as a brake, slowing progress so we can check on the rails ahead. Conservative resistance can only ever be *reactive*. What Munro, Armitage and Munro offer us are *active* resistances. And at times, they quite literally go ‘off the rails’.

If progress and novelty are questioned and resisted in our first three papers, resistance itself takes centre stage in this issue’s Note From the Field. In a kind of literary montage inspired by Walter Benjamin, Böhm reports on the anti-capitalist activities taking place this May Day by juxtaposing journalistic reportage with emails and itineraries of activists involved with the protests, and theoretical reflections on the contemporary political scene. Refusing to provide any authoritative commentary, this method aims to let the conjunctions of these discourses generate ‘new’ insights, trying to avoid imposing any particular reading.

The two reviews in this issue are perhaps more conventional (i.e. not so new) in their reading strategies but in their own ways they continue the themes of

resistance, a kind of ideological euthanasia? (“It was the kindest thing we could do really - he had a terminal case of Marxism you know...”) Or perhaps the ‘new resistances’ *do* constitute something new, and perhaps something that is worthy of the name ‘resistance’.

(But didn’t optimism go out when the last light-bulb of the enlightenment blew?)

We have been told often enough that we would be best off thinking of resistance in forms other than opposition to a singular dominating force. This is the message of so many efforts to rethink resistance (anew?), principally those following Deleuze and taken up so effectively by Foucault.

Resistances, then, which are not singular or simply oppositional (which would be to presuppose a power which is pre-formed and molar), but multiple and creative. In this sense, resistance doesn’t come ‘after’ an already powerful force, but is instrumental in the proliferation of openings, of movement, transformation, difference. The new?

Is this the power of the new anti-capitalist movements – a multiplicity without centre, but united in opposition?

Or will these new resistances allow that which is opposed to rally its own forces and unite them in yet more oppressive practices, carried out in the name of ‘democracy’? A ‘new’ democracy...(Fade out accompanied by ‘The March of Progress’...)

newness and resistance. In the first review Oliver Speck engages with two recent books on Deleuze, one of the ‘hip and the new’ amongst recent theorists. And we must admit some sympathy with this work. Indeed, we were recently accused of being ‘Deleuzian’ (*too* Deleuzian’ actually), which we might be able to take as a compliment or an insult, if only we knew what this meant. (And when Foucault suggested that there might be a ‘Deleuzian century’, wasn’t he talking about the one just passed? – damn, too late again!).

In Peter Fleming’s review of Ackroyd and Thompson’s *Organizational Misbehaviour*, questions of resistance return to centre stage. This book refocuses on the question of workers’ strategies of resistance in the workplace. Accusing ‘the Foucauldians’ of failing to account for resistance at work,

Ackroyd and Thompson suggest that this neglect has led to an impoverished account of organizational reality. Here we concur in both directions. We share an excitement in this upsurge of interest in workplace resistance, but equally share Fleming’s concerns about Ackroyd and

Thompson’s accounts of power and resistance and all too easy rejection of Foucault. At the risk of

being vanguardist, it is quite possible that these *new* forms of resistance might only be thought through with the benefit of *new* theory...(Fade out accompanied by ‘The March of Progress’...)

Here, I think, we are touching on one of the forms – perhaps we should call them habits – one of the most harmful habits in contemporary thought, in modern thought even; at any rate in post-Hegelian thought: the analysis of the present as being precisely, in history, a present of rupture, or of high point, or of completion or of a returning dawn, etc. The solemnity with which everyone who engages in philosophical discourse reflects on his own time strikes me as a flaw. I can say so all the more firmly since it is something I have done myself...

(Michel Foucault, ‘Critical Theory/Intellectual History’)

Time is out of joint. O cursèd spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
(William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*)

discussion

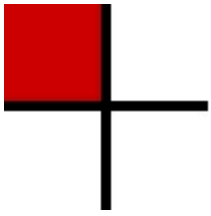
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Disposal of the Body: Upending Postmodernism¹

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abstract

A failure to problematise a *disposal* of meanings encloses the modernity/postmodernity debate. Modernists, with their focus on knowledge have equated the disembodied mind with the *production* of meanings. Postmodernists, with their focus on identity have equated fragmenting images of the self with the *consumption* of meanings. In this paper, drawing on the work of Heidegger and Derrida, the mode of reflection is decentred from its philosophers' throne as engaged neither in the production nor the consumption of meanings, but in the disposal of an 'excess' in meaning. Bringing back the body, without re-centring the subject, offers a more sustainable view of culture as recursively constituted by actors in the work they do to dispose of meaning. Far from any arbitrariness in the assigning of meanings to expressions preshadowing an 'end to the social', the paper goes on to argue that knowledgability about ambiguity should be seen as a key resource of social actors.

Consider a frenchman tying his shoelace. An untied shoelace is self-evidently a matter for investigation and the frenchman does not hesitate to comport himself to this sign of disorder in the universe. In throwing himself at the problem he disposes of his body likewise. He up-ends himself as 'supplement' to his investigation. In contrast, the englishman, for whom the pose is everything, refuses to be so dis-posed. While he instantly recognises the untied lace as a sign to be read by others of a disorder in him as universe, he has at his disposal his leg as a loyal and docile servant. Practised in the economy of command, he raises the knee to bring the boot to heel.

Introduction

In a nice turn of the meaning of 'refuse', Mary Douglas has pointed to the interpretative possibilities of examining what is pollution or taboo for identifying 'implicit meanings'. Douglas (1966, 1975) examines what is taken to be 'dirt', that which is too mundane to

¹ This paper was presented at the *Theory, Culture & Society* 10th Anniversary Conference, Champion, Pennsylvania, 1992 and the 10th SCOS conference, *Organisation and Theatre*, Lancaster University, July 1992, and subsequently revised later that year. As a number of people writing on disposal refer to the revised 1992 manuscript, I have resisted the temptation to refine or correct this version with the exception of adding a postscript.

be other than implicit. She relates this to the backgrounding of cosmological knowledge, which for Douglas is also implicit, since it is 'too true to warrant discussion'. Implicit meanings do not, therefore, represent opposite ends of a discursive spectrum, with some meanings beneath thought and others above talk. For Douglas implicit meanings are wholly related:

Humble rules of hygiene turn out to be rationally constructed with the way that the Lele cosmos is constructed... (Douglas, 1975: 4)

Douglas's point is that the Lele must refuse to change their belief that contagion will spread by food cooked in a fire tended by a menstruating woman, since to include a negation of this possibility requires their whole cosmos to collapse.

A less exotic example linking conceptions of refuse and conduct comes from a consumer behaviour study of 'appropriateness' in London and Newcastle. Marshall's respondents in the Newcastle area recount their problems for the disposal of fish:

'I would not do anything with left overs.'

'I mean once fish is cold and cooked no way would I think of heating it up or putting it in the fridge.'

'It would be straight into the bin.' (Marshall, 1990: 108)

As Marshall (1990: 107) points out 'this behaviour feeds (sic) directly back into the acquisition stage'; according to his study, people in the Newcastle area do not eat much fish. Problems with disposal position our consumption. Indeed, as this paper intends to demonstrate, disposal affects all we do and interpenetrates how we 'go on' in the world.

Problematizing disposal inverts consumption as the mainstay of postmodern thinking. Commodification (Lukacs, 1971), symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984), the collapse of metanarratives (Lyotard, 1984) and Baudrillard's own thesis of cultural implosion and a universe of floating signs, all privilege the symbolic in terms of consumption, but fail to problematise questions over the disposal of meaning. This is no small failing. As a consequence of the tendency to regard consumption as derived unproblematically from production (Featherstone, 1991: 13), the spectre of consumption as meaningless haunts much of postmodern theory.

Ironically, as will be discussed, an emphasis on disposal evinces that there can be no deletion of meanings. Disposal works along *conduits* to alleviate pressure. Disposal is never effected through deletion; meanings are *arranged* and *managed* through recursively constructed 'structures' (Giddens, 1984) which facilitate their dispersal and displacement. Only in this latter sense can the production and consumption of meaning be fully understood.

Figuratively, the paper excavates the sump in con-sump-tion. Plumbing may seem an odd re-duct-ion of social life. The argument over con-duct, however, is that disposal matters wherever there is pro-duct-ion. When the septic tank is full, what goes down must come up. Another flush in the john and back up the pipes comes a brown looking liquid together with an unpleasant smell. Postmodern views that we float on endless signs takes on a new meaning. Next time you overconsume and it may be you floating.

More substantially, the paper makes two moves. First, disposal is introduced to the debate on modernity and postmodernity in order to unsettle the dominance of the production/consumption pairing by forming a triptych. This move allows the mode of reflection to be realigned away from that of the production or consumption of meaning, where philosophers and social theorists have always taken it to be. Instead, drawing on Heidegger and Derrida, it will be argued that the mode of reflection is largely geared to the *disposal* of meaning. That is, rather than effect a denial of the cognitive nature of cognition, I am reworking the mode of reflection away from its prior pre-eminence as that which produces or consumes meaning towards that of a secondary and 'back-up' role concerned with the disposal of meaning. The task is not to celebrate the collapse of meta-narratives (Lyotard, 1984) as irrational, but to clarify the nature of rationality.

Second, and against the thrust of much postmodern theory, I will argue that our propensity for the consumption of signs depends on how well 'plumbed out' meanings are for their dispersal and displacement. This move decenters the disposal of meanings from the self to the social. The flush of embarrassment when one discovers a block in one's con-duct. Adopting the most crude interpretation of Mary Douglas's thesis, I take 'culture' to represent the architecture of disposal. Where before many may have gained some feelings of belonging by attending a football match, today some 'take their stress' to the floatarium (Parks, 1992); instead of relating to film stars, women exercisers draw on advertisements in ways that enable slimmers to separate off their images of self from the materiality of their failure, disposing of their body as 'jello walking behind me' (Ray, 1992); others who take writing the body very literally just 'eat, fuck, tattoo' (Wauters, 1992).

Decentering the disposal of meaning away from the self and into the ducts of the social takes much of the load of interpretation out of the mode of reflection. This marginalises the mode of reflection from its historical placing as the seat of a disembodied mind, where it has been long equated with 'thinking', to a more occasional and post hoc intervening in an embodied consciousness. As will be discussed, these occasional interventions seem unconcerned with the production and consumption of meanings. Rather reflection, as will be discussed, appears more limited to, and preoccupied with, a disposal of any 'excess' in meaning.

PART I

The Postmodern Challenge

The social appears challenged by the 'depthless culture' thesis. Postmodernity, in at least one of its major guises, is associated with a shift of significance away from conditions of materiality towards a universe of signs. For example, Baudrillard is read as having replaced a theory of the mode of production with a theory of 'modes of seduction' (Gane, 1991: 193). This reversing of the direction of determinism through saturating social relations with shifting cultural signs Baudrillard interprets as the 'triumph of a signifying culture' and forms the 'end of the social' (Featherstone, 1991: 6).

For the purposes of this paper, postmodern theory, even where there is no postmodernity to address, at least raises the question of what sort of meanings can survive without the support of 'culture'. In the more extreme view, however, culture 'implodes' to reduce significance to a practice which can amount to no more than consumption of pure signs. This 'culture of consumption' constitutes the millennium, a *monstre froid* recursively constructed from a liquidation of the self into ever-fragmenting bundles of quasi-selves (Featherstone, 1991), a black hole of our own making into which the social vanishes.

Perhaps because of the extremity of Baudrillard's thesis, others have drawn back from describing a world emptied out into 'pure signs'. For example, de Certeau (1988) argues that consumers are the place where meaning is not only recognised and given shape but also ordered and consumed in real and symbolic terms. In drawing on de Certeau's theme, Grafton-Small adds:

...it is our understanding which adds substance, if not meat, to the menu. (Grafton-Small, 1991: 1)

But where the subject has been decentred, what is understanding? Where there is no meat to the meaning, what is substance? The melancholy of millennium postmodernism (Jay, 1986) can hardly be pushed off by a tacit return to the subject with voluntaristic intentions.

Featherstone also argues against a mere "reverse populist celebration of mass pleasures and cultural disorder". In a more deterministic mood than de Certeau, he seeks a more detached sociological account:

...it is important to focus on the growing prominence of the *culture* of consumption and not merely regard consumption as derived unproblematically from production. (Featherstone, 1991: 13)

Certainly the culture of consumption cannot merely invert the culture of production. But again there are difficulties here. Where is the space in which consumption can be examined without recourse to the projects of modernity?

Largely missing either from those who theorise consumption as a 'depthless' culture, or from those who wish to study the empiricity of consumption, is some account of disposal. In this respect Mary Douglas's thesis does more than equate culture with social mechanisms for directing and stabilising meanings. In moving away from such structuralist concerns, she emphasises rather the importance of thinking 'culture' as it were from the bottom up. In her focus on the exchange of signs, whether in the form of goods or the form of norms, she suggests first how the social is central to consumption and second how acts of disposal reconstitute the social.

Drawing on Levi-Strauss's insight that animals which are tabooed are chosen not because they are good to eat but good to think, Douglas and Isherwood (1980: 76) insist that "any choice between goods is the result of, and contributes to, culture". Properly understood, Douglas's thesis undercuts conditions of possibility for postmodernity. There can be no 'end to the social'. What can be expected instead is that the social is always forming and reforming; while no doubt to many, deforming (see also, Featherstone, 1991).

The purpose of this paper, however, is not simply to point to an omission in the 'depthless' culture thesis, or even point to a failure of the 'depthless culture' critique to 'follow' Baudrillard further into his search for 'modes of disappearance' (Baudrillard, 1990a: 15). Rather, on the above cue from Douglas, the intention is to displace the implied order by suggesting that theorising disposal cannot stand as a mere addition to consumption. Instead I will argue that difficulties in the disposal of meanings dramatically affect a propensity for consumption of significance and affect our positioning towards the symbolic.

An Outline of the Problem

Once meanings are formed, how do we rid ourselves of unwanted images? I might, for example, have attended an orgy yesterday evening. Now I want to get back to work, but some images are recurrent. Now I am back with my partner, but some images are still present. Now I want to go on as before, but some images jar with my self-esteem. Far from my images being consumed in the early sense of "to destroy, to use up" (Williams, 1976: 68), psychoanalytic theory has re-sown meanings as "dragon's teeth which jump up as armed men".

Post-marx, post-freud, the question is: How do I throw away meaning? The question today is not: How are meanings formed? Meanings are formed; they run ahead of reflection as Hume argued in his much misunderstood discussion on 'necessary connection'. And, following Heidegger, they are pre-formed; and perhaps prefigured (Fernandez, 1986). Meanings are part of our 'thrownness'; they are sedimented and constructed into the 'projective' nature of understanding before reflection wakes that understanding up. Meanings therefore are neither determined by choice or by cause. Meanings are recognised, where they are recognised at all, *after* their formation, not before.

So how do I dispose of meaning? Answers vary. Humanist traditions espouse volition, which at least offers a last-in-first-out disposal mechanism. In contrast, rationalism so sequesters experience, the body and the lifeworld that it dispenses with meanings altogether, since knowledge consists of objective representations alone. Inversely, although his own program for progress rested on a simplistic account of deletion through falsification, Popper (1963: 3) notes that rationalism cannot even admit the possibility of there being 'sources' of ignorance. Within the rationalist creed, since knowledge is indubitable, knowledge can never be contemplated as a disposable object, as something to trash. Kuhn's (1962) crime was to open the dustbin of history and point out that it wasn't ignorance that was thrown away, but that which stood as, and could still stand as, knowledge.

More surprisingly, postmodernists have also left unexamined problems inherent in any disposal of meanings. In their emphasis on consumption of the symbolic, disposal has not formed an explicit part of the postmodern critique of rationalism. However, setting rationalism aside re-introduces problems made invisible by that perspective. Any rejection of rationalism cannot avoid attending to the problem of disposal, or non-disposal, of meanings. Nor can postmodernists have recourse to last-in-first-out

deletion, unless they abandon the poststructuralists' decisive rejection of volition in their decentring of the subject.

The failure to problematise disposal is intense for postmodernists. By failing to problematise disposal, it appears that their conclusions of an emptied out universe of signs simply arise from prior assumptions about disembodied meaning. Explaining knowledge as disposable looks to be crucial for any non-foundationalist position. It is self-evident that contextualization of theorising within time-space settings is not possible without a certain disposability of meanings. Even in physics, some contextualization of what constitutes knowledge is always tacit (Kuhn, 1990) and necessary (Putnam, 1974). If meanings are not actually abandoned in order to switch settings, some ability to rearrange so as to *defer* meaning looks to be a minimum condition.

There is of course some irony in disposability being foundational to all non-foundationalist positions. The aporia is so immediate as to suggest at once the impossibility of disposal having been completely overlooked. Such a lacuna, following Derrida, can be expected to have its absence marked by the presence of the problem everywhere within extant theories. Indeed, Baudrillard's 'modes of disappearance' is an interesting turn on his earlier positions. Bourdieu's (1984) symbolic capital manifests itself in each's 'disposal' of their body: this exceeds just the tying of shoelaces since symbolic capital affects one's shape, one's walk and an ease or discomfort with one's body. And Derrida's own emphasis on differance suggests that pre-disposals over meanings are pivotal in the processes of deferral and displacement.

PART II

In problematising disposal I first examine meanings in respect to the 'logic of presence'. As Derrida (1982: 22) remarks, Heidegger's meditation on the ontico-ontological difference is 'uncircumventable'. Heidegger's interrogation of Being stands as a conduit through which all examination of meanings must pass. Specifically I draw out understanding as located in time-space settings (Goffman's [1958] 'neglected situation'), sharpening conceptions of modernity as being the will to act at a distance (Latour, 1987; Rose & Miller, 1992) and circumvent the 'presence' of time-space settings. Heidegger's emphasis on a 'fall' from Being suggests that some loss of meaning, essence, is the price to be paid for navigating modernity through what Margaret Donaldson has termed disembedded thinking.

I turn then to reexamine Derrida's attack on the 'logic of presence' and suggest that his deconstruction of the hierarchy of speech over writing can be reinterpreted as a recognition of text making meanings ever present. There is no deletion of meaning, merely a continuous deferral. Derrida's examination of text stresses a materiality in the signifier which reverses Husserl's failure to dispose of the signifier in his search for pure meaning. Since no signified can escape the inevitability of becoming a signifier, Derrida is raising the impossibility of abandoning meanings. Instead, any deconstruction of text pivots on a disposability of meanings in terms of their *rearrangement* through an

ability to differ and defer. Writing, in Derrida's ontology, stands as a machine for moving among signifiers, expressions, in order to think the Other and pull through meanings.

