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Problematizing Global Knowledge and the New Encyclopaedia Project

An Introduction

Mike Featherstone and Couze Venn

*T*heory, Culture & Society will commemorate its 25th anniversary in 2007. This provides us with the opportunity to reflect on the project of a journal committed to theorizing culture and society. Since its inception the journal has endeavoured to promote and debate innovative or challenging theory, for example, in special issues and sections devoted to postmodernism, globalization, reflexive modernization, digitalization, multiculturalism, performativity, vitalism, complexity and so on. As to be expected, the prime focus has been on theorizing culture and society in the context of profound changes in the contemporary world, and the emergence of new interdisciplinary fields of study in the social sciences and humanities. Nevertheless, even though 'the new' and 'progress' have been subjected to persistent critique in the pages of this journal, we need to reflect more on the relevance and impact of our theorizations in the circuits of global knowledge. This raises questions not only about the authority of our formulations, but also about the addressee. The analysis of the globalization of culture and knowledge has been a central concern of the journal, yet it is also important to give greater consideration to our participation in the globalization of a western-centric knowledge. This is especially the case if we remain confident that the theorizations we feature are necessarily legitimated because they are the latest, and by corollary the most advanced.

In this special issue we seek to refocus attention on these questions and address the topic of the globalization of knowledge and its critique. As will become clearer in this introduction, the development of the New Encyclopaedia Project has enabled us to think through these issues about the production and circulation of knowledge in a way which opens up a more dialogical space of engagement with different globalizing knowledges and their modes of authorization. In considering these questions, we are trying to use, in what we hope proves to be a new way, an old form, namely, the encyclopaedia. A great deal of discussion and experimentation has gone into both the epistemological and the practical problems of how to reactivate this form as a forum for critique and for the production of new knowledge that would reflect the plurality of perspectives and interests that emerge in the flux of globalization and digitalization. Our overall goal is to open up the process of production and authorization of knowledge to greater questioning, along with the generation of new agendas for research that are sensitive to the broader questions of relevance, authority and public education.

The Problem of Global Knowledge

As we move into the 21st century, it is clear that the boundaries, limits and classification of our world are shifting. Cultures no longer seem to have the same level of stability as before – or at least as they are depicted in our theories. The uncertainty as to what we should know in the face of an enlarged world has become crystallized through the processes of globalization and digitalization.

The first, *globalization*, suggests that an important effect of the integration of the global economy within the framework of capitalism has been the clashing of cultures. From a number

of points of view, it may well be the case that we increasingly live in 'one world', but many contradictory processes are taking place: not just the extension of English as the language of business, commercial law and international non-governmental organizations, but also the visibility of different cultures and traditions and the need on the part of less powerful nations and groups to assert their diversity. We are becoming increasingly aware of different accounts of global history and various alternative modernities. Western accounts of the rise of modern times and the classification systems used in the social sciences and humanities are becoming challenged by counter-knowledges. This suggests we have to abandon many of the universalistic assumptions that underlie these systems, for example about linear temporality and progress, and instead start from a perspective which emphasizes global *variability*, global *connectivity* and global *inter-communication*.¹

The second process, *digitalization*, points to the capacity of the new information technologies to store and retrieve vast amounts of data. Yet to have all the cultural representations and texts of the world immediately at hand in this format raises the problem of the structure and classification of the world. This is especially so when many different forms and types of knowledge can be put into a vast database which can be traversed through hyperlinks and search engines. Yet who should construct the databases, hyperlinks and search engines: the state, the corporations, the university? A sort of order is emerging with the Internet, yet it is driven by many different and conflicting principles and interests, with the commercial dot.com economy currently in the ascendant. We therefore have a problem about how to classify, handle and access digital culture.

The title of this volume, 'Problematizing Global Knowledge', indicates our commitment to address these changes in terms of their consequences for knowledge. On one level these linked processes can be seen as the extension of a particular type of knowledge which aspires to become a global standard. In a similar manner to the way the Internet and intranets play an important role in netting together business activities and the financial markets through the global flows of information which legitimate a certain type of knowledge, academic and intellectual knowledge can be seen as subjected to similar processes.

If we examine the social sciences and humanities, there has frequently been the assumption that they were producing universal generic knowledge – valid for human beings in all times and places. But it was clear that this knowledge was the product of a particular place – historically Europe, or 'the West'. Yet more recently the idea of a more relational sense of conceptual formation has been proposed. Colonialism needs to be seen as a key element in the global space which defines what Europe is (Pagden, 1993) and is allowed to do. In effect, following Chakrabarty (2000: 17), there is the need to 'provincialize Europe':

The problem of capitalist modernity cannot any longer be seen simply as a sociological problem of historical transition (as in the famous 'transition debates' in European history) but a problem of translation, as well. There was a time – before scholarship itself became globalized – when the process of translating diverse forms, practices, and understanding of life into universalist political-theoretical categories of deeply European origin seemed to most social scientists as an unproblematic proposition. That which was considered an analytical category (such as capital) was understood to have transcended the fragment of European history in which it may have originated.

It is important that the problematization of knowledge does not repeat the denigration or silencing of non-western knowledge that has been the mark of a certain universalizing Occidentalism (Moore, 1996; Venn, 2000). A long history of social science's inability to grant epistemological equality to non-western knowledge and experience sustains the persistence of an attitude that still regards the others' world as deficient in some fundamental way. It legitimizes the not so subtle imposition of diagnoses, based upon economic and sociological theories and assumptions, of what ails the 'Third World' when it 'fails' to show signs of catching up with the standards set in the West to measure factors like wealth creation, education, way of life and so on. Mbembe has established the extent to which the 'extraordinary poverty' of the

corpus of social scientific knowledge concerning Africa has to do with the fact that '[M]ore than any other region, Africa thus stands out as the supreme receptacle of the West's obsession with, and circular discourse about, the facts of "absence", "lack", and "non-being", of identity and difference, of negativeness – in short, of nothingness' (2001: 4). Equally debilitating is the hold that western knowledge has on experts internationally, globalized in the form of the social engineering advocated by international NGOs like the World Bank and WTO and disseminated through countless courses in universities across the world, where the knowledge is taught as authoritative and universally valid.

Against this current in globalized knowledge, we would point to the extent to which a longer history of knowledge uncovers its diasporic character, demonstrating that cross-cultural borrowings and grafts are intrinsic to its formation in any culture or period. Thus a genealogy of medicine, agriculture, mathematics or navigational and writing technologies shows the extent to which knowledge developed in one culture or part of the world, like the Arabic, the Chinese or South Asian, crossed over into European and Greek science, often operating as one key condition of possibility for the later developments (Goonatilake, 1998; Harding, 1998). One of the effects of European colonialism and the differential emergence of modernity is that such genealogies can no longer be confined to territories and cultures. Indeed, as Mbembe points out about the effects of European occupation of African societies, '[F]rom a narrow methodological standpoint, this means that, from the fifteenth century, there is no longer a "distinctive historicity" of these societies, one not embedded in times and rhythms heavily conditioned by European domination' (2001: 9). Today, knowledge communities are even more diasporic and dispersed, and theory travels even more swiftly across cultural zones, though the problem for a democratization of knowledge remains that of the relative dominance of particular centres and authorizing procedures that continue to favour a specific western perspective; this situation underlies our argument for a radical de-centring of habitual conceptual frameworks.

History, then, should be seen as more spatial and relational. Societies cannot be studied in isolation, for they form a reference group knitted together through a wide range of exchanges and flows of information, goods and knowledge. But this does not mean each nation has an equal capacity to influence others. Nation-states and societies are embedded in a series of unequal power balances, and clearly the United States and Western Europe command vastly superior intellectual and academic resource bases and firepower. Hence the flows are generally seen as one way, from the more advanced 'superior' western centres to the rest. This suggests that we need to extend Appadurai's (1990) notion of global flows to the academic community itself. According to Sakai (2001: v), global academic and intellectual information can be seen as two distinctive flows:

The first is a centripetal flow of 'raw' and particularistic factual data from peripheral sites to various metropolitan centres 'in the West.' The second is a centrifugal flow of information about how to classify domains of knowledge, how to evaluate given empirical data, how to negotiate with the variety and incommensurability which is inherent in the body of empirical data from the peripheries, and how to render intelligible the details and trivia coming from particular peripheral sites to 'a Western audience.' Academic information of this second kind is generally called 'theory' and, in contrast to the particularistic nature of the first kind, it is believed to be universalistic and hostile to the presumption that only those who are involved in the locale can tell what it is that they are concerned with.