Being-in-the-World and the Logic of Presence

As conventionally stated, Heidegger (1959, 1962) reveals traditional metaphysics to be obsessed by questions of materiality, whose poverty is governed by the either/or of questions, such as do I exist? why are there things rather than nothing? Materiality is always privileged over meaning. Or at least it seems so from these questions which arise from viewing the world as composed of/fragmented into 'things' (Siendes). Heidegger (1959) deconstructs metaphysics as a tradition within which the very questions of meaning, constantly evaded by a stress on existence *as* materiality, are brought into being in the form of questions of essence and by the very same tradition. Exposing the frailty of a foundationalism built around the (false) separation of meaning and materiality is an essential part of Heidegger's legacy.²

The logic of presence is critical to Heidegger's (1962) account of meaning. Being involves presence. Presence therefore entails meaning, understanding, as located materially in the time-space settings of being-in-the-world. Since presence is specific to a time-space setting, meanings can be expected to alter through alterations in presence and, hence, in time-space. In this way, although Heidegger would not state it so, time-space acts, movements of the body, can be conceived as a medium through which meanings change. That is, meanings are not only constructed through presence in time-space, prior meaning is *disposed* of, deleted, by changes in presence.

Central to Heidegger's account of meaning is a theory of action. Acts are central to his logic of presence. Meanings and action are always interlinked, but not always in the same way. It is important to distinguish two moods (Stimmungen) in Heidegger's analysis. The first is when we stand in 'production'. Here meanings are *ready-to-hand*. As ready-to-hand we do not notice meanings; they pivot action, not reflection. Thus in nailing down the roof, the hammer disappears into an extension of my arm. Only when the hammer slips from my fingers, or bangs my thumb, does the hammer 'announce' itself as hammer. Meanings become visible to consciousness only when they are *un-ready-to-hand*. Only in the mood of interrogating language, when consciousness turns on itself in the mode of 'reflection', do meanings become the object of reflection and, hence, visible *as* reflection.

2 Heidegger (1962) locates meaning through his concept of Dasein, being-in-the-world. Following Husserl's call 'to the things themselves' and Brentano's tenet that only things can be the object of thought (Kotarbinski, 1976), Heidegger evolves presence as a logic in which meanings and things co-constitute each other. This unifying of signifier and signified within presence breaks radically with Husserl's attempt to form a 'pure' signified through his method of transcendental reduction. In this way Heidegger exits from the Cartesian subject/object split and repudiates the 'ontic' doctrine of meanings as merely representational of objects. Instead of focusing meaning on the epistemological question of how can we know, Heidegger gives 'meaning' and ontological turn.

It should be clear from this summary account of the logic of presence, that if meanings are accepted as not only pivotal to action, but inseparable from action, then their disposability becomes paramount for modernity and the rapid navigation of time-space settings. Unless meanings are subject to change, alteration or rearrangement, action will self-arrest. Meanings which are ready-to-hand in one setting become un-ready-to-hand in the next. Instead of helping us to 'go on' in the world, meanings become the barrier to action. Indeed, the position is worse. Not only will I shift moods, out of one characterised by 'production' to one of 'reflection', but I would become stuck for ever in the particulars of *that* reflection.

Language and Making Everything Present

Derrida's inversion of writing over speech can be understood as an attempt to overthrow the logic of presence.³ By mobilising writing rather than speaking, Derrida wants to emphasise the impossibility of deletion. The word stroked out is a new inscription, the attempted erasure inscribes a new mark. These facts are elided by philosophers when they introspect and mistake the illusion of speaking as speaking *for* consciousness. Derrida first notes that presence, as pure presence, rules out the possibility of language:

The hinge [brissure] marks the impossibility that a sign, the unity of a signifier and signified, be produced within the plenitude of a present and an absolute presence. (Derrida, 1976: 69)

Derrida perceives language for Heidegger to be an 'undecidable supplement' to the logic of presence. Heidegger wants to rethink meaning as Being, but however close he comes to the brink of saying so, he cannot propose that language be finally abandoned. And if, instead, language is that which is to be interrogated, how can this process of interrogation escape being endless?⁴

3 In *Of Grammatology* Derrida (1976) contends that philosophers have always privileged speech over writing. In support of his contention, Kamuf quotes Aristotle:

Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words. (1991: 31)

Formally stated, if philosophers has (mis)taken speech to represent reality, writing has been accorded an even more lowly status as the mere representation of speech. However, Derrida's inversion of writing over speech attacks not only this second hierarchy, he is also displacing the dogma of language as representational. In this last displacement, Derrida follows Heidegger, but no attempt will be made here to split their relative contributions to an overturning of the foundationalist view of language. Instead, in this section, I want to explore Derrida's account of language and make sense of his claim that we stand before the text and that there is only the text.

4 'Tympan' (Derrida, 1982) can be read as illustrating this dilemma. In the scientism on the left hand side of the page, Derrida demonstrates on the reader the endlessness of deconstructing a particular term. By weaving in more and more terms, the deconstruction repeats 'what is implicit in the founding concepts' and hence the text becomes more and more technical, tedious and boring:

Here one risks ceaselessly confirming, consolidating, *relifting* (*relever*), at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs. The continuous process of making explicit, moving toward an opening, risks sinking into the autism of closure. (Derrida, 1982: 135)

Deriding Heidegger's account of presence as an "ontotheological determination of the meaning of Being", Derrida (1982: 33-34) seeks instead the "hidden passageway" that makes "the problem of presence communicate with the problem of the written trace". For Derrida, the hidden passageway is language. Language, Derrida argues, comes into play as a 'hinge', in the very movement across moments of presence. The double meaning of hinge, as a joint and a break, Derrida (1976: 65) takes to designate both "difference and articulation". Language enters therefore not only in the production or consumption of meanings, but acts to facilitate their disposal: first by differing, marking a distinction in meanings; and second by deferring, putting off an engagement with *those* meanings because *other* meanings are already being pulled through.

Certainly on this account language looks central to facilitating rapid movement across time-space settings. For Derrida, the catch is that through recourse to language all other experience is deferred from presence. The only artefact which can claim presence is language. But this is not to say that 'things' have absence. Rather it is to recognise that their very thingness reveals them as the residue of a mediation through language. It is the disciplining powers of language which hypostatize 'things' as primary and obscure their nature as a residue of being-in-the-world. In order to invert this displacement and point to the "arche-phenomenon of 'memory'" Derrida (1976: 70) names this residue as *trace*:

That the signified is originally and essentially ...trace, that it is *always already in the position of the signifier*, is the apparently innocent proposition within which the metaphysics of the logos, of presence and consciousness, must reflect upon writing as its death and its resource. (Derrida, 1976: 73)

It is as trace that language constitutes a labyrinth of association, one of both difference and articulation.

However, in order to for trace to instantiate these powers of suggestion, language eliminates presence for all but itself.. As Derrida argues, since no signified can escape the inevitability of becoming a signifier, the text before us stands for all text. A text in which there can be nothing absent and which is all that is present. If Heidegger was always on the verge of recognising the fullness of the presence of language, it is Derrida's contribution to have revealed that through language nothing can have absence. Everything is 'lifted' into language. Since the continuous constituting of 'things' through language also acts *on* language, only specific *inscriptions* may be absent.

The literary nature of the right hand side of the page registers the second strategy of deconstruction, illustrating Derrida's argument that throwing off the discipline of a discourse merely throws discussion onto older ground:

...the simple practice of language ceaselessly reinstates the new terrain on the oldest ground. (Derrida, 1982: 135)

Derrida does not claim any easy way out of this dilemma but suggests that 'a new writing must weave and interlace' these two motifs of deconstruction. This process is illustrated by the way in which a new margin is created through footnotes cutting across the pages of 'Tympan'.

In re-examining writing, Derrida has picked up language from its status as that of an 'undecidable supplement' to the logic of presence and transformed language-in-use into presence itself as *text*.⁵ Once the simulacrum of text is entered, the logic of presence is abandoned and, in consequence, as Roland Barthes has noted, language can never be exited. In Derrida's words, we stand before the text, there is nothing but the text, etc. On this account the rapid movement across time-space settings through inscriptions (Latour, 1987) is in part illusion since language is never left and the time-space setting only ever entered as text.

Bringing Back the Subject

Heidegger and Derrida offer distinct, and competing, theories of the disposal of meanings. Within the logic of presence the transition of meanings from one time-space setting to the next appears unproblematic; one minute we are consuming nailing in all its full-fill-ment; the next minute we are sucking our thumb and consuming the hammerness of a hammer. Within the logic of text the transport across meanings is also unproblematic; language stands as a machine (Derrida, 1982: 316) the productivity of whose marks and inscriptions is, in all their linearity, to pull through meanings. Stated baldly thus, each amounts to a determinative view of meaning, although the materiality constituting presence and the materiality constitutive of text register important differences.

This provisional result is due to the absence of the 'subject'. While both Heidegger and Derrida de-centre the subject, it is nevertheless, a serious misreading of their philosophies to think that either do not attend assiduously (and throughout their respective writings) to the subject. My reason for caricaturing Heidegger and Derrida respectively as the text of presence and the presence of text, however, is to note an overlap. Both the logic of presence and the logic of text offer possible worlds for understanding how a disposal of meanings can be accomplished through action or through writing.

Conceiving the mode of reflection as directed towards disposal provides a way of theorising the subject that is perhaps consonant with both Heidegger and Derrida. Although space only permits a sketch here, what directs reflection at disposal is an 'excess' of meaning. It is the excess of meaning that exerts pressure on consciousness, bringing reflection to bear upon it *in order to dispose of this excess*. For Heidegger, it is the excess of meaning that makes something 'un-ready-to-hand' and turns the projective nature of understanding upon its tools *as* tools. The hammer enters reflection when the

5 Derrida sees 'presence' as the trace of the trace. Or, since language constitutes the erasure of presence, the term presence registers the death of Being and stands as 'the trace of the erasure of the trace' (Derrida, 1982: 66). Derrida's point, perhaps one of his most difficult concepts as he struggles to give due credit to Heidegger's insight, can be approached by analogy with the problem of the murderer who either has to dispose of the body or, as some popular novels might have it, dispose of the traces of the crime. It is the erasure of expected signs which constitutes a trace. For example, in Philip Friedman's *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* the absence of *any* fingerprints on the telephone indicates the pivot part a telephone call has played in the crime.

nail is missed, or the hammer slips. For Derrida, the attempt to dispose of the Other, through making a difference and a deferral, always imparts to the subordinated or excluded predicate (Derrida, 1982: 329) an 'excess' of meaning. This excess of meaning re-turns the 'trace' into something present, by way of 'supplement'. For example, sucking my 'hammer bruise' sets up a trace for the next swing of the arm, throwing my confidence to dispose of the hammer into my armswing.

Conversely, if the argument that reflection centres on disposal is correct, those meanings which carry no excess of meaning pass by unnoticed. They seem more akin to Mary Douglas's 'implicit meanings'. The unnoticed are the meanings which are ready-to-hand, those which are silently and centrally facilitating a 'going on' in the world. What has to be added therefore to Heidegger's view is that what are also unnoticed are the traces which are not present. Traces may not appear 'within' reflection as present but, as Derrida has shown, neither are they absent. It is the 'not absent' status of unnoticed traces which critically give the subject its fluidity to pass from meaning to meaning.

To be sure all this sounds strange and paradoxical. But this is largely a matter of metonymical confusion, a tradition of identifying 'consciousness' with its more obtrusive and distinctive counterpart 'reflection'. How consciousness is theorised can fluctuate the subject between the meaninglessness of determinism and the illusion of voluntarism. The latter exists I suggest because philosophers, in their fix on essence, have been prone to treat the mode of reflection as the essence of the subject. The heritage of rationalism is for the production and consumption of signs to be treated as a matter of choice, a matter for the constant minutia of 'decision-making'. Consciousness is always being conceived of as a pro-active consumer. To be caught in the 'mirror of nature' is to (mis)take the problematics of 'going on' in the world as a matter of 'deciding' the signifieds as if these 'meanings' reflected unproblematically the 'materiality' of the signifiers. But thinking and 'going on' in the world are much more than the process of reflection or its products and neither Heidegger's logic of presence nor Derrida's logic of text allow for any rupture of the sign into a dualism of signifiers and signified.

Problematizing disposal suggests how reflection comes to constitute the subject for the subject. It seems too precipitate to dispose of either a logic of presence or a logic of text, but neither should we dispose of the subject, since Derrida merely dethrones subjectivity:

In this typology, the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from this place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and the entire system of utterances. (Derrida, 1982: 326)

Voluntarism accords a sovereignty to a governance of intentions which Derrida rejects. The limits of governance begin with the inescapability of the speech act being already, and always, different from intention and ends with the endless "quest for context" (Derrida, 1982: 327).

The limits of reflection to govern action do not arise simply because, once clothed in text, traces pull through un-ready-to-hand meanings from the constituting subject which

result, for example, in forms which Goffman (1972) locates as embarrassment. The limits to self-governance can be better understood in terms of the mode of reflection being decentred from its philosopher's throne and figured instead to be engaged in a surveillance over disposal.

Encounters offer an intersection of text with the time-space settings of the body and these can be expected to afford meanings for the constituting subject which are both ready-to-hand and un-ready-to-hand. But it is only the un-ready-to-hand which appears 'in' reflection. Nevertheless it is their potentiality for disposal, the ease with which the unready-to-hand may be turned into the ready-to-hand which 'matters' to a consciousness bent on disposal. Forgetting a name can freeze action or be turned into an opening line of conversation. Indeed, both trace which is present in its excess and trace which is absent can be important to effect disposal, since the first is pivotal for the initiating of deferral and the second is necessary to effect difference.

PART III

The paper turns now to a discussion of the empirical implications of non-disposable meanings, in the sense that they may be differed, displaced or disregarded but never abandoned. Difficulties in the deconstruction of meanings suggest, against the conventional view that conduct is simply driven by prior meanings, that conduct is anchored and shaped by the conduits of the social, Derrida's 'hidden passageways' which form the pre-disposal of meanings.

Consumption Revisited

In considering the above sketch of disposal, a tale of Baudrillard's with fatal consequences is apt:

A little boy asks a fairy to grant him his wishes. The fairy agrees on one condition, that he never thinks of the colour red in the fox's tail. 'Is that all?' he replies offhandedly. And off he goes to find happiness. But what happens? He is unable to rid himself of this fox's tail, which he believed he had already forgotten. He sees it everywhere, with its red colour, in his thoughts, and in his dreams. Despite all his efforts, he cannot make it disappear. He becomes obsessed with this absurd, insignificant, but tenacious image, augmented by all the spite that comes from not having been able to rid himself of it. Not only do the fairy's promises not come true, but he loses his taste for life. Perhaps he dies without ever having got clear of it. (Baudrillard, 1990b: 74)

"An absurd story", Baudrillard adds, "but absolutely plausible, for it *demonstrates the power of the insignificant signifier*, the power of a meaningless signifier".

While elsewhere "words and gestures are emptied of their meaning by unflagging repetition and scansion", the insignificance of the colour red of the fox's tail, Baudrillard claims, is the reason why the child was "not on his guard". From the above sketch, however, we can anticipate that the child was in mortal danger. The child had no means at his disposal with which to dispose of the image. When words have "neither context nor referent, they can take on the power of a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Baudrillard, 1990b: 75). As Baudrillard remarks:

If the fairy had forbidden the child from doing something serious or significant, he would have pulled through easily, instead of being seduced against his will. For it is not the prohibition, *but its non-sense that seduces him*. (Baudrillard, 1990b: 75)

Baudrillard's argument is that the sign proved "compelling because of its very nullity". This argument, in its displacement of the central actor as a 'child', calls for some examination.

The significant is disposable (although not always as easily as Baudrillard implies) since its very significance marks the existence of its ducts for disposal. However, if the boy can be understood to be seduced by the idea of (instant) happiness, what fails the boy is not his inability to find significance, but precisely his ability to connect his task to the reward! 'Significance' marks a ready-to-handness, a 'pre-disposal'. The child was not pre-disposed to think *otherwise* about the redness of the fox's tail. (Just, presumably, like people in Newcastle do not think the *otherwise* of fish). And without such a predisposal he could not be on guard. Lacking a 'gaze' (Foucault, 1973) the child could not regard it as other than that it was for him, he could not re-connect it, re-g(u)ard it so as to take care of its significance.

But Baudrillard fails to see all this. Instead he argues that seduction works on the very absence of sense:

This is why neither magic nor seduction concerns belief or make-believe, for they employ signs without credibility and gestures without referents; their logic is not one of mediation, but of immediacy, whatever the sign. (Baudrillard, 1990b: 75)

Yes, the immediacy of the redness of the fox's tail was un-refuse-able. But why? Baudrillard suggests that the child could not dispose of the sign because the requirement not to think about it was for him a sign 'without credibility', a gesture 'without referent'. Is there a harking back to a correspondence theory of meaning here?

Perhaps the better move is to recognise the likelihood of the child *assigning* correspondence: of the child attaching "red in the fox's tail" to the reward of 'instant happiness'. Perhaps the latter represented to the child the sole possibility of assignment? If the child cannot abandon the trace - the lure of gaining 'instant happiness' - then the child also cannot also erase the red in the fox's tail. Somewhat against Baudrillard's argument, it is not the nullity of significance that is important here, even if such a thing was thinkable. Rather, by not regarding *other potentialities* of the sign as significant, the child lacked all 'context or reference' with which to re-g(u)ard it and, hence, dispose of it.

Effacing the Trace

The problem of disposal, of which meditation is perhaps the classic struggle, is not that of erasing the trace. Nor is the problem even an epistemological difficulty, that of knowing which trace to erase. The recurrence of an 'unwanted' image suggests already that the *volition* of last-in-first-out disposal fails. That language cannot just be abandoned is consonant with the de-centring of the subject by poststructuralists. But will the opposite path, seeking a *determinacy* inherent in a first-in-last-out disposal, not

fail too? If this paper were to try to follow Freud and excavate what propels the recurrent, would this not also end in an endless loop of trying to trace the trace?

Indeed if Derrida is right, an attempted erasure of a trace simply creates another trace into which all other traces become drawn. And this eventuality does not only cover a leucopathy in the fox's tail. Think of mother. Even if a lobotomy could be conducted to nullify mother, to eliminate all 'traces' of mother, very soon a red coat, a gesture in a restaurant, through the use of a particular word and mother would be back.

My point here is not that a disposal of signs, images, meanings is difficult. For much of the time disposal appears easy and effortless, affected as it is all the time through our pre-disposal. When we think *smell* the leftover fish is in the bin before we reflect on keeping it in the fridge. Our consumption of images, gestures, signs of all kinds, is constituted in part by our ability to transform meanings from these into the 'readymade'. As readymades we have pre-disposed ourselves towards their disposal. When we see *pate* instead of a cold wet fish the bin is deferred until we next open the fridge.

Nevertheless, the difficulty in disposing of signs is central to our day to day experience and is likely therefore to affect our conduct. For example, difficulties with disposal may heighten a pre-disposal towards r-out-in-es, towards those out-in experiences which we take, and possibly mistake, to be readymade for disposal. Television is turned to for relaxing but how many turn off at night more tired, more 'drained' than when they began? Boring lectures are supposed to turn people off, but intellectual challenge may stimulate boredom.

Indeed difficulties in disposal seem so central to our day to day experience that one wonders why it should be necessary to 'discover' the difficulty?⁶ Perhaps it is this very centrality which leads us to 'dispose' of *this* difficulty and that we are, in consequence, always covering up our failure here. This is of course similar to Heidegger's argument over the existential anxiety. That our very inability to think death is brought about through our everyday experience of the certainty of our death.⁷

The point here, and it is hardly an original one given difficulties in accomplishing a 'death' of the centred subject within depth meditation, is that knowledge of problems

6 As I have shown, it is hardly necessary to discover the problem of disposal. Rather disposal marks the subject for poststructuralists. Even if it is only by way of their 'supplement', their excess which they can't or won't efface, Derrida and Baudrillard keep rubbing our noses in the difficulty of disposal.

7 One of Heidegger's insights over Dasein is that it is always covering up itself. That this gets 'forgotten' suggests the dangers of reading his example of death as a universal truth, rather than as an empirical, and context-driven, 'noticing'. In what follows I want to stress that positioning towards consumption - disposal in an early meaning of the term - is a matter of strategy, not certainty; and so underline how problems with disposal are always situated. In saying this I intend no return to the 'endlessness' of context as foundational. Rather it is to underline that the 'neglected situation' includes language not just setting. Text is always brought to settings since it is language alone which disposes of the logic of presence. Text guards against the threat of a situated 'arrest' within meaning, but text is also, always, con-text.

over disposal of signs acts to change our conduct. Our propensity for a particular consumption of signs is affected by our positioning towards that potential consumption, both in the time-space settings of the body and of text. But further, conduct is affected by our prior experience and its effect on disposal. The relations here are however complex. Predisposal plus outcomes does not equal future conduct. For example, I might return to the floatarium when it fails to dispose of my stress, but this time to excite myself with sensory deprivation.

Reflection is accomplished through that excess of meaning which has announced itself as un-ready-to-hand and by that trace which is so effaced as to be always be in excess and appear as supplement. The complexities here suggest that we do not, as Giddens (1984) has it, learn much about how to 'go on' in the world through accumulating rules. Rather than cognitively loading up rules, although negatives are a likely counter-instance here, we shift about on strategies which we think will help to anticipate or circumvent difficulties with disposal. This question of strategies and the ducting of language by the social is now discussed.

Consequences for Conduct

As has been discussed the importance of culture as norms for stabilising meanings has been challenged by the 'depthless culture' of postmodern theories. To the extent that postmodernist thinking has helped to decouple the concept of culture from the concept of norms, the intervention is welcome. To the extent that postmodernist thinking simply represents an attempt to delete culture as important, postmodernists place themselves alongside modernists in their misunderstanding of the nature of the social.

Hidden within postmodernist views are preconceptions that conduct is driven by prior meanings, with the feedback effects of conduct adding to, or deleting, prior meanings more or less unproblematically. These are the familiar suppositions of modernity: causality and accumulation. Against these suppositions the paper has demonstrated that conduct is affected by strategies which are anchored around a *pre*-disposal of meanings in the social. That is, the interpenetration of the self by the social, through the exchange of goods or their simulations, simultaneously instantiates one's prior experience of disposal.

Difficulties in the disposal of meanings, therefore, suggest not only more caution in interpreting Baudrillard's thesis but some revision of the 'consumption' view. For example Friedman (1990) develops the consumption thesis thus:

Following a line of argument that began with the recognition that goods are building blocks of life-worlds, we have suggested, as have others, that they can be understood as constituents of selfhood, of social identity. (Friedman, 1990: 327)

By further assuming a global historical frame, he goes on to assert that it is possible to:

...detect and even to account for differences among broad classes of strategies of identity and therefore of consumption and production as well as their transformations in time. (Friedman, 1990: 327)

No doubt, but perhaps the more local frame, which Friedman also seeks, can only be found through problematising disposal? A disposal analogous to the 'bricoleur' in using devious means (Levi-Strauss, 1966: 16) to shape and reshape conduct out of the ruins of previous engagements with the social.

Explaining the local remains fundamental. Once the fatal search for essence is abandoned *all* the dualisms of 'base' and 'superstructure', production and consumption, economics and culture, 'technical acts' and 'aesthetic frills', macro and micro, and even global and local, can be thrown out the window.

The extreme challenge here comes from Cohen (1985, 1987) who, in the tradition of Saussure's arbitrary relation of signifier to signified, has pointed up the logical consequences of ambiguity in the *semiotic gap* between 'shared expressions' and 'shared meanings' for notions of community. For Cohen it is this very ambiguity of signs which affords their binding properties. Unless Whalsey is taken as an outpost of postmodernity, Cohen's 'symbolic construction of community' both prefigures and undercuts much postmodern discussion.

At risk from an irredeemable ambiguity in meanings are not just the sacred version of culture from Durkheim, the top-down tumble of values, but also the profane. For example, much as she wants to distance herself from Durkheim and argue culture 'bottom up', Douglas posits an "elusive exchange between explicit and implicit meanings". According to Douglas, this elusive exchange arises from a large part of discourse being:

...dedicated to creating, revising and obliquely confirming this implicit background, without ever directing explicit attention on it. (Douglas, 1975: 4)

Perhaps. Certainly this is a less grand culture, even if it still appears totalising. But if the gap between shared expressions and shared meanings is to be taken seriously, Douglas's proposed 'elusive exchange' is elusive indeed.

Relating con-duct towards disposal suggests a less totalising view. Sedimentation processes, as hinted to by Schutz, would *contextualise* paths between shared expressions and shared meanings and further contextualise these paths specifically as written into each knowing subject. The remaining difficulty is to see how these paths, having become sedimented as ducts, conduits for disposal, can *also* be avoided and by-passed.

Given a knowledgability of ambiguity in meanings, actors will not necessarily rely on the availability of these conduits. Unlike Baudrillard's child they may add, or even deliberately seek out, other possibilities for treating some sign *as* something else. Part of 'experience' is surely to learn to as-sign other potentialities; to know that things could be other than *as* they seem. On this version, conduct is an engagement in the social which draws upon, but is not fixed by, the network of disposal strategies that culture represents. Where the making of fish into pate is absent from the day to day in Newcastle, fishsellers may attempt to simulate a pate-making culture within their advertising.

This drawing on disposal strategies as resources is a chiasmic interplay of bets and noticings. The interiority of strategies, which governs the bets by which each actor departs text to setting and imports setting through text, by the same token registers an exteriority of these strategies, which will be read by others. Broadly, although brush strokes are inadequate here, settings become 'read' explicitly for their excess of meaning and it is this excess of meaning which may be communicated in gestures such as a grunt or a raised eyebrow. Whereas we can actively dispose of an excess through constant rearrangement, conversely we may also comport ourselves in ways which preface, or efface, the excess of meaning afforded by the setting.

Actually what 'encounters' afford are *account-able* experiences within which or from which one can examine one's standing 'with' and 'in' the social. But when all bets are on, and this is the force of knowledgability about ambiguity in signs, we are more bookkeepers than bookmakers. With great irony Bauman depicts this examination within modernity thus:

...actors are challenged to justify their conduct by reason as defined either by the goal or by the rules of behaviour. Only actions thought of and argued in such a way, or fit to be narrated in such a way, are admitted into the class of genuinely *social* action, that is *rational* action, that is an action that serves as the defining property of actors as *social actors*. (Bauman, 1991: 144)

In understanding the projects of modernism as one of a re-disposal of bodies through our accounting to and for ourselves, this rearrangement, the examination depicted by Bauman has to be seen as *continuous*. There are no separate 'accountability' encounters, although there are certainly in a manner of speaking moments of reckoning. But moments of reckoning have become fractionalised and internalized and are likely to have occurred long before those those encounters staged as calls to account.

Concluding Remarks

Postmodernists have been busy celebrating the implications of Saussure's semiotic gap long after linguists quietly abandoned it (Hopper, 1992). By drawing attention to different strategies for disposal, I am not suggesting that there *is* a gap between expressions and meanings which could be addressed linguistically or sociologically. What the poststructuralist, postmodern and postfeminist debates have shown is that the problem for everyday conduct is not one of producing meanings to close gaps. Meaning is produced from closure. The problem is how to *open up* gaps, create the clearings, break into the fissures and *make* the spaces.

In theorising disposal I have tried to show why there are no gaps to close. The connections between signifiers and signifieds are already made. They are always prior to reflection. Our astonishment at the holocaust is already in place (Bauman, 1991) and *must* be in place if we are to dispose of it as a one-off event of history, if we are to hold it aside as that ultimate of all aberrations.

The problem, when there is a problem, is one of not *liking* the connection. It is some *discomfort* that obtrudes meanings into reflection as an excess of meaning. Far from the

mind writing the body, it is the body that writes the mind. But this ability to write into reflection is a very limited compared to the extent that the body is written on by the social.

Our bets on the social are written into us, I have argued, as conduits for disposal. These conduits form a *distribution* of knowledge that pre-fixes closure in our readings of the social. What Baudrillard's child, the good people of Newcastle and this paper all fail to do, is to pre-guard against this closure by re-assigning that potential excess which we won't like into a different trace. We fail to do this because it doesn't occur to us to do this. And further because it can only occur to us *after* the opportunity for reflection to engage has given rise to an excess. Opening up my bets into other meanings is not something that is much under my governance and depends on my noticings interweaving with interventions from others.

This said, the likelihood that actors are apperceptively aware of their own *semiosis* (Eco, 1984) between meanings and expressions should not be overlooked. Specifically this entails recognising that members' knowledgability about moves in a language game (Lyotard, 1984), which may be poor or tacit, enters as part of their resource and facility to engage in the social, whether this is conceived as traversing the time-space settings of modernity or not. Derrida (1976: 76) is surely at the heart of the matter here when he reminds us that 'ambiguity' is a trace of the logic of presence and that instead of ambiguity we should call it 'play'. Stated as such the 'semiotic gap' cannot be denied of social actors, but the question is why members of organizations 'forget' to deploy this central resource. All research on conduct should confront this question before fixing their theories: where is the play?

Whatever the epoch, and the paper *is* questioning the dichotomising of modern/postmodern over its exclusion of the non-western as 'primitive', disposal strategies matter. Whereas in close island communities such as Whalsay apperceptions about ambiguities, the play in meaning, may be turned inward to construct a 'private' space in which differences in meanings can be celebrated as the self, a different strategy may be adopted where culture is perceived to be receding or 'depthless'. For example, a would-be member may adopt one of Baudrillard's 'saturated' signs as an *overcoding* (Eco, 1977) to upstage ambiguity, a floating fortress of meaning with which to advertise their affiliation. Why else do Tory ladies wear those hats?

Or register disaffiliation? Nationalism has long been associated with a 'standing against' and a mainstay of Douglas's thesis is to point out that *all* inclusion necessitates exclusion across *all* cultures and, presumably, *all* epochs.

Through problematising the disposal of meaning, the paper has questioned preconceptions of reflection in an attempt to unsettle the existing order which pairs together production/consumption with modernity/postmodernity. A safety pin through the nose may not prevent a raised eyebrow but, in advertising a readiness to excite disapproval, its difference blocks a 'normal' transfer of the problem of disposal and thereby both anticipates and defers the secret exchange of the social.

Through 'culture', the everyday making of moves in language games, the social serves the disposal of meanings. And such pre-disposal in turn instantiates culture *as* the

social. But just as neither is the other, so neither determines the other. Nor do they together determine conduct. For example, although one strategy of disposal may involve complicated accounts of the self to the self, another strategy might involve avoidance of settings, such as orgies or death camps, which may be thought to lead to those meanings which require an intensive accounting to the self for their 'internal' disposal.

Whereas either strategy followed relentlessly might be experienced as a 'loss' of culture, the everyday excavation and dissemination of disposal strategies also offers new conditions of possibility for 'culture' to mutate away from its 'deep' and highly localised form. For example, a more reflective and deliberative 'switching' of strategies can be expected to have implications for both culture in both its production and consumption; we have all learned that to *refuse* a joke unexpectedly can radiate power. Or again, domination may be effected particularly through shifting language games rather than staying within that of a particular expertise. For example, managers shift from the production numbers to the accounting numbers in order to perform power. Where all this is so the concept of culture calls less for its disposal, millennium or not, but for revision, in order to see its what and where.

A Parthian shot. Given the age and ubiquity of language, competence in the disposal of meanings surely goes a long way back? But does play only begin with the invention of the phonetic alphabet, the division of the world, as McLuhan (1962) suggests, into visual and aural spheres? And then end in cold print? Only to come back after the ruinous projects of modernism through film? Of course *technologies* change and these may create conditions of possibility for different conduits and new strategies for disposal. But McLuhan (1962: 25) in his retelling the myth of the invention of writing, skips over Plato's point. The upshot is one of writing helping people not to remember, but 'to forget'. Featherstone is right to call for more focus on the 'culture of consumption' but the entire triptych of primitive/ modern/postmodern could still be located as an accommodation by the social of differences in technology, were it not more exciting to figure each as staging posts in a race towards a millennial deletion of the social.

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Postscript

There is a notion (in crime novels) that no-one can be tried for murder in the absence of a body. No body, no crime. A clear implication is that a perfect murder requires the perfect disposal of the body.

The title of the paper borrows this trope. For a disappearance of the body from the sociological canon long pre-dates the postmodernists and their confessions. The death of materiality can be traced to earlier, modernist emphases on meanings in which symbolism replaced culture, the subject replaced the social and decisions replaced deeds. Once meanings are made precise and valorised as real - and this double production of meanings is the modernist project - the mumblings of materials are silenced. Putting postmodernists on trial for dematerialising the world reminds one of those inversions of the middle ages in which the village fool is made Pope for the day.

This is my first 'upending' of postmodernism: the ephemera of finding a world upside down. The moral panic over relativism heralding an outbreak of lynchings in which postmodernists and poststructuralists were being roped together for the same crimes. Like others, I found myself engaged in a critique of consumption theory, particularly over its dalliance with postmodern ideas of a universe of signs. But I also felt arguments against 'dematerialisation' had to avoid a return to brute empiricism and take seriously the interpretive mood of twentieth century sociology. Hammering materialism back into the world would likely just reinstate the dualisms of mind and body, form and substance, word and object.

The second 'upending' came from the intuition that the endless inversions beloved by postmodernists could themselves be inverted. The gambit was to take postmodernism at its word: over the supposed omnipresence of meanings, not over postmodernism's dismissal of the object world. (The cry to 'to the things themselves' seems a fatal strategy in a world which has already renounced materials in its attachment to meanings). So my tactic was to pursue the meanings themselves. And pursue them to excess. What happens to meanings? Where do they go? How do they not just accumulate and jumble up the world?

My answer, then, to the conundrum of excess posed by the paper was that it was not us who disposed of meanings. Rather, as I would say in the light of my subsequent work with Strathern, it is the circulation of materials that disposes of us. I assumed the

impossibility of actually disposing of meaning - as if by volition - was made self-evident in the paper. Instead, drawing on poststructuralist thinking, the analysis stressed the importance of materials as offering conduits for disposal. Thus, far from suggesting 'anything goes', a putative superfluity of meanings implied a (hidden) presence of (moving) bodies. Regrettably, at the time, I took this answer - that there never was any murder - to be too obvious to explicate fully and no doubt, for this reason, this crucial move in the paper remains obscure.

Certainly the irony of the writing seems lost on commentators who have taken the disposal theme itself at face value. The point of introducing a third term - disposal - was not primarily an attempt to theorise a new concept. It was as much a move to challenge an implicit priority of consumption over disposal and so destabilise the 'seesaw' of production and consumption (a pairing of perspective and supplement complicit in their 'violent hierarchy'). My intuition was that the contemporary turn to consumption - for all its focus on fluidity - remained in the thrall of production. Yes, materials were again being made present - in the form of Mary Douglas's goods - but more as vehicles for the exchange of meanings. In the name of consumption, commentators were still mapping out the production and reproduction of highly static identities and overlooking any motility to belonging: the way in which one is inside one moment and outside the next.

The kind of radical interpretivism in which I was engaged accepts meaning - the ephemera on which the world turns - but rejects any reification of movement into 'meanings'. Confusion, as I still see it, arises from a failure to observe the ontological difference between meaning and meanings. A key part of the paper therefore lay in making associations here with Heidegger's notions of truth as momentary - the 'unrevealing' of silver as the ore is beaten into the form of a goblet. The existential phenomenology of this 'logic of presence' was extended by making a comparison with Derrida's 'logic of text'. The reasons for doing this are clear enough, but the convoluted play on Derrida's more usual dismissal of presence (in the classical sense) distract from the argument that Derrida's desire to 'dispose' of Heidegger leaves him over-valorising language as 'text' rather than re-membering it as 'extension'.

By way of an historical note, the paper was performed dressed in a black bin liner at the 10th SCOS conference, Organisation and Theatre, Lancaster University, July 1992. The chiasmus of the frenchman tying his bootlaces took on the body of Derrida and the paraphrase of Kennedy's notorious Berlin speech - Ich bin ein Binliner! - found its way into a radio show some years later. I made one attempt to get the paper published, but Theory, Culture & Society rejected it on the basis of a one paragraph review suggesting more clinical evidence was needed! (To be fair, Mike Featherstone suggested I resubmitted the paper with a new introduction - the wisdom of which I guess this postscript confirms).

Centre for Social Theory & Technology, Keele; 14 May 20001

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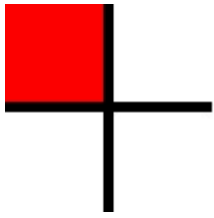
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Project(ile)s of Hypermodern(organ)ization¹

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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

¹ I would like to thank Steffen G. Böhm, two anonymous referees and Joanne Roberts for their valuable comments on an earlier draft of this article.

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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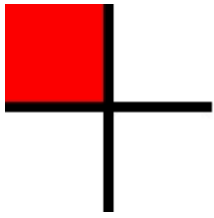
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Informated Identities and The Spread of the Word Virus

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abstract

This paper will focus on changes in the way people see themselves and the different practices emerging for constituting their subjectivity. These practices of subject formation will be examined through a number of different concepts. These concepts revolve around the ways in which our everyday practices and self conceptions are mediated by the new communications technologies. There is a utopian theme running through much that is written about the information revolution and its social and economic implications which begins with the work of McLuhan. This paper will attempt to expose the holes in this utopianism, with particular reference to the concept of identity. Castells' idea of 'project identities' that have arisen in protest against globalization will provide the starting point for the argument. From this point of departure other influences upon identity constitution within the information society will be explored including the concepts of informated identities, the incitement to discourse, the effects of the word virus, the rise of interactive docility and the champions of electronic utopias.

It has been claimed that psychoanalysis does not resolve problems but merely displaces them... We might say the same of technical and industrial progress. (Virilio, 2000: 37)

Compared with music all communication by words is shameless; words dilute and brutalize; words depersonalize; words make the uncommon common. (Nietzsche, 1968: 428)

Global Identities

Perhaps the information age could be said to have commenced with the following declaration from Joseph Goebbels: "He who knows everything fears nothing" (Virilio, 2000: 62). Over the last few decades a lot has been made of the transition from industrial society to a post-industrial information society. The first great treatise on this movement was Marshal McLuhan's *Understanding the Media*, where he predicted that, "Under electric technology the entire business of man becomes learning and knowing" (1964: 69). But it has taken three decades for this message to be properly received in organization theory and management studies. The effect of electronic communications on the way we see ourselves and others is of a profoundly different kind from previous technological revolutions. McLuhan located this difference in the fact that previous technologies tended to serve as extensions of the human body whereas the electronic

revolution was more like an extension of the central nervous system. Today there is a diverse range of cybernetic technologies which operate in this way including the Internet, mobile phones, CCTV, as well as more mundane business applications such as Electronic Point of Sale systems and SAP. The Economist Intelligence Unit forecasts that the Internet will radically transform the way businesses operate over the coming years, and much of its research is devoted to these changes (www.eiu.com). These changes are not simply confined to commerce but are being experienced in all sorts of social arenas. Castells (1997) believes that we are at the dawn of a new network society, and the RAND corporation is even talking of a revolution in warfare called 'information warfare' (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 1997).