This situation means that if non-western scholars are to gain prestige and legitimate themselves, they are obliged to join the patronage networks which stem from the West. It can produce an orthodox mindset which non-western scholars are eager to accept. If global history must be spatial and relational, as many authors have pointed out, then there is potential for an alternative account of processes addressing not only our understanding of global history and culture, but academic history and culture too. The rise of the power potential of East Asia has complicated this process and is leading to a revision of Eurocentric theories of the rise of global

history (see Gunder Frank, 1998; Hobson, 2004; Pieterse, this issue; Pomeranz, 2000, who point to the considerable revisionist literature on the Middle East and other parts of Asia). While such works challenge the European exceptionalist views of Weber and Marx and their 20th- and 21st-century supporters, they have had relatively little impact on mainstream social science scholarship in the West. Yet they provide the basis for the development of counter-knowledges which can stimulate the establishment of alternative academic prestige networks which can encourage a new generation to reconstitute the global archive of knowledge and open up new research pathways.

The question of problematization thus needs to make use of a range of approaches in order to both uncover the mechanisms and processes constituting global knowledge as well as begin the construction of an alternative corpus that would support different forms of sociality. Some of these conceptual tools are familiar, for example, as deployed in the notion of critique, including the critique of ideology, that has a long history in the discourse of modernity. We have indicated already other approaches, namely genealogy and deconstruction. It is important that we add those of ethnography and a *longue durée* cross-cultural history – that is to say, it is important that problematization includes reference to how people actually live and make sense of their lives in different parts of the world, and that these processes be considered in the light of an historicity that recognizes the ‘multiplicity of times, trajectories, and rationalities’ (Mbembe, 2001: 9) and the complex and uneven temporalities that characterize change in any region. Problematization therefore ideally involves both critique and the production of a different archive of knowledge.

The potential constitution of the global archive of knowledge is in the first place a bringing together of the different knowledges of the world into the same space. A good deal has been written about the potential of digitalization to create such an archive, by scanning in the material in the various national and independent libraries and archives in order to achieve flexible search and recovery of documents. In one sense the contemporary ‘archive fever’ and ‘storage mania’ are driven by the new technological possibilities of digitalization which offer greater ease to document, record, store and retrieve material (see Featherstone, 2000, and the entry on archive in this issue). Yet while it is possible to search the digital archive (which includes the Internet via the various search engines such as Google), there is the tendency to view the technology as somehow neutral, as if the shift from the pen to the typewriter to the personal computer has no impact on the process of writing and self-formation (see Hayles, 1999). Different inscription systems and types of storage device used clearly have a major impact on the nature and type of knowledge produced (Kittler, 1990). To oversimplify we can view this in terms of changes in form and content, with the inscription and storage devices changing the form. But the form is not neutral, it opens up new worlds and possibilities.

The capacity to reconstitute the archive leads not just to increased *extensivity* – through the increased availability of newly recorded knowledge ‘at the fingertips’ – but also to increased *intensivity*, the qualitative shift into new forms of knowledge through encountering new metaphors and tropes. It has been suggested that theory in science originates in and relies on metaphors (Hesse, 1970). The largest source of metaphors around the world is Asia, especially India, China, Tibet. South Asia, for example, has one of the largest repositories of literature in the world. Yet, unfortunately, in recent years, the education of South Asian scholars totally neglects this tradition. But these accumulated writings in the various languages, literatures, philosophy and mathematics employ a vast range of epistemological and ontological positions which could be most stimulating for generating new discoveries and concept formation in the academy and the sciences. For example in Kerala, South India, there existed a strong tradition of mathematics and astronomy, and it is estimated that over 100,000 manuscripts have survived. Yet a recent *Sourcebook of Indian Astronomy* only listed 285 works (Goonatilake, 1998: 255). Estimates of all the Indian manuscripts available today in all languages are 500 million. The particular globalizing economy which the world is embarking upon itself, ironically, values South Indian knowledge experts in Bangalore and other places where computer programmes and other aspects of the information economy are out-sourced. This is not just a

question of favouring innovation and short-term economic gain over long-term scope of conservation of knowledge, it is to argue that the two are linked, that creative innovation frequently depends upon the exploration of that which is not close at hand. This also reminds us that, in the long term, ideas which contemporary scholars regard as failures and judge obsolete often re-emerge at later points in history. In the long term we need a sense of the traditions of knowledge around the world if we are to build an effective global archive for humanity, which would become a sort of global database, acting as a potential reservoir for generating new theories, new concepts and classification of knowledge. Such an archive would make problematic existing scholarly classifications, and usher in a de-classificatory mood. The question arises whether we are at a particular historical juncture at which the speed of knowledge delivery systems through digitalization is extending the de-classificatory attitude, or whether we are merely turning over the raw material from which new classifications emerge. At the same time, however much some would argue that we are being propelled into a world in which generative structures, flows and flux outpace classifications and our old typological mode of theorizing and require more contingent processual knowledge forms, the process of education itself demands learning processes which work off maps and classifications. Historically, when there has been the sense that the world itself is being remade and that too much new knowledge is emerging at a pace too difficult to assimilate, there has been the need for practical handbooks, with encyclopaedias one of the most successful forms.