Castells (1997) has proposed that the way people's identities are shaped are changing as a result of globalization and what he has termed 'informationalization'. He suggests that civil society serves less as a basis for identity construction because of the weakening powers of traditional social structures in an increasingly globalized world. For example, the institutions of the labour process and political process were very much a product of the first media age under modernity, but we are now undergoing changes in the post-industrial societies, with reduced union activity and falling numbers of voter during the electoral process. Instead, he suggests that old 'legitimizing identities' that formed the basis of civil society under modernity will be replaced by emerging 'project identities' which may form a new civil society under the new logic of globalization and the ever extending information networks. New cultural communes have been gaining popularity, which have developed hand in hand with globalization and have attempted to resist the power of globalization and uncontrolled informationalization (1997: 361). Amongst these he suggests are ecologists, feminists, religious fundamentalists, nationalists and localists. Ecological and feminist movements both provide opportunities for transforming the ways in which we see ourselves and the practices through which our identities are constructed. With the demise of patriarchal forms of organization, feminism may offer alternatives forms of familial relations and sexual identity. According to Castells, ecological movements are developing the idea that the world's peoples have a "new identity as a species" (1997: 127), which unites the species as under threat from ecological disaster. Castells' favourite group is probably the Zapatistas which he calls "the first informational guerrilla movement" (1997: 79). He likes this group not only for its support for some of the poorest most oppressed groups in Mexico, but for the way they harnessed the Internet itself to resist the effects of an oppressive global movement, NAFTA¹.

The Zapatistas are particularly interesting since this movement shows that the distinction between economic war and information war is now far from clear. An insightful discussion of the relation between information war and economic war can be found in Desmond's (1997) analysis of the function of marketing. He shows clearly how a masculine and militaristic discourse is involved in marketing, and suggests that

1 This form of warfare has proven particularly successful in Mexico where the Zapatista's leadership was able to address Mexico's parliament directly for the first time in March this year (*The Guardian*, March 29th 2001).

feminist theory may be particularly suitable for highlighting this tendency. However, he also warns that some recent developments in marketing which appear in feminine guise, such as relationship marketing, are really just a form of information warfare being waged against radically other feminist identities. For Desmond, marketing is a form of warfare, where “the mind of the consumer forms the territory on which the battle is waged” (1997: 344). Paul Virilio has argued that each new war is fought with the latest technologies available, which today are the new information technologies. What is unusual about these technologies is that they are already a fundamental part of the economic infrastructure of the big Western powers. Virilio cites the Multilateral European Agreement on Investment as part of an overall movement by the World Trade Organization to deregulate national sovereignties, where the deregulation of markets goes hand in hand with the deregulation of strategic information. So information war and economic war merge together, “since each involves the same hegemonic ambition of making commercial and military exchanges interactive” (Virilio, 2000: 144).

Informed Identities

One of the first theorists to write about how information was transforming modern society was Theodore Adorno writing about the cultural shifts which lead to World War II. Adorno’s understanding of the mass media was very much influenced by how the media operated to mobilize attitudes during the War, particularly in Germany. He stated that, “mass culture is an organized mania for connecting everything with everything else, a totality of public secrets. Everyone who is informed has his share in the secret, just as under National Socialism the privilege of esoteric blood-brotherhood was actually offered to everyone” (1991: 72). This mania for connecting everything to everything else has been taken to a new degree of intensity with the development of the Internet and the World Wide Web. And the shared secret has become a serious problem for governments who no longer have control over the public secrets and the nature of the groups to which one might belong. Governments express concern over the appearance of hate groups and criminal organizations on the web, but they are also rather keen on monitoring each and every citizen, by means such as the clipper chip and surveillance technologies installed within Internet Service Providers. This attitude is not just an expression of a centralized power but is clear in recent proposed legislation allowing employers to monitor employee emails. In this sense the power relations developing in the network society may be less centralized than in the more apparent hierarchical structures, but they still exist in more subtle and abstract forms (Munro, 2000).

One might say that in the information age we are becoming a society of informers and stool pigeons. This is exactly what Paul Virilio believes when he says that the information revolution is really a “revolution of generalized snooping” (2000: 62). William Burroughs says that in the age of information, informers are farmed like dairy cows, so swollen with information they have to be milked regularly (Burroughs, 1995). There is a strong economic argument for this, which has been stated over and over again in the management literature by the high priests of the knowledge society like Peter Drucker, and the gurus of knowledge management like Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995).

Now that knowledge has become such a valuable commodity we must not waste a drop of it, and if possible it should be stored up in huge vats for later use (cybernetic networks of people and computers). Several decades before the dawn of this information age Adorno offered this advice as both an observation and a warning, "Those who have been thoroughly informed lend themselves to thorough utilization" (1991: 72). Today, of course, this is not seen as a warning but has become a mantra for the information age. It is likely that we will not have a clear idea of what the truly informed individual will look like until the nascent revolution in biotechnology is fully underway.

'The Incitement to Discourse'

In his *History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault (1981) pointed out that rather than repressing discourse, power may also offer an 'incitement to discourse'. Power can be repressive, it may operate through censorship, but before this it is also productive. The example he examines in his book is the confessional, a model which appears in a number of different social relationships, such as between priest and sinner, judge and criminal, parent and child, doctor and patient. However, this incitement to discourse may also be in other forms, and has taken on a very specific form with this new age of communication technologies. Perhaps it is best summed up in British Telecom's old advertizing slogan: 'It's good to talk.' Here talking has become a good in itself, the categorical imperative for the information society. Even back in the 60s McLuhan noted this increasing power of the language of the marketplace in the electronic media, "Marketing and consumption tend to become one with learning, enlightenment and the intake of information" (1964: 373). It is also clearly in operation in the Internet, much of which is becoming sponsored by advertizing. Communication and commerce are becoming ever more tightly bound together².

One of the most interesting ideas to appear on the Internet in the year 2000 was the notion of the 'ideavirus' developed by marketing executive Seth Godin. Godin argues that crazes for products mirror the behaviour of diseases, especially venereal disease in the ways that they are spread by a promiscuous and energetic few. Once the ideavirus has taken hold in a small population it can then grow exponentially. To demonstrate his point, Godin released his book, *Unleashing the Ideavirus*, free on the Web, and within a few months of appearing in August 2000 it had been downloaded by over a million people (*The Observer*, 26 November 2000). Godin believes that traditional advertizing will disappear as the new media takes over and that word-of-mouth recommendations through the new media will replace this. Examples of this kind of marketing can already be seen in websites devoted entirely to reviewer's comments and Amazon which ranks its reviewers as well as its products. The ideavirus is really just a technological variation

2 Perelman (1998) has also cited an abundance of evidence to show that advertizers frequently exert influence over newspaper editors with regard to the stories being run by their paper. This especially concerns the censorship of stories that might reflect negatively on the corporation's activities.

of traditional word-of-mouth marketing, but this is greatly amplified by the power of new communications networks. In this new kind of marketing it will be important to identify the 'sneezers' who spread the word virus, and fertile places for the spread of contagion, such as schools or student unions (mirroring real viruses). Of course, Godin's approach is market orientated clap trap, but it is a significant innovation in the commodification of communication.

The Word Virus

"The word is a virus", said Burroughs (1986) and now it has found new means of spreading. According to Burroughs the word shares the same identifying feature of the virus, "it is an organism with no internal function other than to replicate itself" (1986: 47). Historically, there has always been a close relationship between disease and language, the ancient cultures of what is now Latin America were destroyed as much by the alien language which infected their culture as by the alien viruses the Conquistadors brought across the Atlantic with them. Burroughs claimed that, "The word itself may be a virus that has achieved a permanent status with the host" (1979: 141). Words are not merely interpreted by us, but have a direct physiological impact on us ('What do you think you're doing Iain?', 'Do what you're told Iain', 'You failed to qualify Iain', 'You passed Iain', 'Fuck you Iain', 'You're fired Iain', 'I love you Iain'...). They can make us sick, and weaken our immune systems. They are also contagious, the use of slogans being an obvious example, which has for many years been common knowledge amongst politicians and advertizing executives.

Nietzsche's (1994) genealogical studies of language are remarkably close to Burroughs on this point. Nietzsche attempted to show that there is a necessary relationship between training the body and the production of knowledge, the body must be made passive and sickly before it will be receptive to the absorption of knowledge. Even the self exists partly as a linguistic convention, 'I', and partly as a physical inscription through punishment³. It is the body that gets punished and made sick on behalf of the grammatical 'I'. So the host body must be made passive and sickly before the parasitic 'I' can thrive within it and further propagate itself.

Modern information technology has intensified the power of the word virus, it is spreading like never before, particularly the US English variant. A paradigmatic demonstration of this power was the spread of the 'I love you virus' last year. This virus was probably the most effective and damaging virus to infect the Internet since its inception. It has been estimated that it destroyed data on about 45 million computers worldwide, causing computer downtime the total cost of which is incalculable but may

3 It is true that the grammatical 'I' functions on a purely indexical level as simply the subject of an action or statement. However, the material reality to which this refers has no fixed or necessary content. Nietzsche's studies expose the historical practices which have lead to certain contemporary moralistic and legalistic understandings of identity.

have run into the \$100 millions (Stateman, 2000). This virus was particularly successful, not only because of its code, but because of the mechanism by which it spread, 'I love you'. This kind of virus, known as a 'worm', has many variants which depend largely upon the power of their name for their effect. Common names include, 'I LOVE YOU', 'Joke', 'Mothers Day Order Confirmation', 'Dangerous Virus Warning', 'Virus Alert', 'Important! Read carefully!' Dressed as good ideas, they know how to market themselves. They literally command you to open them and thereby become contaminated⁴.

Interactive Docility

Mark Poster believes that the new technologies provide new opportunities for self development because of the increased levels of interactivity they allow. In his words: "Subject constitution in the second media age occurs through the mechanism of interactivity" (1995: 88). One might add that interactivity is an essential feature of subject constitution in any era, but that the nature of this interactivity changes. The first media age concerned one-way broadcasts such as newspapers, radio and television (the telephone was exceptional as a 2-way channel), whereas the second media age has led to a proliferation of lateral communications. However, one of the most striking features of the information revolution is its effect of massively amplifying mundane experiences. Anyone who doubts this need only sit for an hour on a train, and listen to the number of times such phrases as 'I'm on the train now' are spoken, a phrase rarely to be heard in the pre-mobile phone era. Perhaps it is the effect of all that battery radiation on the brain, though I suspect it is a feature of what Nietzsche termed the herd mentality. The absolute quintessence of this vacuity is to be found in an advert for a well known kind of beer, where a group of friends get in touch with each other by mobile calling to each other 'wassupp?' extended *ad nauseam*, rather than engaging in any real conversation. What such examples highlight is the nature of interaction that is encouraged by modern information technologies, which might best be termed 'interactive docility'. McLuhan observed this phenomena at the very beginning of the information revolution, stating that "electromagnetic technology requires utter human docility and quiescence of mediation such as benefits an organism that now wears its brain outside its skull and its nerves outside its hide. Man must serve his electric technology" (1964: 68). McLuhan's understanding of technology was heavily inspired by Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, which conceived of mankind quite literally as the reproductive organs for machines.

The nature of this kind of interactive docility is to cut off creative activity. Indeed, this is a driving force behind the current cybernetic revolution. Cybernetics is a revolution in

4 Some years ago, before the Internet took off, Roland Barthes wrote a book of 'image repertoires' on the effect of the lover's discourse, and it could be argued that the virus would make a powerful new addition to this repertoire. In *A Lover's Discourse*, Barthes writes about the informer who furnishes the amorous subject with information about the loved being, he passes on these messages "like a disease" (1979: 139).

feedback and adaptation, at the expense of experiment and creation. Paul Virilio describes the consequences of the communications revolution in the following terms: “every time we introduce a higher speed we discredit the value of an action, alienating our power to act for the sake of our power to react, which is another, less elevated name for what we currently term ‘interaction’” (2000: 123). The most obvious example is that we have reduced the need for movement or travel which is, of course, the whole point of information technology. Recent examples where instant reactivity has been introduced into society include technologies such as Just In Time (JIT) management and Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) software. One might also consider the management of consumers whereby loyalty cards and store cards integrate consumers more closely into the organization (they supply demand, as it were). Credit cards also provide this service with the mediation of banks and it is quite possible that it will not be long before cash completely disappears in favour of the more cybernetically adaptive credit cards. McLuhan was prescient yet again when he predicted the threat of the new technology to our concept of money (1964: 150), but whereas he foresaw a Star Trek like Utopia where money is no longer necessary, what has happened is an increasing cybernetic integration of money into our way of life.

The Electronic Babel

Poster has emphasized the emancipatory potential of new information technologies like the Internet. He believes that, “the Internet seems to encourage the proliferation of stories, local narratives without any totalizing gestures and it places senders and addressees in symmetrical relations” (1995: 92). This may be true to a limited extent, but it appears to ignore the wider processes of globalization and standardization which make it possible. McLuhan had made a similar claim for the emancipatory potential of the new technology stating that computers should allow instant translation between different codes or languages and that, “The computer, in short, promises by technology a Pentecostal condition of universal understanding and unity” (1964: 90). McLuhan envisaged a new era of collective harmony and peace arising naturally from these technological developments. But, what we know now with the emergence of the Internet is that things are not translated from any language into any other, but from any language into US English. In fact, they are often not even translated by computer at all since US English has become the language of globalization, commerce and the Internet. Last year English was spoken for the first time by more people as a second language than by native English speakers.

A report on globalization by British Telecom is very revealing in this respect. This report shows how languages are fast disappearing, being replaced instead by the language of commerce. This is also another sign of increasing standardization, or as Nietzsche wrote, “words making the uncommon common” (1968: 428). BT is clearly concerned about the effects of globalization as suggested by research posted on its own website: “...up to half of the (approximately) 6,500 languages now spoken are already endangered or on the brink of extinction, and linguists estimate that a language dies somewhere in the world every two weeks. Much of the remaining linguistic diversity is carried by small communities of indigenous and minority people. In fact, some predict

that we may lose over 90 per cent of the world's languages during the next century. Already, more than a quarter of the world's population – 1.7 billion people – now speak English” (www.bt.com/world/sus_dev/).

This section of BT's report concludes by stating somewhat blandly that, “The negative aspects of cultural imperialism and intolerance could be replaced with an understanding of our world-wide impacts and intrinsic inter-linkages, which are underpinned by our own cultural uniqueness.” Everything in this conclusion seems to rest on the word ‘could’, which perhaps *could* have been put in bold typeface given its highly speculative nature. It also shows that although concerned, BT believes that the benefits outweigh the costs, with little need to do anything further about the matter. One might be tempted to suggest that this perspective is a little coloured by the nature of its business. The English word virus triumphs, contaminating more hosts than any other variant. It's good to talk - in English.

This thesis may be seen as an updated argument of what George Orwell (1949) termed ‘Newspeak’, a fictional form of the English language in which certain words were changed or removed to facilitate thought control. In this book the citizens of the totalitarian state of Ingsoc were given an impoverished vocabulary with which to speak and were bombarded instead with slogans such as, “War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength”. But whereas Orwell's Newspeak was imposed by a centralized socialist government, the spread of US English is a function of both the success of US information technology and the marketing methods of the huge capitalist enterprises which sell and use these technologies. Whereas the fictional Newspeak reduced the richness of language for expressly political purposes, the actual spread of US English and the subsequent disappearance of cultural diversity is being rationalized in economic terms, where ‘freedom is the free market’.

E-topia: Electronic Utopias

There is a strong Utopian theme underlying much of what is written about the information age which is present in works as diverse as Drucker, Zuboff, Poster and McLuhan⁵. McLuhan is probably the clearest in outlining this utopian message and it is in this work that the problems of this message are most apparent. Back in the early 1960s McLuhan believed that the new electronic media presented a serious challenge to the traditional hierarchies present in our societies. He stated that, “In an electric structure there are, so far as the time and space of this planet are concerned, no margins.

5 It may be interesting to note that one of the founding fathers of modern cybernetics, Norbert Wiener, was somewhat ambiguous as to the uses of his theories. When writing about the second industrial revolution in electronic communication back in 1949 he stated the following problem: “In the long run, the deadly uninteresting nature of the repetitive task may make this [revolution] a good thing, and the source of the leisure which is necessary for the full cultural development of man on all sides. It may also produce cultural results as trivial and wasteful as the greater part of those so far obtained from the radio and the movies” (1950: 188).

There can, therefore, be dialogue only among centres and among equals” (1964: 291). McLuhan noted that the development of the telephone was the most powerful technology which challenged existing hierarchical structures at the workplace. The power of such lateral communication technologies lauded by McLuhan has recently been greatly intensified with the development of mobile phones and email. This argument is especially interesting when considering recent discussions of panoptic control in sociological books and journals, since McLuhan is suggesting that there is already a movement away from hierarchical observation and control which was such a dominant feature of the panoptic technologies in the Nineteenth Century. The fact is, however, that McLuhan was wildly utopian in his desire to see a technological liberation of mankind. This is attested to by recent legislation in the UK which will make it legal for employers to monitor their employees’ emails (The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Bill). Anyone who has been given a mobile phone by their company or has worked in a call centre will know that the hierarchies have reasserted their power quite successfully by appropriating these new technologies. In fact, hierarchies may be seen in even the most horizontal and democratic communications. Elias Canetti (1973), for example, points out that in any dialogue there is an interrogator who requires a reply from the person being interrogated, which is a hierarchical relation even if it is mutually consensual. Hierarchies re-establish themselves within networks through issues of access, the use of passwords and concerns over security and encryption.

There may be a sense in which knowledge work has done away with the old division of labour and leaves man free to develop his full potential. This argument has been made quite forcefully by both McLuhan and, more recently, Zuboff. Zuboff has argued that in the informed organization, “Earlier distinctions between white and blue “collars” collapse” (1988: 393). The new type of work “requires more extensive participation of the human personality” (1988: 401), which takes more account of a person’s emotions. Despite highlighting such positive aspects of the informed organization Zuboff does not build an entirely utopian picture of the future and suggests that management might attempt to reassert their hierarchical controls. McLuhan was far less bashful in this respect, announcing nothing less than the total spiritual transformation of humanity (1964: 72). McLuhan argued that, “Where the whole man is involved there is no work. Work begins with the division of labour and the specialization of functions and tasks... In the electric age the ‘job of work’ yields to dedication and commitment, as in the tribe” (1964: 149). The information age, therefore, heralds a new era of communal living reminiscent of pre-industrial tribal societies.

What these accounts fail to grasp, however, is the true nature of the division of labour and the alienation of the worker. Even in the information society the worker labours in order to get money so that s/he may meet his or her needs (though these be socially produced). The value of his or her labour is not equivalent to the value of the product of this labour since the latter is largely made up of surplus value which is absorbed by the capitalist. Note also that under the commodity relation the worker is alienated from the product of his or her labour (Marx, 1976: 716). Therefore s/he confronts the product of his or her labour as a commodity, as exchange value for a given quantity of congealed labour time, where the qualitative experience of this relationship is that of alienation. The commodity is something useful to them only to exchange, “For the owner, his

commodity posses no direct use value. Otherwise he would not bring it to market” (Marx, 1976: 179). Zuboff explicitly states this in her discussion of knowledge: “The informed organization is a learning institution, and one of its principal purposes is the expansion of knowledge- not knowledge for its own sake (as in academic pursuit), but knowledge that comes to reside at the core of what it means to be productive” (1988, 395). A few pages later she is more forthcoming about exactly what she means by productive and value-adding knowledge: “cost, efficiency, quality, product development, customer service” (1988: 398). Here knowledge is defined purely in terms of useful, commodified knowledge, and productivity is defined purely in terms of the production of commodities, or exchange values. What Zuboff is describing when she discusses the new worker is nothing less the totally alienated worker, alienated even from his or her own thought and knowledge.

The concept of the commodity and that of information share many important similarities. For example, neither information nor the commodity can be defined simply in terms of being physical objects. Information may be defined as being abstracted from the physical world as a pattern underlying the order of that world (Wiener, 1950). Likewise, the commodity cannot be explained in terms of the material dimension of a product but in terms of a fetish, the crystallisation of so much labour power (Marx, 1976: 187). The commodity and information both lack a certain physical or corporeal quality, as Marx explained, “as soon as it [an object] emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness” (1976: 163). Another important commonality between information and the commodity is that both serve as a focal point of exchange. Wiener understands information in terms of energetic exchange when he adapts the second law of thermodynamics to say that information is actually exchanged with our environment as part of a process of entropic decay (1950: 22). Marx, on the other hand, defines the commodity as the basis for all economic exchange under capitalism when he states that the commodity is characterized by the amount of labour power (human energy) crystallised within it.

Despite these similarities Wiener believed that information was not a suitable basis for a commodity since, like entropy, information is not conserved when it is transmitted (1950: 129). Information differentiates itself as a commodity in that it has a certain nomadic quality, whereby it can move very rapidly between parties and when it is exchanged both parties may then possess it (this implies increasing entropy, as Wiener noted). Many of the problems surrounding the information society concern the attempts to domesticate information and knowledge, by means of security, passwords and access codes, encryption, intellectual property rights and so on. This is precisely the purpose of current management fads such as Knowledge Management, which pursues the domestication of hidden tacit knowledge. Certain contradictions are inherent within information economies most notable of which is the proliferation of barriers to the sharing of information (Perelman, 1998). Information is not a scarce resource in the usual economic sense because when exchanged, it need not leave the possession of the original owner. To compensate for this, an increased level of secrecy and the deployment of intellectual copyrights are being used to create an artificial scarcity in the market for information. Is it not ironic that the information age has witnessed such a sharp rise in the prices of academic journals? These trends are in stark contrast to McLuhan’s early hopes for the information age where, “Men are suddenly nomadic

gatherers of knowledge, nomadic as never before, informed as never before..." (1964: 381). In fact, the informed man has been domesticated like never before, although knowledge itself may be becoming nomadic like never before, hence the great efforts being made to make it visible, immobile and easily stored.

The Multiplication of Channels: the Information War Machine

This paper has shown how communication today tends to be seen as a good in itself, and has attempted to take issue with this view, particularly in terms of the loss of linguistic and cultural diversity and the increasing power of the market over our communication channels. This process of cultural homogenization and knowledge management can be summarized in terms of the different themes that were discussed above:

- The emergence of *project identities* to resist certain features of globalization.
- The increasing development of *informed identities*, which lend themselves fully to utilization as part of the forces of production in the more intensive information societies.
- The *incitement to discourse*, where communication is seen as a good in itself, and the medium of communication is increasingly subject to commodification.
- The *word virus*, especially the US English variant which, as the language of commerce, dominates the Internet to say nothing of international relations.
- *Interactive docility*, whereby human interaction is increasingly mediated by information technologies which integrate such interactions more fully within a cybernetic network of instant feedback and purely reactive adaptation.
- *Electronic Utopias*, which are peddled by the ideologues of the information age such as McLuhan, Drucker, Zuboff, and Nonaka and Takeuchi. These ideologues tend to hail the disappearance of hierarchies and expound the rise of the network organization, with scant thought given to the appearance of new more intrusive hierarchies (eg. the information rich, versus the information poor), and the reassertion of the divisions of labour in new forms (eg. call centres).

In all these cases, however, there is also the possibility for resistance to power and novel means of identity constitution. The technologies which have led to the commodification of communication have also seen the rise of new forms of resistance to such commodification. Take, for instance, Linux and the development of GNU copyleft for this software. This new form of copyright ensures that any programme under such a copyright must be passed on free of charge to its users and that any further modifications to such software are also subject to this form of copyright. The discussion of Castells' work at the beginning of this paper also mentioned a number of 'project identities' such as the Zapatista rebels in Mexico and the world wide ecological movement which emerged in response to some of the excesses of globalization. A

myriad of groups are emerging that use the new media to orchestrate their movements, including groups as diverse as fuel protestors in the UK, the Slow Food Society in Italy (www.slowfood.com), Greenpeace International (www.greenpeace.org), Adbusters (www.adbusters.org) and so on. The extent to which these movements are effective vehicles for resistance in the face of global capitalism is contentious and will continue to be a matter for debate, what is undeniable however, is their effect in mobilizing previously untapped energies and creating novel identities as they do so.

Our identity is not given to us fully formed, but evolves through techniques of mnemonics, the mastery of language and our relationships with other people (Nietzsche, 1994). With each relationship there is an opportunity to develop a different aspect of the self, and in this sense the self is an ongoing project and very much a kind of virtual phenomenon. Stone has noted that the idea of a virtual self is not so alien as might be supposed since, "...we all change personae all the time to suit the social occasion, although with online personae the act is more powerful" (1992: 612). Nietzsche called man a "many souled animal" (1990: 47). The unconscious is comprised of various forces and passions, some dominating and others dominated, some active and creative and others reactive and turned in on themselves. The great genius of the human animal has been as an inventor of masks, where there is no true mask lying deep down orchestrating the others. Belief in one mask is merely dogma and idleness, cutting off the creative powers of the body ('one' being composed of many, but speaking as one or 'I'). It is no longer enough to be sincere (*sine cera* – without a mask). In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the foolish Polonius condemns his own son to a bloody death with the advice "This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the day the night, Thou canst not then be false to any man." But it need not follow and the logic of his advice leads to his own undoing and later the death of his obedient son. The wily Odysseus provides a better model. When the blinded Cyclopes asks who wounded him so viciously, Odysseus hides behind the anonymity of his name calling after him "nobody did it" (the word for 'nobody' is almost identical to the name 'Odysseus' in the Greek)⁶. The use of masks and the development of virtual personae can be seen in terms of an aesthetic, but this is not the same project that is driving the evolution of the Internet and other communication technologies.

So how can one avoid the worst of cultural homogenization and the dangers of what Nick Land (1995) has termed 'cyber psychosis'? There has been a limited recognition of the problem of protecting a person's identity on an institutional level, as manifested in concerns for the privacy of the individual and the formulation of data protection policies by both corporations and governments (Arge, 1999). Deleuze (1995) has suggested that resistance in the information age will likely take the form of gaps in the networks of communication, the ability to remain hidden and unrecorded. Of course, this can have severe penalties associated with being cut off from the consumer culture and the privileges of the information society. The pleasures offered to us by modern technology form habits which are very difficult to break. This is the price paid by

6 A contemporary example of such an anonymous hero might be Subcommandante Marcos, the spokesperson for the Zapatista rebels in Mexico.

nomads, being weak they must drop what they are doing and run with what they can carry, with luck their aggressors will perish in the act of pursuit.

The closing passage of Foucault's first book on sexuality show us that the idea of a liberated identity is extremely problematic (Foucault, 1981). The practices through which the individual emerged historically did not have liberation as their end. There is, however, the possibility that the self can become an aesthetic project independent from other normalizing influences involved in the construction of identity. As a question of technology Foucault said what is needed is "a differentiation of communication networks" in order to overcome the unifying and normalizing powers of our institutions (1988: 328). It could be argued that the proliferation of lateral communications does promote such differentiation, but this paper has attempted to highlight the possibility that such identity constitution has been increasingly domesticated by such technological commodification. To continue the viral metaphor proposed by Burroughs, perhaps it is a matter of cultivating your own local variants of the word virus, and developing methods of inoculation against infection from other more global strains.

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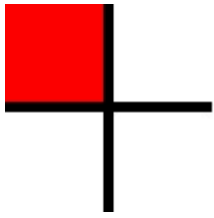
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010501

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abstract

Mayday. Mayflies. Dialectical images. (Non-)organisation. Protest. Anti-globalisation. Movement. Anti-xxx. Green. Red. White. Non-colours. Diversity. History. Politics. (Neo-)liberal vs. radical democracy. Future. Hope. (Non-)violence. Global corporations. Notes from the streets. Boredom. Tiredness. Pessimism. Global action. Method of this project: literary montage. I needn't *say* anything. Merely show. I shall purloin no valuables, appropriate no ingenious formulations. But the rags, the refuse – these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them.¹ Quotes without quotations marks. Every text is a bricolage. The citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without inverted commas.² The author is only a guest in his own text. Benjamin's *Arcades Project* as inspiration. Literary montage as political action. From a critical distance. Theory as practice. No authoritative commentary. Give voice to a multiplicity. Absence of a single centre. Articulation of plural elements.

Someone must have traduced Joseph K., for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning.³

Mayday, London, 2001: At least 65 people were arrested, including a 15-year-old boy, and up to 30 were taken to hospital. Among those arrested were people from Denmark, Poland, Belgium and the US.⁴

Scene from the July Revolution. A woman donned men's clothing to fight alongside the others, and then afterward, as woman again, nursed the wounded who were lodged in the Stock Exchange.⁵

1 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 460 (emphasis in original).

2 Barthes, R. (1977) *Image – Music – Text*, transl. Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 160 (emphasis in original).

3 Franz Kafka (1935) *The Trial*. London: Martin Secker & Warburg, 3.

4 *Epolitix.com*, 2 May 2001, 10:30 AM.

5 C.F. Tricotel, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 713.

Around 3000 protesters were engaged in running skirmishes with police in London's Oxford Street as they slowly dispersed late on Tuesday night. ... London escaped with only minor damage as police hailed their operation, which had involved around 6000 officers, as a complete success ... Damage was largely caused by protestors leaving both ends of Oxford Street - mainly centred on Tottenham Court Road where 20 windows were smashed. The rioters also attempted to set fire to the Tesco store in nearby Goodge Street while terrified staff were trapped inside. By the end of the day the body of protestors had been reduced to a hardcore of trouble-makers consisting of anarchists and the criminal elements that operate in the West End. The total cost for the day's mayhem has been estimated to be at around £20 million in lost trade, damage and police wages. Home Secretary Jack Straw praised the work of the Metropolitan Police in dealing with the rioters. "I congratulate all the police officers involved in the policing of yesterday's demonstrations in central London..." Straw said. The London mayor, Ken Livingstone, said: "The police have put in an excellent effort ... The best protest is a massive peaceful demonstration. I hope that in the future people will contact us to talk about where they want to go and what they want to do."⁶

The prime minister, Tony Blair, has praised the Metropolitan Police's handling of May Day protests as dozens of protesters plan to sue the police for false imprisonment. The Mail claims that firms of solicitors are queuing up to cash in on civil liberties claims by protestors - with solicitors turning up at one of the police stations holding people arrested in the riots to offer their legal services.⁷

In the dialectical image, what has been within a particular epoch is always, simultaneously, 'what has been from time immemorial.' As such, however, it is manifest, on each occasion, only to a quite specific epoch - namely, the one in which humanity, rubbing its eyes, recognizes just this particular dream image as such. It is at this moment that the historian takes up, with regard to that image, the task of dream interpretation.⁸

"The organisers will not negotiate with the police, won't even contact them about the route they want," [Livingston] said. "For them the objective is the scenes of mayhem we saw last year. Now last year a lot of innocent people got caught up in that." Mr Livingstone expressed the hope that the numbers of demonstrators would remain low so the police could "concentrate on trying to identify the ringleaders who all got away last year". And he warned protesters that they would alienate people from the causes they were seeking to publicise. Mr Benn, who is retiring from parliament to go, as he put it, into politics, said that he supported past anti-capitalism demonstrations in Seattle because "they were warnings and something very good". "Every single progressive movement in history has been denounced as violent," he told GMTV. However he said

6 *Epolitix.com*, 2 May 2001, 10:30 AM.

7 *Epolitix.com*, 3 May 2001, 07:17 AM.

8 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 464

that he accepted that any violence would distract people from the anti-capitalist cause he refused to denounce the protest.⁹

It is necessary...to broaden the domain of the exercise of democratic rights beyond the limited traditional field of 'citizenship'. As regards the extension of democratic rights from the classic 'political' domain to that of the economy, this is the terrain of the specifically anti-capitalist struggle. Against those champions of economic liberalism who affirm that the economy is the domain of the 'private', the seat of natural rights, and that the criteria of democracy have no reason to be applied within it, social theory defends the right of the social agent to equality and to participation as a producer and not only as a citizen.¹⁰

London mayor, Ken Livingstone, formerly known as "Red Ken" and a once a "champion of direct action", has been branded as a "a class traitor who must be taught a lesson" by anarchist May day militants angry at his support of the "zero tolerance" policing planned for anti-capitalist demonstrations.¹¹

British "ant-capitalist" activists said to be planning disruptive May day demonstrations in London have been trained in US camps supported by the Body Shop's Anita Roddick.¹²

07:30 Marylebone Station & Liverpool Street Station Critical Mass Bike Ride.

09:30 King's Cross Station: Giant Veggie Burger Giveaway: Meet at McDonalds at Kings Cross, corner of York Way.

10:00 Victoria Embankment Gardens: Peacenik in the Park: This is an autonomous event with no agenda.

11:00 / 12:00 Speaker's Corner, Hyde Park: Building Hotels on Mayfair. Ever wanted to build a hotel on Mayfair? Now's your chance.

12:00 Outside ULU, Malet Street Action Against Fees: Meet outside the University of London Union at noon to protest against Student Fees.

12:00 Trafalgar Square: Feed The Birds. Mayday is the first day the birds are no longer being fed by the GLA.

12.00 Break the bank! Picket Coutts bank, the bank of Royalty and the seriously rich.

12.00-14.00 South London Mayday action against capitalism! To highlight the absurdity of the system we are organising an action in the form of a game.

13:00 44 West Cromwell St, (north of Earls' Court Tube): Protest against 'hoteliers' Accommodata Limited, profiteer contractors to the Home Office in 'housing' refugees.

13.00 A Beltane Celebration: with the Dionysian Underground and others.

13.00 Angel Crossroads: Protest Peacefully to Protect the Planet.

9 *BBC*, 29 April 2001, 12:08 PM.

10 Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso, 185.

11 *Epolitix.com*, 20 April 2001, 07:13 AM.

12 *Epolitix.com*, 19 April 2001, 07:34 AM.

14:00 HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Road, N7: Go directly to jail and show your solidarity with prisoners.

14:00 The World Bank offices, New Zealand, corner of Pall Mall & Haymarket: Street Theatre and protest to highlight Debt Issues.

14:00 Philip Hockley Furs, 20 Conduit Street, W1: Action Against the Fur Trade.

16:00 Oxford Street, Sale of the Century: Read the leaflet once it's distributed and watch out for the signal around 4pm; that's all we can say at this point!¹³

It is really imperative that we understand, in precisely its polemical bearing, the apotheosis of organization and of rationalism which the Communist party has to promote unceasingly in the face of feudal and hierarchical powers, and that we be clear about the fact that the movement itself comprehends mystical elements as well, although of an entirely different sort. It is even more important, naturally, not to confuse these mystical elements, which pertain to corporality, with religious elements.¹⁴

Organization of the state workshops by Thomas. 'It suffices to mention that Emile Thomas divided the workers into brigades and companies, and that their chiefs were elected by universal suffrage of the workers. Every company had its flag, and Emile Thomas made use, for this organization, of other civil engineers and of students from the Ecole Polytechnique, who, through their youth, exerted a moral influence on the workers. ... The national workshops before long became ... the gathering place for all sorts of vagabonds and idlers, whose labor consisted exclusively in marching through the streets with their standard bearers, here and there mending the pavement or turning up earth, but on the whole – singing and shouting, ragtag and unruly – doing whatever came into their head. ... One day, there suddenly appeared on the scene 600 actors, painters, artists, and agents, who together announced that, since the republic was guaranteeing work to all citizens, they too were putting forward their claim. Thomas made them inspectors.' ... 'Neither the mayors not the police commissioners, who had to sign the certificates attesting to the bearers' eligibility to work in Paris, could maintain the slightest control in view of the threats circulating against them. In their anxiety, they even gave certificates to ten-year-old children, who, with these in hand, presented themselves for admission to the national workshops.'¹⁵

From: Genoseize Therat
Date: Mon Apr 30, 2001 7:45 am
Subject: see you on the streets!

13 Organization of the Mayday protests in London: www.maydaymonopoly.net

14 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 699.

15 Sigmund Engländer, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 701.

Well this is the last chance I'll get to post til after Mayday, so best of luck everyone. Keep a cool head, remember what you are fighting for and let it inspire you in your struggles.¹⁶

'Street warfare today has its own technique; it was perfected, after the armed takeover of Munich, in a curious little confidential work published with great secrecy by the government in Berlin. One no longer advances through the streets; they are left empty. A path is opened within the interiors of houses, by breaking through walls. As soon as one has taken a street, one organizes it; lines of communication are laid through the holes in the walls, while, to prevent the return of the adversary, one immediately mines the conquered ground. ...Perhaps the clearest sign of progress, here, is that one need not concern oneself at all with sparing houses or lives. Compared with civil wars of the future, the episode of the Rue Transnonain will seem quite ... innocent and archaic.'¹⁷

Nine people have appeared in court in connection with Tuesday's anti-capitalism protests in central London. Six who were accused of violent disorder were remanded in custody by Horseferry Road Magistrates Court until May 10. The other three defendants were remanded on bail. One was accused of drugs possession. Another faced two charges of violent disorder and criminal damage. A woman had her case of violent disorder adjourned until June 14. Yesterday, 13 people appeared before Bow Street Magistrates Court in connection with the protest.¹⁸

Faure Perez, 21, of Forest Hill, south-east London, was fined £100 with £50 costs for failing to remove a cyclist's mask when challenged as he protested in Trafalgar Square. The police can demand that people remove masks under the Public Order Act. Brian Kennedy, defending, said: "He asked for proof that the provision existed and was not given any... There were photographers around and if there was trouble he didn't want to be pictured in the papers because people might think he had caused the trouble." But magistrate Christopher Pratt said: "You were wearing the mask to conceal your identity and that's the reason why police wanted you to remove the mask." Nicholas Gray, 32, of Southwark, south-east London, was remanded on bail to June 20 after pleading not guilty to failing to remove his cap and sunglasses. Peter Zephar, 28, of Shepherd's Bush, west London, and Godson Chigbu, 33, of Lambeth, south London, were both remanded on bail to June 19 after they denied assaulting police officers. Chigbu shouted: "Power to the people" as he left the court.¹⁹

Once again the cops proved brutal as they bashed their shields and batons against unprotected people. Then the horses were brought forward to further intimidate and

16 Email message posted to the mayday monopoly discussion group at groups.yahoo.com/group/mayday-monopoly.

17 Dubech and d'Espezel, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 700.

18 *Ananova*, 3 May 2001, 04:35 PM.