So, the new encyclopaedia today has the potential to be both archive and a device for classifying and de-classifying knowledges and objects of the world. The new technologies mean that greater fluidity can be introduced in the process of searching databases, enabling the forging of new pathways in reading transversally across disciplines and types of data. This would connect with new research methods that make greater use of serendipity and are less circumscribed within disciplinary boundaries. There are implications in these arguments for a new form of archival hospitality, subversive of disciplinary and access restrictions, and new strategies for learning, and thus new educational processes that need to be invented and taught.

Yet neither an encyclopaedia nor an archive simply appears: an immense labour, largely invisible in the background, yields the data in a storable form, whether in the form of writing or computer storage systems. A central problem about memory arises here: what should we consider worth preserving or passing on, and in what forms can this inheritance be best preserved? Not everything can be digitized. Here we think of performance and music, the rituals of everyday living, that is, everything that has embodied and spatial density which varies in its performative enactment. Furthermore, the book still remains the cheapest, most accessible and most versatile resource for learning and thinking, especially when one considers that the production and operation of computers requires vast amounts of raw materials, resources that poorer countries cannot easily afford. These issues are made more complicated today because of the tie-up between problems of storage and access with questions of intellectual property rights and digital rights management that result in new restrictions and inequalities of access. The problematization of knowledge cannot avoid these wider and longer-term issues that bring to the fore questions of responsibility and ethics.

Encyclopaedias and Classification

The term encyclopaedia is generally thought of as indicating a device which systematically organizes knowledge of a known, or knowable world. The extensiveness and comprehensiveness of the phenomena classified can be seen to legitimate the world: because the multifarious aspects of the world have been documented and summarized, then the world can be taken to exist. An encyclopaedia is a flexible type of ordering somewhere between a system and a list. Many of the entries refer to each other in a coherent way and could be extracted to reconstruct a systematic disciplinary order, such as, for example, the discipline of physics. Indeed, this was one of the features and selling points of early popular encyclopaedias, such as Chambers *Cyclopaedia*. Encyclopaedias, in short, are devices for concisely assembling, classifying and indexing vast amounts of knowledge about the known world. They have a long history

and can be found throughout the world in many cultural and civilizational traditions. Islam had a long history of encyclopaedias, with the Arab encyclopaedia tradition going back at least as far as the 10th century to the work of Ibn Qutayba.² The Chinese encyclopaedia tradition is particularly interesting in terms both of the scope of some of the massive projects and the nature of the classification systems involved.³ 類書 *Leishu*, or Chinese encyclopaedias, have enjoyed a central position within Chinese literature and raise many questions not only about the exhaustiveness of the compilations, but also the extent to which the translation of *Leishu* as encyclopaedia is adequate for the very different pedagogic system with its mode of knowledge construction and transfer (Hahn, 2000; Kaderas, 1996).

In the western tradition⁴ perhaps the most famous encyclopaedia has been the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des Arts, et des Métiers* (1751–65), edited by Diderot and D'Alembert. Indeed it was sought as the key book of the Enlightenment. This and earlier encyclopaedias, such as Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* (1728), were addressed to a burgeoning literary public who looked for some authoritative and clear statements of the new expanding field of scientific and practical knowledge.⁵ Indeed, in France the *Encyclopédie* came to be regarded as a rallying point for the more cosmopolitan *philosophes* against the academies sponsored by the King. The new forms of communication helped to begin to bind together a scattered readership into 'a republic of letters'. Diderot envisaged a voluntary association of individuals responsible for the production of the encyclopaedia, which also suggests a wide public readership. Eighteenth-century encyclopaedias were aimed at a public without geographical or denominational limits. This was a cosmopolitan ideal which informed much of European Enlightenment culture: the ideal of transportable knowledge across national boundaries, with individuals of whatever social status able to participate in a universal conversation (Yeo, 2001: 56).