19 *The Guardian*, 3 May 2001, 2001.

scare the people. They continued to push until nearly half the intersection was ours. But not for long. The cops countered with a brutal and cruel push of their own, swinging repeatedly with their batons and jabbing people with their shields and forcing their horses to move forward nearly trampling many of the people. Further pushes were attempted to retake the intersection, but all unsuccessful. Before long, people began to realize that cops had blocked off the north end of Holles St. by Cavendish Sq. thus trapping us on Holles St. People turned and marched to the north end and attempted to push there, but again, unsuccessfully. So there we were, penned in around 4:30-4:45pm... until 7:45pm. Skirmishes broke out as people tried to force their way through the lines, but the cops wouldn't have it. Bottles were hurled along with whatever else people had in hand, from sticks to cop hats. Spraypaint cans were emptied on the walls and storefronts. People danced to the samba band. Demonstrators climbed to the tops of the store awnings and danced and displayed various items from bus stop signs to a cop jacket with the words 'fuck the pigs' spraypainted on it. A window was smashed on a storefront on the northwest end of the street amidst cheers and the cops quickly moved in front of it so as to form a u-shape with their line. A CCTV camera on one of the awnings was kicked repeatedly until it dangled by its wires and then, insistent on destroying the camera altogether and encouraged by the crowd, a man dangled from the wires with hopes of ripping it out. This attempt failed. Someone atop the awning pulled out a lighter and tried to burn the wire but this failed as well. Handed a knife, he cut through the wire as sparks flew and successfully detached the camera as the crowd erupted in celebration. The camera was then thrown off the awning with hopes of busting it. Also thrown off were large metal plates from atop the awning. Someone then continuously threw the CCTV camera at the storefront window but it wouldn't shatter. Police, upon seeing this and hearing the crowd react in celebration, moved in and sealed off the whole western sidewalk of Holles St. Soon, the intersection was surrounded and full of around 500 people, and somebody in the crowd was yelling "sit down! Sit down! They won't hurt us if we sit down!" Most people sat down. After about half an hour, one line of police started moving backward, and the other forward, and started herding us along, until we got to the corner of Great Titchfield Street, where they stopped for a while. They seemed acutely aware that everyone knew that it was a feeble excuse to temporarily imprison us without good cause.²⁰

Episode of the February Revolution. On the twenty-third, at eleven o'clock in the evening, a fusillade on the Boulevard des Capucines: twenty-three dead. 'The corpses are immediately paraded through the streets in a masterly, romantic *mise en scène*. ... From time to time another worker, positioned behind the cart, raises this lifeless body with a muscular arm and – his torch all the while emitting sparks and flakes of fire – casts his savage gaze over the crowd, shouting, 'Vengeance! Vengeance! They are slaughtering the people!' 'To Arms!' respond some voices; and the corpse falls back into the bottom of the cart, which continues on its way.'²¹

20 How Earle Martin experienced the Mayday protest in London: www.maydaymonopoly.net

21 Cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 699.

Trades unionists for a real May Day: We, activists who have worked within the framework of the “official” trade union and labour movement for many years, declare solidarity with the “globalise resistance” demonstration outside the World Bank offices and other “May Day Monopoly” events. We share the organisers’ aim of “reclaiming May Day as a day of celebration for all those struggling against capitalism and globalisation”. We support the demonstrators against the fantastic frenzy of aggression being whipped up by the police, much of the media and the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone. The announcement of a “zero tolerance” policing policy and a campaign of preventive arrests is a brazen abuse of civil liberties. Livingstone’s call in his Evening Standard article (23.4.01) for police to arrest anyone “whose intention it is to engage in criminal activities” (how will they be selected?!) is shameful. It is an incitement to officers who have no sympathy for progressive causes to abuse the powers given them by Labour’s dictatorial Criminal Justice Act – as Livingstone knows perfectly well. The publication of photographs of people “suspected” by police of “intending” to cause violence – by newspapers with a pathetic or non-existent record of exposing capitalism’s monstrous, daily destruction of people and environment – is witch-hunting, not journalism. The establishment’s paranoid reaction to the movement against global capitalism, and the indifference or hostility of most “official” labour organisations, is symptomatic. Instead of embracing the passionate enthusiasm with which a new generation are confronting the evils of an immoral society, they shudder in fear. We welcome that enthusiasm with open arms.²²

The people’s flag is deepest red,
It shrouded oft our martyred dead,
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
Their hearts blood dyed its every fold.
Then raise the scarlet standard high. (chorus)
Within its shade we’ll live and die,
Though cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
We’ll keep the red flag flying here.
 Look round, the Frenchman loves its blaze,
 The sturdy German chants its praise,
 In Moscow’s vaults its hymns are sung
 Chicago swells the surging throng.
It waved above our infant might,
When all ahead seemed dark as night;
It witnessed many a deed and vow,
We must not change its colour now.
 It well recalls the triumphs past,
 It gives the hope of peace at last;
 The banner bright, the symbol plain,
 Of human right and human gain.

²² Email message posted to the mayday monopoly discussion group at groups.yahoo.com/group/mayday-monopoly

It suits today the weak and base,
Whose minds are fixed on self and place
To cringe before the rich man's frown,
And haul the sacred emblem down.
 With heads uncovered swear we all
 To bear it onward till we fall;
 Come dungeons dark or gallows grim,
 This song shall be our parting hymn.²³

From: Ian

Date: Sun Apr 29, 2001 6:31 pm

Subject: [mayday-monopoly] Green party.

> Here's a new hobby: spot the liberal-left fall over themselves to condemn Mayday.

> > Darren Johnson, Leader of the Green Group on the Greater London Assembly, said: "For protest to be genuinely non-violent, the organisers need to stress from the outset that only non-violent behaviour will be acceptable. The May Day organisers have not done this." See what happens when the Green party gets a few seats in the Euro-parliament and the GLA. They wouldn't have been so eager to come out with this drivel when they were completely out in the cold. I hope anyone who toyed with the idea of voting for them because some of their ideas are ok will now see they would be wasting their time. Now they have a foot in the establishment they'll throw everything they have to out of the door in order to appear "respectable". Bye now, Ian.²⁴

The fact that Reclaim The Streets has not been involved in the logistical planning for this year's MayDay has been seen by the corporate media as a split in the movement. But there are many groups and affiliations, each with their own analysis and focus, who all oppose the globalisation and the oppression of the capitalist system. MayDay belongs to each and every one of us. Around the world, social movements do not need to reconcile all their diverse ideas, just embrace the universal desire for change. Thus our aim is that everyone, everywhere should feel empowered to take part in building a future where we all take responsibility for an equitable continuation of life on this planet. Large actions, small actions, kitchen sink actions - who cares, as long as we continue to make them happen? ... Our group will not, however, have some journalist's definitions of organisation, or "fluffy" or "spiky" imposed upon it; neither will it fail for attempts to drive a wedge between it and other groups, nor will it fail to support those individuals or other groups subject to vilification and harassment. The violence of capitalism is 24/7, 365 days a year, and one day is as good as another for taking action towards real change.²⁵

23 'The Red Flag' by Jim Connell.

24 Email message posted to the mayday monopoly discussion group at groups.yahoo.com/group/mayday-monopoly.

25 Statement by Reclaim the Streets posted at www.gn.apc.org/rts/.

‘Nothing of the general movements, nothing of the great clashes, but rather a succession of details which can never form a whole.’²⁶

Victoria, Canada: This year marked the first MayDay march in Victoria in many years. Approximately 100 Socialists, Anarchists, Trade Unionists, and Wobblies...The theme of March was the call for a six hour work day (with no reduction in pay).

Montreal, Canada: This year in Montreal, radical activists answered the international appeal of “May Day”, May 1st. They organised a colourful and voluntarily “calm” demonstration in Westmount, the richest neighbourhood not only in Montreal, but in all of Canada.

Czechoslovakia: On one side of the cordon stood a unit of riot police armed with shields and batons and making a number of forceful arrests; on the other side a group of anarchists chanting slogans such as “fascists”, “Gestapo”, “police state”, throwing a few plastic bottles and here and there wielding sticks or plastic pipes...

Copenhagen, Denmark: As part of the global day of action against capitalism, 1,000 activists in Copenhagen demonstrated against the neo-liberal exploitation of the majority of the world’s population.

Finland: Demonstration and a carnival against capitalism. The day started with a demonstration “For Humanity, Against Capitalism”. Over 500 people marched through Helsinki city centre...

France: Following the call for an other global day of action against capitalism on Mayday, some radical left activists organized an anticapitalist demonstration in the center of Dijon, France, on April 28th.

Germany: The Left/Liberal newspaper TAZ writes that among the 400 arrested at the “Revolutionary May 1st Demonstration” in Berlin, is a policeman from Leipzig. He was not on duty, but on a holiday when by coincidence he saw the demonstration pass by. Police attacked the demonstration and as usual didn’t hesitate to rough up innocent bystanders. Our tourist from Leipzig got so angry when riot-cops hit him, that he joined the demonstrators who defended themselves throwing stones, bottles and other portable stuff. According to the police the policeman had thrown a bottle at a water-canon when he was arrested. This year’s revolutionary 1st of may demo was 10.000 persons strong (there was also a separate Marxist-Leninist-Maoist demonstration of some 2000 people. Fascists mobilised 1000 demonstrators earlier that day in Hellersdorf outskirt and were intensely protected by cops against antifascist).

Wellington, New Zealand: A successful and unique Carnival against Capitalism organised by local anarchist group the Committee for the Establishment of Civilisation was held on May Day in Wellington. Overall, probably over 500+ people attended the combined events of the day...

Spain: The march (about 1500 activists) moved up Passage De Gracia - the economic centre of Barcelona -. Hardcore, hooded, scarfed-up graffiti and superglue artists hit every building, including the Stock exchange, Deutsche Bank and Macdonalds, while blue-boiler-suited, white masked, flyposter teams re-invented advertising.

26 J.-J. Nescio, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 713.

Boston, USA: As part of the Mayday 2000 Global Day of Action, over 200 anarchists, environmentalists, workers, students, and assorted radical left activists descended on Boston's Financial District in a spirited and disruptive celebration against capitalism.

New York, USA: On Saturday, May 6 about 75 revelers celebrated a bright summer-like day by "reclaiming" the streets of downtown Huntington, Long Island, rousing shoppers out of their usual consumer slumber.²⁷

The favorite readings of the working-class tailor are the histories of the Revolution of 1789. He likes it when these texts develop the idea that this revolution was a good thing, and that it improved the condition of the working class. He is inspired by the aura of drama lent to men and events by several famous authors. ...Not perceiving that the principal cause of his social inferiority lies within himself, he likes to think that these men are the models for those who, in forging a new progress, will preserve him from all kinds of calamities.²⁸

The 21st Century has witnessed the rise of mass demonstrations against multinational corporations and the free market. In the past 18 months, protesters from a diverse range of interest groups have been drawn to Prague, Seattle and Quebec City... There seems to be little to unite the disparate groups that typically turn out to protest against globalisation, yet at least environmentalists, anti-vivisectionists and anti-roads protesters each have their own defining cause. But what of the anarchists, to whom the constraints of government are pure anathema? What do they believe in? Michael, an anarchist helping co-ordinate the London May Day Collective, says May Day is a chance for protesters to highlight their concerns about the profits-before-people motive. "We believe in including people, allowing them to organise for themselves how they want to live. "The whole process of globalisation excludes people from having their say, it limits their choices." When the IMF steps in to shore up the economies of Asian nations, he says, the conditions attached force local input out the window. But the activists have no intention of putting up an alternative to capitalism for fear of robbing others of their voice, Michael says. "As anarchists, we believe people have to be involved in discussing what alternatives might work for them, without prescribing the options. For this reason, we distance ourselves from doctrines such as Marxism, which impose a strict set of rules."²⁹

Why anti-capitalism? Capitalism is the name of the system which rules our lives. It is a system in which a few rich people control and exploit the rest of us. Other ways of living are possible based on cooperation and equality. They have been given many names, including anarchism, communism and ecology. This festival has chosen 'anti-capitalism' to embrace the diversity of these different traditions and to stress that we do

27 The global Mayday activities in 2000; reports by participants, posted at www.ainfos.com and summarised at www.pcworks.demon.co.uk/magazine/newhomepage.htm

28 F. Le Play, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 699.

29 *BBC*, 26 April 2001, 12:36 PM.

not have all the answers but need to seek solutions together. Imagine what we could do if we replaced capitalism with a system based on our needs and desires, not their profits.³⁰

What is Globalise Resistance? Globalise Resistance is an emerging worldwide force uniting peoples and organisations against the growth of global corporations. Environmentalists, anti-capitalists, debt campaigners and many disparate groups have shown through the results of Seattle and Prague that a new global movement is emerging against self-serving profit hungry global corporations and the IMF/WTO institutions, and that a new world can be possible. This website's purpose is to unite Irish people and organisations who want to get involved in the struggle.³¹

The game of monopoly is one of accumulation, making it perfect for our times. The aim is for each player to make profits through the sale of a single commodity - land - and to expand their empire. In real life one single commodity generates all profits - our labour power. Since labour power cannot be separated from people, we are literally bought and sold in the market place. To prevent stagnation, capitalism must constantly expand. Thus we must also consume as well as produce. Originally invented as The Landlord Game, to expose the parasitic role of landlords, it was repackaged as Monopoly in the USA at the height of the great depression, as a sop to be sold to those workers who were being laid off and losing their livelihoods, a distraction from the reality of capitalist poverty. Such distractions may have got more sophisticated - TV, the internet, holidays abroad, flashy cars etc - but our exploitation continues unchecked. As capitalism is a social relation between classes its continuation requires the participation of both exploiters and exploited. By continuing the repetitive cycle of work and consumption we reproduce this alien mode of production. We are therefore our own jailers. However, since capitalism is opposed to human needs and desires, there is a constant struggle between those of us who produce and the bosses who reap the rewards. Capitalism is a global system, with the rule of the market imposed everywhere, usually by force. Hence the destruction of indigenous cultures.³²

International Human Rights Community Condemns Nike's Inaction on Labour Rights Abuses. Nike's refusal to end labour abuses in its suppliers' factories will be documented today in an open letter signed by more than 40 human rights and labour groups from around the world. The letter will be presented to NIKE's Annual Shareholders' meeting in Hilversum, Netherlands. On-site investigations reveal evidence of:

- * physical and verbal abuse of workers in Nike factories in Vietnam and El Salvador;
- * the Indonesian military being employed by a Nike contractor to intimidate workers during wage negotiations;

30 www.freespeech.org

31 www.ingenious.ie/~gwalsh/resist/whatis.html

32 www.maydaymonopoly.net

- * Nike refusing to reinstate Vietnamese workers who have been humiliated and dismissed for talking to journalists;
- * workers being sacked for trying to organise unions in Nike factories in El Salvador, Thailand and Indonesia;
- * severe fire hazards in a Nike factory in China.

The joint letter was motivated by frustration at Nike's continued failure to match its rhetoric with action.

"NIKE responds to its human rights abuses of its workers with cynicism, denial and concealment," says Bob Jeffcott of the Toronto-based Maquila Solidarity Network.

"Personally, I am very angry with Nike for their endless lies. The reality of what is going on should be disclosed to the world," says Alice Kwan of the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee.

"Nike is a great pretender. They know the reality in Indonesia, they know it well, but forever they always keep in silence; they never show their concern for the labour situation or condition," says Ara Tibi from the Indonesian human rights group SISBIKUM.

The letter calls on Nike to reinstate all workers who have been fired for organizing unions or talking to journalists; ensure workers are paid a living wage for a standard forty hour week; publish the addresses of all its suppliers factories and put in place a credible system for monitoring conditions in those factories.

Representatives of the Clean Clothes Campaign in the Netherlands will attempt to read the letter aloud during Nike's Shareholders' Meeting. The meeting is being held in Nike's new European headquarters in Hilversum, the Netherlands starting at 4:00 pm, Wednesday, September 22.³³

William Wood, 9 years old, 'was 7 years 10 months old when he began to work'. He 'ran moulds' (carried ready-moulded articles into the drying-room, afterwards bringing back the empty mould) from the very beginning. He came to work every day in the week at 6 a.m., and left off at about 9 p.m. 'I work till 9 o'clock at night six days in the week. I have done so for the last seven or eight weeks.' Fifteen hours of labour for a child of 7! J. Murray, 12 years of age, says: 'I turn jigger and run moulds. I come at 6. Sometimes I come at 4. I worked all night last night, till 6 o'clock this morning. I have not been in bed since the night before last. There were eight or nine other boys working last night. All but one have come this morning. I get 3 shillings and sixpence. I do not get any more for working at night. I worked two nights last week.' Fernyhough, a boy of 10: 'I have not always an hour (for dinner). I have only half an hour sometimes: on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.'³⁴

33 www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/5232/

34 Karl Marx (1976) *Capital, Volume 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin, p.354 quoting the Children's Employment Commission, First Report, etc., 1863, Appendix, pp. 16, 19, 18.

Being a dialectician means having the wind of history in one's sails. The sails are the concepts. It is not enough, however, to have sails at one's disposal. What is decisive is knowing the art of setting them.³⁵

fitter happier more productive
comfortable
not drinking too much
regular exercise at the gym (3 days a week)
getting on better with your associate employee contemporaries
at ease
eating well (no more microwave dinners and saturated fats)
a patient better driver
a safer car (baby smiling in the back seat)
sleeping well (no bad dreams)
no paranoia
careful to all animals (never washing spiders down the plughole)
keep in contact with old friends (enjoy a drink now and then)
will frequently check credit at (moral) bank (hole in wall)
favours for favours
fond but not in love
charity standing orders
on Sundays ring road supermarket
(no killing moths or putting boiling water on the ants)
car wash (also on Sundays)
no longer afraid of the dark
or midday shadows
nothing so ridiculously teenage and desperate
nothing so childish
at a better pace
slower and more calculated
no chance of escape
now self-employed
concerned (but powerless)
an empowered & informed member of society (pragmatism not idealism)
will not cry in public
less chance of illness
tyres that grip in the wet (shot of baby strapped in back seat)
a good memory
still cries at a good film
still kisses with saliva
no longer empty and frantic
like a cat

35 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 473.

tied to a stick
that s driven into
frozen winter shit (the ability to laugh at weakness)
calm
fitter, healthier and more productive
a pig
in a cage
on antibiotics³⁶

The concept of progress must be grounded in the idea of catastrophe. That things are “status quo” *is* the catastrophe. It is not an ever-present possibility but what in each case is given. Thus Strindberg (in *To Damascus?*): hell is not something that awaits us, but this life here and now.³⁷

It is important that “once upon a time” it was like that. We can do it again. We need independent working class politics. No collaboration with government and bosses. Real solidarity with fellow workers in struggle, not a blinkered sectional outlook. We still need a further reduction in working hours, without loss of pay, to make work for the unemployed. We need revolutionary politics. That means politics that can lead us towards a genuine socialism where freedom knows no limit other than not interfering with the freedom of others. A socialism that is based on real democracy - not the present charade where we can choose some of our rulers, but may not choose to do without rulers. A real democracy where everyone effected by a decision will have the opportunity to have their say in making that decision. A democracy of efficiently co-ordinated workplace and community councils. A society where production is to satisfy needs, not to make profits for a privileged few. Anarchism.³⁸

It is clear...that a left alternative can *only* consist of the construction of a different system of equivalents, which establishes social division on a new basis. In the face of the project for the reconstruction of a hierarchic society, the alternative of the Left should consist of locating itself fully in the field of the democratic revolution and expanding the chains of equivalents between the different struggles against oppression. *The task of the Left therefore cannot be to renounce liberal-democratic ideology, but on the contrary, to deepen and expand it in the direction of a radical and plural democracy*³⁹

May 1 1886 saw 340,000 workers striking all over the United States demanding an 8-hour day. In Chicago alone, 80,000 came out and there a number of anarchist militants

36 Radiohead (1997) ‘fitter happier’, on *OK Computer*. London: Parlophone.

37 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 473 (emphasis in original).

38 www.ainfos.ca

39 Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso, 176 (emphasis in original).

agitated inside the movement. The following Monday, the police fired on strikers at the McCormick Harvester works and six workers were killed. The next day a protest meeting at Haymarket Square was broken up by the police. In the following confusion, a bomb was thrown at the police, killing one outright and fatally wounding 7 others. Evidence came to light later that the bomb had been thrown by a police agent. The bosses, however, used this incident to victimise leading working class militants and attempt to break the movement.⁴⁰

1919 - Germany: From April 29 to May 2, Munich: Government forces crush in blood the Republic of the Councils of Bavaria. Resistance results in many hard-fought street battles. Many resisters are summarily executed, leaving more than 700 dead.⁴¹

It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent. – Only dialectical images are genuine images (that is, not archaic); and the place where one encounters them is language.⁴²

02.05.1989: Unofficial May Day demonstration in Prague. 1000 take part. Stanislav Devaty, Charter 77 is arrested, along with BBC Central Europe correspondent, Misha Glenny. He is released in Prague in the evening. He says he was hit on the face, had his arms twisted and tape recorder smashed on the ground. Hungary begins to dismantle the Iron Curtain, at the instigation of Foreign Minister Gyula Horn. 10 000s march through Warsaw, ending with a meeting to support Solidarity candidates in next month's elections.⁴³

Up to 500,000 demonstrators chanting slogans and waving banners marched through half a dozen East German cities last night to keep up pressure for political reform. The flood of refugees leaving for the West through Czechoslovakia continued. By last night, 23,000 East Germans had arrived in West Germany from Prague since Saturday. The biggest demonstration was in Leipzig where hundreds of thousands of people, some shouting 'the Berlin Wall must go', surged on to the streets in driving rain to call for free elections and unlimited freedom of travel. More than 135,000 people rallied in other cities, including Schwerin, Halle, Cottbus, Dresden and Karl-Marx-Stadt.⁴⁴

40 www.freespeech.org

41 www.ainfos.ca

42 Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 462.

43 www.centraleurope.org.uk

44 *The Guardian*, 7 November 1989.

Revolution is a drama perhaps more than a history, and its pathos is a condition as imperious as its authenticity.⁴⁵

Rabble of the faithless, the soulless, the rootless,
Who want to wipe out every art and industry,
To crush underfoot the cult of the Cross,
And drown in an ocean of blood and flames
- Its waves have risen round the flanks of Paris -
Temples, palaces, priests, peoples, and kings!⁴⁶

John Zerzan doesn't have a car, a credit card or a computer. He lives a quiet life in a cabin in Oregon and has sold his own blood plasma to make ends meet. So why does corporate America think he is the Antichrist? "It's the effort to understand and do away with every form of domination, and that involves questioning very basic institutions, including the division of labour and domestication upon which the whole edifice of civilisation and technology rests ... If you took away division of labour and domestication you might have something pretty close to what obtained for the first two million years of the species, during which there was leisure time, there was quite a lot of gender equality and no organised violence - which doesn't sound too bad. They say: 'Oh, you want to be a caveman.' Well, maybe that's somewhat true." ... "The idea of technology being a neutral, discreet thing and whoever is in charge can use it this way or that way, that's really missing the point. It's inseparable from the system, it's the incarnation of the system and it's always been that way. You can't take a totally alienating technology and use it for anything except more alienation, more destructive impact on every level from the psyche to the rest of the biosphere. Globalisation is a kind of buzz word at the moment and once again the lefties have come up with a soft core thing. Globalisation is nothing new; what's happening now is just the latest round of excesses." He does not, he says, "throw out all of Marx, the class struggle, all that we take for granted". But he includes in his condemnation "liberals, Marxists, members of left parties, Noam Chomsky, the anarchist left, the syndicalists, the Wobblies, all those people who think technology is fine and it just depends on how you use it and that there's nothing wrong with development and the industrial system, it just depends who's running it."⁴⁷

There are really two varieties of globalisation: élite globalisation (which we oppose) and grassroots globalisation (which we promote). The top-down globalisation is characterised by a constant drive to maximise profits for globe-spanning corporations. It forces countries to 'open up' their national economies to large corporations, reduce social services, privatise state functions, deregulate the economy, be 'efficient' and

45 Blanqui, cited in Geffroy, L'Enfermé, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 470.

46 Edouard d-Anglemont, L'Internationale, cited in Benjamin, W. (1999) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 698.

47 *The Guardian*, 18 April 2001.

competitive, and submit everything and everyone to the rule of ‘market forces’. Because markets move resources only in the direction of those with money, social inequality has reached grotesque levels. But there is another kind of globalisation that centres on life values: protecting human rights and the environment. Grassroots globalisation comprises many large and growing movements: the fair trade movement, micro-enterprise lending networks, the movement for social and ecological labelling, sister cities and sister schools, citizen diplomacy, trade union solidarity across borders, worker-owned co-ops, international family farm networks, and many others ... Even George Soros, the billionaire financier, admits: ‘Markets basically are amoral.’⁴⁸

‘[G]lobalization’ is not a new phase of capitalism, but a ‘rhetoric’ invoked by governments in order to justify their voluntary surrender to the financial markets and their conversion to a fiduciary conception of the firm. Far from being – as we are constantly told – the inevitable result of the growth of foreign trade, deindustrialization, growing inequality and the retrenchment of social policies are the result of *domestic political decisions* that reflect the tipping of the balance of class forces in favour of the owners of capital.⁴⁹

From: classwarrior1926

Date: Sun Apr 29, 2001 8:11 pm

Subject: Re: Anarchist Origins of Mayday

All I can say is good job anarchism deals with the issues of patriarchy then isn't it..isn't it such a wonderfully liberational philosophy anarchism? All these other sectional philosophies pale into insignificance in comparison with it..ah, for an anarchic future, freedom to all the oppressed!!!..though since anarchy can trace its root to the taoists in china, did withes predate it?..dunno but with anarchy you are guaranteed freedom!! Embrace the truly libertarian philosophy!! For True Freedom Through Anarchy! CW1926⁵⁰

In the absence of actual information about the May Day demonstrations they echo the self-fulfilling prophecy of the police - violent thugs have taken over and peaceful protesters are staying away, with the result that “ordinary people” and “families” will be too frightened to attend. A relentless media campaign over the past few weeks, coupled with increasingly aggressive police announcements, is plainly intended to divide anti-capitalist activists and criminalise protest. But “ordinary people” and “families” are the anti-capitalist movement. We are part of society, not apart from it. We are your neighbours, the people you sit next to on the bus, in the park, in the housing office.⁵¹

48 Kevin Danaher, *The Observer*, 29 April 2001.

49 Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant (2001) ‘NewLiberalSpeak: Notes on the new planetary vulgate’, *Radical Philosophy*, 105: 2 (emphasis in original).

50 Email message posted to the mayday monopoly discussion group at groups.yahoo.com/group/mayday-monopoly.

51 *The Guardian*, 16 April 2001.

The police have demonised May Day since the very first demonstrations were called in the 1880s, and if the police want a fight they're sure to get one, but that's not the point of the protest. The anti-capitalist movement is a broad coalition, and the wider the police's net is cast, the more "ordinary" people are caught in it. We have something to say and we're not frightened to make our voices heard.⁵²

The idea of turning London into a life-sized Monopoly board on May Day sounded like a great idea to me. The most familiar criticism lobbed at modern protesters is that they lack focus and clear goals such as "Save the trees", or "Drop the debt". And yet these protests are a response to the limitations of single-issue politics. Tired of treating the symptoms of an economic model - under-funded hospitals, homelessness, widening disparity, exploding prisons, climate change - there is now a clear attempt to "out" the system behind the symptoms ... Let's call it McProtest, because it's becoming the same all over ... [O]ne of the greatest challenges of living in the high consumer culture that was protested against in London yesterday, is the reality of rootlessness. Few of us know our neighbours, talk about much more than shopping at work, or have time for community politics. How can a movement be accountable when communities are fraying? Within a context of urban rootlessness, there are clearly moments to demonstrate, but perhaps more importantly, there are moments to build the connections that make demonstration something more than theatre. There are times when radicalism means standing up to the police, but there are many more times when it means talking to your neighbour. The issues behind Tuesday's demonstrations are no longer marginal. Yet something is gravely wrong when the protests still seem deracinated, cut off from urgent daily concerns. It means that the spectacle of displaying a movement is getting confused with the less glamorous business of building one.⁵³

There is the pin-up girl of the anti-globalisation movement, Naomi Klein, the author of the international bestseller *No Logo* which has itself become the international logo of the anti-globalisation movement. Miss Klein rages about how distinctive regional identities are being obliterated by a bland remote multinational homogeneity - and she does it through a column in Canada's *Globe And Mail*, reprinted in *The Guardian*.⁵⁴

The logic of democracy is not a logic of the positivity of the social, and it is therefore incapable of founding a nodal point of any kind around which the social fabric can be reconstituted. But if the subversive moment of the logic of democracy and the positive moment of the institution of the social are no longer unified by any anthropological foundation which transforms them into the fronts and reverse sides of a single process, it follows clearly that every possible form of unity between the two is contingent, and is therefore itself the result of a process of articulation. This being the case, no hegemonic

52 Jim Bradley, letter to *The Guardian*, 16 April 2001.

53 Naomi Klein, *The Guardian*, 3 May 2001.

54 Mark Steyn, *Sunday Telegraph*, 22 April 2001.

project can be based exclusively on a democratic logic, but must also consist of a set of proposals for the positive organization of the social.⁵⁵

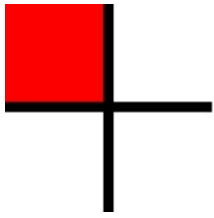
To put it plainly, much as I like expressing myself in images...: your life as apes, gentlemen, insofar as something of that kind lies behind you, cannot be farther removed from you than mine is from me. Yet everyone on earth feels a tickling at the heels; the small chimpanzee and the great Achilles alike.⁵⁶

discussion

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55 Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy*. London: Verso, 188-189.

56 Franz Kafka, *A Report to an Academy*.



Mastering the Major Discourse

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review of:

Buchanan, I. (2000) *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*. Durham: Duke UP.
(PB: pp.269, US\$ 17.95, ISBN 0-8223-2548-9)

Rajchman, J. (2000) *The Deleuze Connections*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
(PB: pp.176, US\$ 14.95, ISBN 0-262-68120-X)

“Great books are written in a kind of foreign language.” This quote from Proust has been used by nearly all commentators on the work of Deleuze, and indeed, it brings out the common trait in the many works by him. His oeuvre, as has also been pointed out by nearly all commentators, consists of commentaries on the works of other philosophers and artists. Nevertheless, Deleuze’s peculiar ways of working with these texts make him a highly original and notoriously difficult thinker. Instead of adding another layer of commentary, Deleuze gains insight by looking at the intersection of seemingly opposite, or opposed, ideas. Instead of showing how a preceding philosophy might have influenced another, he thinks with these texts to demonstrate what will always be new in them. These ways of reading amount to a style that is characterized neither by the loaded buzzwords of pseudo-philosophy nor by the idiosyncrasy of poetry. Like T.E. Lawrence, a writer Deleuze admires, Deleuze *becomes* the object of his study, without attempting to *be* the author under consideration. As Deleuze explains: “Lawrence speaks Arabic, he dresses and lives like an Arab, even under torture he cries out in Arabic, but he does not imitate the Arabs, he never renounces his difference, which he already experiences as a betrayal” (Deleuze, 1997a: 117). This movement, the becoming which always recognizes difference, is not one of imitation but of ‘minorization,’ as Deleuze calls it. Deleuze does not mix two or more discourses, he makes a new use of a given discourse. Deleuze, Beckett and Kafka share a similar strategic program, “they make the language take flight, they send it racing along a witch’s line, ceaselessly placing it in a state of disequilibrium, making it bifurcate and vary in each of its terms, following an incessant modulation” (Deleuze, 1997a: 109).

The problem for a reader of Deleuze is not the minor language, not immediately that is, but first to master the major discourse in order to see where Deleuze handles it differently. This is exactly why the outstanding commentaries on Deleuze have been

written by specialists in the field in question. For example, one of the best books on Deleuze is *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* by D.N. Rodowick. Rodowick, a film scholar, limits himself to a study of the two cinema books by Deleuze. A thorough knowledge of Bergson, film history, *auteur*-theory and semiotics is necessary to grasp the radicalism of Deleuze's notion of extracting concepts of cinema and taking these concepts to do philosophy. To put it blandly: it is always preferable to read a novel in the original language. However, if one doesn't speak this language fluently, it is hard to judge where and how the text deviates from the normal, the 'major' usage.

A book that sets out to provide an introduction to Deleuze should therefore follow two strategies. It should think with Deleuze, just as Deleuze works with other texts – becoming Deleuze and acknowledging difference from him – and provide a translation of the above mentioned 'strange or foreign language' for those of us who do not master it. This makes the declared goal of John Rajchman's book, *The Deleuze Connections*, look promising: "This book is thus a map meant for those who want to take up or take on Deleuze philosophically as well as those engaged in what Deleuze called the 'nonphilosophical understanding of philosophy'" (p. 5). However, instead of thinking with Deleuze, Rajchman sounds like a pedantic academician, seeking to press Deleuze back into a major narrative. He mentions names and concepts, without ever enlightening his declared target audience about what they mean in his opinion. Words are put in quotation marks and it is not clear if this indicates a quote, a reference, or stands in for a 'so-called.' The following sentence is a typical example of Rajchman's convoluted style:

We are accustomed to enclosing empiricism within the 'analysis' of Russell's logic, and opposing to it the historicism or metaphysics of the Continent, perhaps counting the holism of Quine as a correction of its 'protocol' in Viennese philosophy. (p.18)

The quote is also an example of Rajchman's penchant for namedropping, whose unnecessary showiness is undermined by the insufficient editing evident in the embarrassing misspelling of 'Weltanschauung' and, twice, of 'Rechtsstaat.' Indeed, one wishes for a better proofreader for his manuscript.¹ Not only does he mention some things twice,² Rajchman often quotes without giving a proper source. The important word 'noology' appears on page 35 without reference or quotation marks. It would have been helpful to note that it can be found in *A Thousand Plateaus* in the chapter on the 'War Machine', where its meaning is explained (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 374-75).³ Another practice, which is conventional in the dominant academic discourse, is to refer to the English edition of a work cited, and in case of one's own or revised translation

1 Apart from these embarrassing misspellings, the text changes between 'Riegel' and 'Reigel', 'Liebniz' and 'Leibniz' and the postface to Beckett's *Quad* is not listed in the list of works cited but quoted later.

2 It is mentioned twice, that the title of Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* is an anagram of nowhere/now here, while the word 'Urdoxa' appears several times without being explained. The same sentence is printed in the text and the footnote: Rorty and "his youthful enthusiasm for Whitehead" (p. 19/n.10). This is a typical mistake of 'cut and paste' and symptomatic of the sloppy editing.

3 Why John Rajchman spells it 'noo-ology', I can't tell.

mark it as such. Rajchman refers only to the French editions of Deleuze's works, often without page numbers, while he quotes Foucault mostly from English editions.

Maybe Rajchman's book is not intended for interested 'nonphilosophical' readers? Maybe it is intended for those of us who read Deleuze in French and can identify the numerous quotes that appear without source? The sloppiness in the editing mirrors a far greater flaw: Rajchman jumps to conclusions without making it possible to follow his argument. Indeed, one could suspect an intentional blurring of sources to make criticism impossible. A typical example is a discussion of Deleuze's relation to modern art, where several of Gilles Deleuze's ideas are conflated. Rajchman rightly detects a moment of violence in the event of art:

What then would it mean to think of art or the work of art in its relation to such violence? Developing some ideas of Blanchot, Foucault had tried to understand the 'madness' peculiar to the modern work as a kind of 'absence d'oeuvre,' a kind of 'un-work'; in this way he rediscovers his own view of the anonymity of discourse as a condition or event, or the emergent of something new. Deleuze himself often refers to this attempt, developing it in his own way – he talks about making vision or language stutter, as if speaking in a foreign tongue saying '...and, and, and' rather than 'is.' But Deleuze never wanted to make a theology out of such 'absence,' as though it were the mark of some Law; for him it was a matter of multiplicity or construction [*sic*] multiplicity, not of some transcendental void or emptiness. (p.124)

A footnote that appears after the first sentence in the above quoted paragraph refers to an article by Foucault in the French edition of *Dits et Ecrits*. It would have been more interesting for the reader to see in another footnote where, according to Rajchman, Deleuze "often refers to this attempt". It would have helped to clarify what "this attempt" actually is. Though Foucault is quoted throughout Rajchman's book, the complicated intellectual and personal relationship between Foucault and Deleuze, and Deleuze's commentary on Foucault (cf. Deleuze, 1999) are not mentioned. The equally fascinating figure of the writer/critic Maurice Blanchot, who influenced both Foucault and Deleuze, is just mentioned *en passant*.⁴ Blanchot, quoted on numerous occasions by Deleuze (Deleuze and Guattari, 1991: 59), develops the notion of an outside (*dehors*) that is paradoxically not exterior (*extérieur*)⁵. Foucault interprets Blanchot's notion in an article, which shows the affinity between these three thinkers (Foucault 1990). It is this 'dehors', the limit and the base for thinking, that can also be found in works of art and in philosophy: "Perhaps this is the supreme act of philosophy: not so much to think *the* plane of immanence as to show that it is there, unthought in every plane, and to think it in this way as the outside and inside of thought, as the not-external outside and the not-internal inside – that which cannot be thought and yet must be thought..." (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 59). Here, the programmatic distinction between art and philosophy, formulated by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?* is very helpful.

4 Rodowick, who does mention the influence of Blanchot, cites the source and thus gives his readers the opportunity to follow up on this important resource (cf. Rodowick, 1997: 229, n.3).

5 Deleuze and Guattari, 1991: 59: "Le dehors non extérieur." Engl. Ed. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 60): "the not-external outside and the not-internal inside."

It is aesthetic experience and not philosophy that opens up a *dehors*, which is a field of virtuality, a field we were not willing or able to think of as such up to now.

But let us go back to the paragraph by Rajchman quoted above: It would be interesting to know where Deleuze “talks about making vision or language stutter”. Looking at the article ‘He Stutters’ in *Essays Critical and Clinical* by Deleuze we find the sentence Rajchman probably paraphrased: “a great writer is always like a foreigner in the language in which he expresses himself, even if this is his native tongue.” (Deleuze, 1997b: 109) It refers not to the absence of an oeuvre but to the creative process of minorizing a language. Rajchman seems to misunderstand this concept entirely when, earlier in his book, he mentions that one has “to invent a minor language” (p.80, again without source). However, according to Deleuze, what these authors do “is invent a *minor use* of the major language within which they express themselves entirely” (Deleuze, 1997b: 109).⁶ Deleuze’s own emphasis in this quote makes it clear that the difference is crucial to him. The process is linked to the becoming that is never an imitation of a certain mode of existence, but rather an exhaustion of all possible modes within the major language. Deleuze’s great essay on Beckett, ‘The Exhausted’, might give an even clearer idea of how Deleuze looks at language. Since Rajchman mentions the same essay later in the same paragraph, let us assume the reference of ‘vision and language’ is to Deleuze’s discussion of *Quad*, Beckett’s short plays for television. Here, Deleuze shows a way to the outside/*dehors* by exhausting the form of language. Deleuze distinguishes three languages: Language I is an “atomic, disjunctive, cut and chopped language”. Language II is a language of ‘voices’, a language “that no longer operates with combinable atoms but with blendable flows” (Deleuze, 1997c: 156). Language III, “which is no longer a language of names or voices but a language of images, resounding and coloring images”, (Deleuze, 1997c: 161) is the impossible image that remains when all possible permutations are exhausted. This empty image, “one that is nothing but an image”, is foremost an exhaustion of form and not a construction of multiplicity.

The second part of Rajchman’s sentence (“...as if speaking in a foreign tongue saying ‘...and, and, and’ rather than ‘is’”) is, as it turns out, another unattributed quote from Deleuze. After stating in an interview that traditional philosophy depends on the unifying verb ‘to be’ Deleuze says that “‘and...and...and...’ is precisely a creative stammering, a foreign use of language, as opposed to a conformist and dominant use based on the verb ‘to be.’” In French ‘et’ - meaning ‘and’ - and ‘est’ (‘is’) are homophones, which the translator of the interview dutifully notes. This ‘and’ - the ‘et’ that marks an absent ‘est’ - can create a link between the most adversary concepts; it is “diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities” (Deleuze, 1995: 44). The creation of multiplicities, then, is attempted through the exhausted ‘et...et...et’ that bears the visible absence of the ‘est...est...est’ and *thus* destroys the ontological inventory of homogenized beings in favor of a multiplicity of links.

6 Italics in the text. “Major and minor languages ... qualify less as different languages than as different usages of the same language” (Cf. Deleuze, 1997d: 244).

The Deleuze Connections by John Rajchman does not fulfill its promise. Instead of creating connections within and between works by Deleuze or connections between Deleuze and other thinkers, the book associatively mentions Deleuze's and others' concepts without establishing any link. Rajchman's *Deleuze Connections* looks like a typescript from a graduate lecture class, hastily edited under the 'publish or perish' pressure of a big American university. It displays the typical mix of jargon, name-dropping and a conflation of ideas, disguised as new insights, combined with the refusal to provide sources. The problem with books like this is that they make it difficult to engage critically with the argument, and thus fall short of an engagement with Deleuze.

Deleuzism: A Metacommentary by Ian Buchanan lays out a clear program. The book is divided into two parts, 'Deleuzism' and 'Applied Deleuzism', and provides source material. But *Deleuzism* is not just a piece of standard academic scholarship. Buchanan reads with and through Deleuze. To do this, he relies mainly on two authors. He refers often to *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* by Michael Hardt. In part Buchanan's work reads like a second volume to Hardt, who concentrates mostly on Deleuze's earlier works. However, where Hardt reads Deleuze's work mainly as an alternative project to Hegel, Buchanan offers his readers an ally for reading Deleuze that seems at first surprising. His reference is to the Marxist critic Frederic Jameson, especially to his books *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* and *Late Marxism: Adorno, or, The Persistence of the Dialectic* (cf. Jameson, 1997). While the style of writing (and thinking, one might add) of Deleuze and Jameson cannot be further apart, they share a curiously similar analysis of the phenomenon of postmodernity.

Jameson's approach describes the problem of postmodernity as a loss of 'memory', whose functioning as foundational structure is no longer possible.⁷ Instead, a nostalgic momentum of space is evoked. The Past as collective experience cannot be lived anymore, because it is no longer bound to a historical subject or a time.⁸ Gilles Deleuze would not contradict Jameson on that point - we live in a capitalist culture without memory, where everything we claim to remember is (re-)constructed by ourselves. Rather, Deleuze gives the argument a different slant: We are creating our memory only in the form of a realization of the possible, because we have lost our connection to the virtual, a fundamental momentum of memory and time. Deleuze would thus agree with the claim that we have lost our ability to remember. Collective memory as rootedness, which in modernity could be re-constructed as authentic experience, is no longer possible. According to Deleuze, the basic function of memory is Virtuality. With a notion reminiscent of Benjamin, he states that we no longer remember what did *not* happen. This virtual archive, not to be confused with what was possible, has its own reality. The virtual concerns an event that did not happen, but that exists in a virtual world.

7 I paraphrase the first sentence of the introduction to Jameson (1991).

8 Apart from Jameson's *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* from 1984, see here especially the chapter on film: 'Nostalgia for the Present'.

The act of remembering is, in the words of Deleuze, always a ‘genuine creation’. He writes:

Such is the defect of the possible: a defect which serves to condemn it as produced after the fact, as retroactively fabricated in the image of what resembles it. The actualization of the virtual, on the contrary, always takes place by difference, divergence or differentiation. Actualization breaks with resemblance as a process no less than it does with identity as a principle. (Deleuze, 1994: 212)

Following Kierkegaard and Pascal, Deleuze points out in the seventh chapter of his book on the movement-image, that a choice in the Actual results in the typical notion of an outside power, forcing somebody a certain way or another. The crucial difference of the Virtual to this pseudo-choice by force is reflection. Since the Virtual is not opposed to the possible, this Virtual choice can be remembered. Even if out of duty or some other motive one chooses the wrong path, the other way still exists as what Deleuze calls “a mode of existence” (Deleuze, 1986: 114).

Curiously, Buchanan completely leaves out the discussion of the virtual and memory, (re)constructing instead “the set of presuppositions logically prior to everything Deleuze ultimately says, but never actually expressed by him – his double” (p.10). This plane, which Buchanan calls ‘Deleuzism’, is where Deleuze comes closest to Marx. To support his theses, Buchanan first draws a comparison with Deleuze’s contemporaries. He then points out the closeness of Deleuze and Guattari to the Anti-Hegelianism of Marx, drawing his examples mostly from *Anti-Oedipus*.

Buchanan’s argumentation is very careful. He always makes clear when his interpretation differs from received comments on Deleuze, interjecting an “it is my belief that” or “I want to suggest.” Although this might not always lead to a smooth writing style, it does make *Deleuzism* a very ‘user-friendly’ book. For example, when Buchanan in his last chapter openly states his tactics for reading Deleuze, a fruitful discussion can develop: “... I needed to conceive Deleuze’s work as a whole and posit an outside, then read one in relation to the other, which is precisely a dialectical procedure. This is exactly ... what Deleuze himself does” (p.194). The “base of thinking” mentioned earlier, the “not-external outside and the not-internal inside”, has indeed a relationship to the whole of a piece of art. However, it can be argued that Deleuze tries to avoid the concept of totality and instead uses, among other means, the already mentioned process of an exhaustion to come closer to this unthinkable base of Philosophy, what Deleuze describes, already quoted above, as “that which cannot be thought and yet must be thought.”

To show his method at work, Buchanan provides a reading of *Blade Runner* in Deleuzian terms and a reading of the Bonaventure Hotel, which is a revisiting of Frederic Jameson’s famous essay *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Here, Buchanan brings together in a surprising turn Jameson’s process-oriented concept of Utopia and the Deleuze and Guattari notion of Schizophrenia.

[I]t is Jameson’s practice to bracket schizophrenia as a critical and/or aesthetic term, whereas Deleuze and Guattari posit it as an unmediated ground, so to bring the two together involves a substantial epistemological shift. Utopia would have to be supposed an immanent concept for it to

be properly equivalent to Deleuze and Guattari's schizophrenia, and this is exactly what I take it to be. (p.165)

The question Buchanan poses could thus be formulated as "What is the plane of 'Deleuzism'?" The answer would be to perform the unachievable, utopian task of reading Deleuze with Jameson and Jameson with Deleuze at the same time. Whether this plane of mutual reading needs to be called 'dialectic' is open for discussion.

The fortunate reader is one who does not need any introduction to Deleuze, but who can indulge in Deleuze's fascinating insights without any secondary sources. But this reader would have to possess the enormous knowledge Deleuze has about every subject he comments on. To best appreciate the radical nature of Deleuze's thought one ought to approach his work with sound preparation in the given field. For example, reading the two books Deleuze wrote on cinema is not fruitful unless one is steeped in the discourse of film history and theory. His writing performs a breaking free from the conventions he writes about, and to fully understand the breaking free, one must understand the conventions. The reader, too, must be willing to break with convention if his thinking is to have any affinity with Deleuze, but, paradoxically, this affinity precedes the encounter with Deleuze.

A book that sets out to introduce the work of Gilles Deleuze must be mindful of the reader's experience, or predicament, and thus has to demonstrate how Deleuze manipulates the major discourse, how he *minorizes* it. Before reading Ian Buchanan, *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*, I recommend reading Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*. A person interested in Film Studies and the fascinating concept of virtuality will most likely prefer *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* by Rodowick. The books by Hardt, Buchanan and Rodowick are traditional scholarly books, with plenty of footnotes and references. Their approach of reading with and through Deleuze seems to me more promising – and more 'Deleuzian' – than an essayistic attempt to sound like or mimic Deleuze.

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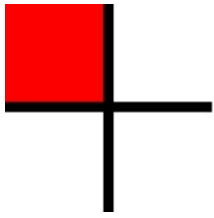
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Beyond the Panopticon?

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review of:

Ackroyd, S. and P. Thompson (1999) *Organizational Misbehaviour*. London: Sage.
(PB: pp.224, £17.99, ISBN 0803987366)

After a long hiatus the issue of worker resistance is now back on the research agenda for those who critically study work and organization. Ackroyd and Thompson's book *Organizational Misbehaviour* attempts to address the serious neglect of employee opposition in analyses of organization over the last ten years or so. Building and expanding upon their influential *Sociology* article, 'All Quiet on the Workplace Front?' (Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995), they make a serious attempt to revive the notion of the recalcitrant worker whilst ferociously criticising the many so-called radical studies that have prematurely heralded the demise of resistance in the contemporary workplace.

Ackroyd and Thompson use the term 'misbehaviour' to describe the many forms of worker resistance and opposition that they argue is still widespread in most organizations. They define worker misbehaviour as including the widest range of behaviour – "from failure to work very hard or conscientiously, through not working at all, deliberate output restriction, practical joking, pilferage, sabotage and sexual misconduct" (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 1-2). In other words, misbehaviour is all of those things that employees do at work but are not supposed to do. The term 'misbehaviour' is being employed ironically here, with not a little smidgin of sardonic humour. They take the position of managerial authority and then undermine its gaze by portraying worker recalcitrance as a legitimate and valid mode of conduct practiced by men and women who find themselves caught within webs of domination and exploitation. Under these conditions, in which so many working people find themselves today, there is an irrepressible drive to self-organize, maintain some meaningful self-determination and find ways to break the rules.

Organizational misbehaviour, according to the authors, consists of a number 'appropriations', whereby workers regain control over a sphere of their working lives that had previously been governed by their employers. This is an excellent way of approaching the subject because rather than resistance being conceived as a negative

reaction to power the authors instead frame misbehaviour as an *active* set of practices that attempt to recover a degree of autonomy at work. Workers not only resist domination following a managerial manoeuvre but also take the initiative, taking the lead on various political issues. The book goes on to classify these appropriations into four types: the appropriation of time (time wasting, absenteeism), the appropriation of work (effort bargaining, soldiering), the appropriation of product (theft, fiddling) and the appropriation of identity (joking, sex games, class solidarity). These classifications are very broad ranged and refreshingly multi-dimensional. They offer the immediate advantage of expanding upon our traditional conceptions of resistance. In the past, research has tended to privilege overt, open and collective practices of dissent such as strikes, picketing and other forms of industrial action. But with the inclusion of the last category, in particular, a whole new realm of workplace practice is rendered visible as modalities of resistance that were ignored in the past. Resistance at the level of identity has tended to take a back seat to more 'material' practices of opposition (perhaps reflecting the concerns with Fordism and industrialism). However, because power now targets the very selves of workers via corporate culture engineering and self-managing teams, we must look at how identity becomes an important site of misbehaviour. We now find that opposition may be covert, subjective, subtle and sometimes unorganized (not to be confused with disorganized). This does not necessarily mean that such practices are any less effective, because in the age of stringent team normalisation and 'identity cleansing' the logic of resistance has shifted. Take the authors interesting comments regarding humour and irony:

Ironic, sardonic and satirical commentary on management initiatives have become in the current context significant forms of misbehaviour. Management today has an interest in trying to incorporate the sentiments of its employees and to harness their goodwill by doing so. (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 103)

Such an acknowledgment of the diverse forms of misbehaviour is undeniably timely, but there is little discussion regarding the ways in which these forms of resistance interact with each other. Collinson (1992, 1994) for example, argued that resistance through counter-identities unwittingly prevented workers from challenging their second-class status because irony, humour and the rest tended to give workers an illusionary sense of elevation and thus secured their consent to domination. On the other hand, we could imagine that cynicism and class-consciousness would be important companions to other forms of rebellion, supporting rather than impeding dissent. Such complexities and overlapping could have been explored a little more in the book.

A good deal of the book seems to be geared toward reprimanding the organization studies literature for being oblivious to the many ways in which workers resist power. The organization behaviour literature, for example, seems to see organizations as one big happy family, with benevolent managers giving rational orders and workers faithfully obeying. Such a picture, maintains the book, is outright misleading and misses much of what goes on in today's workplaces. If we are to gain a richer and more accurate understanding of how people work together then it is argued that we should keep the abiding politics of misbehaviour in mind. The dark underside of organizational life is of as much importance (if not more) to consolidating our understandings of contemporary workplaces as the saccharine 'everything's OK' narrative that many textbooks and journals invariably foist upon readers.

By far the most vitriolic comments, however, are reserved for those who write under the rubric of critical organization studies. And here, Ackroyd and Thompson really have an axe to grind. They quite rightly point out that much of the research on corporate culture engineering, surveillance, team normalisation, JIT etc. tends to take a position that is over-deterministic and dangerously totalising. That is, one is sometimes left with the impression that workers are merely passive clones of the corporate machine who are unable to think for themselves or resist. They argue that Sewell and Wilkinson (1992), Deetz (1992), Townley (1993; 1994), Willmott (1993), Barker (1993), Smith and Wilkinson (1995) and Casey (1995, 1999), for example, naively overstate the extent and effectiveness of new management practices and in doing so write worker resistance out of the picture. They lament, "writers are approaching their subject with the assumption that management has become – for the first time in its history – really effective in controlling behaviour" (1999: 6). Worker resistance features little in this stream of research not because it was not there but because of the obsessive preoccupation these authors seem to have with system integration and reproduction. As a result, the ways in which power is challenged, reversed and fails is left entirely out the picture, frustrating Ackroyd and Thompson no end.

Ackroyd and Thompson lay much of blame for this state of affairs with the Foucauldian perspective and its increasing dominance in critical organization studies. In the last chapter of the book (a rough reproduction of their 1995 article) they formulate their key argument that the Foucauldian approach in organization studies has succeeded wonderfully in explaining how workers are controlled (the docile and useful body) but has failed miserably in explaining how they resist and exercise their agency against and around various forms of domination. Even though they concede that Foucault does give a cursory mention of resistance in his analyses of power, the authors of this book hint that there still seems to be a totalising tendency inherent in his approach and this is why the aforementioned studies inspired by his work spend so little time studying worker misbehaviour. They write of Foucault:

...there is the problem that power is everywhere and nowhere, the impression can be given that it is a force from which there can never be any escape. Resistance is part of the formal picture, but is under-theorised and the dice is loaded against it...in the desire to avoid explanations at the level of the subject, human agency gets lost in the constitution of the subject solely through discourse...
(Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 157-158)

In rightly admonishing a particular group of Foucauldian organization scholars for forgetting about resistance, the authors make the rather rash, and I would say specious, accusation that the texts of Foucault leave little room for resistance because they 'see power everywhere, and therefore it is inescapable.' Of course, this is an outlandishly absurd misrepresentation of Foucault's position on power and resistance and such sloppily contrived caricatures tend to mar the final pages of their book. I do not remember reading in any of Foucault's texts that 'power is everywhere' or that resistance is about 'escaping power' or that because power totally saturates us we 'cannot resist'. I am by no means defending the Foucauldian perspective because I would agree with Ackroyd and Thompson that his work is probably not the most useful to understand contemporary work organization – however, you must have a good understanding of his texts before you critique them in such a pugnacious manner and the authors do not convince the reader that they have such an understanding. Moreover,

what about the important books in the field of organization studies that *do* draw upon Foucault to talk about resistance persuasively? Jermier, Knights and Nord's (1994) *Resistance and Power in Organizations* attempts to formulate a Foucauldian approach to resistance in the workplace but receives scant mention in this book. Dorinne Kondo (1990) writes at length about workplace resistance in a Foucauldian vein in her extremely influential *Crafting Selves* and receives no mention whatsoever. Why the glaring omissions?

Despite these shortcomings the authors do make a good case for thinking a little more seriously about resistance and workplace misbehaviour. The book is concisely written, thoroughly researched and exhibits a healthy empathy for workers, which much 'critical' research sadly lacks today. The argument and analysis is organized in a manner that is both sophisticated and accessible and it makes a worthwhile contribution to the study of contemporary organizations.

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