The *Encyclopédie* not only became a bestseller in France, but helped to generate a large public interest elsewhere in Europe, demonstrating the appeal of the Enlightenment to the upper and middle classes (Darnton, 1979: 528). It contained contributions from many eminent scholars and scientists of the day (including Condorcet, d'Holbach, Montesquieu, Necker, Rousseau, Turgot and Voltaire) and was built around the idea of an exhaustive classification, ordering and connection of human knowledge. It is something which it was assumed would produce benefits for humanity, with social and human engineering potentially following scientific description and classification.

Diderot and the *philosophes*, then, had the dream of recording all knowledge; Diderot remarked that he wanted:

to collect all knowledge scattered over the face of the earth, to present its general outlines and structure to the men with whom we live, and to transmit this to those who will come after us, so that the work of the past centuries may be useful to the following centuries, that our children, by becoming more educated, may at the same time become more virtuous and happier, and that we may not die without having deserved well of the human race.

Yet Diderot was also aware that the *Encyclopédie* was a response to a period of intellectual ferment and that the attempt to provide a sort of 'counter-academy' which would provide a resource for generations to come ran up against the problem of time, as it sought to cope with the explosion of new knowledge (Rosenberg, 2001). Important here is not just the use of the encyclopaedia as a dictionary of new scientific terms, a forum for new theories, often unorthodox or challenging, or a reference manual or handbook of modernity, but also the way in which the availability of this information and its initial piecemeal subscription format helped stimulate public discussion and dialogue. So the encyclopaedia could be used by the public to provide information, to update people on some new technique, scientific discovery or newly discovered and classified flora or fauna. At the same time it appealed to a public discovering its appetite for public education, the potential to express and discuss new knowledge in an informed and critical manner. In short the *Encyclopédie* can be seen as an important intervention in the establishment of a European civil society in which free discussion, dialogue, tolerance and

questions of cultural rights became emergent. Also important was the public/market synthesis of the project and the ways in which this tradition tried to resist monopolization and authoritarian control, through the appeal to and invention of an informed public. Significantly, it became the target of censorship.

The cosmopolitan intentions of the encyclopaedists gave way to the construction of encyclopaedias within the cultural policies and national projects of nation-states, with first the appearance of *Britannica* in the late 18th century. The focus on biography and history in *Britannica* meant that it not only functioned as a dictionary of arts and sciences, as did earlier encyclopaedias, but it aligned encyclopaedias as one of the new devices for the invention of national culture and traditions. Thus, with the emergent re-figuration of European nations as nation-states, which rapidly became locked into a series of intensifying struggles in the 19th and 20th centuries, the role of encyclopaedias expanded from the selection and presentation of valued knowledge to help in the constitution of national imaginaries. With the independence of colonies in the second half of the 20th century, several new nation-states engaged in their own version of this process and developed their own encyclopaedias. Yet one of the aporias was that often the intention was to retain the modernizing potential and include scientific and technological content, while seeking to embed it within a different cultural framework. There were prototypes in those countries which had escaped European colonization and had modernized more on their own terms, such as Meiji Japan in which the Japanese encyclopaedia became a systematic handbook of state-led modernization and invented tradition.⁶ Independent ex-colonial states such as India regarded encyclopaedias as practical handbooks for modernity, a guide to the expanding world of science and technological developments, juxtaposed with attempts to reinvent traditions and develop a new national culture.⁷ This was also the case with the Soviet Union and The People's Republic of China, as they sought to widen the scope for practical everyday scientific, technical and civil knowledge, presented in the form of an alternative world, albeit a world to come. The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union were accompanied by a wave of new encyclopaedia building. The recent publication of encyclopaedias in Eastern Europe and Russia confirms again the importance of the encyclopaedia as a sign of sovereignty and independence at the beginning of a new wave of democratization and the assertion of national identity.

While many post-Second World War nation-states are still engaged in a process of state formation and invention of national cultures, this process has become more difficult to sustain in the face of the current phase of globalization over the last two decades. This has not only resulted in the opening up of markets and the emergence of packaged global education, it has also seen significant shifts in intellectual and academic life, especially in the social sciences and humanities (postmodernism and postcolonialism being symptoms of this shift). As we have noted, there has been an increasing interrogation of the largely European-based conceptual armoury and classification system of knowledge and much of its content, along with a renewed interest in cosmopolitan forms of knowledge. In the light of the recognition of cultures as fundamentally hybrid and syncretic assemblages, shaped by the diasporic movements of peoples, knowledges, technologies and everyday practices, there has also been a contestation of the presentation of cultures as integrated, located and bounded entities. These shifts inside the academy have been bolstered by the movements towards greater global integration through communications technologies such as the Internet and the emergence of a nascent global civil society (via the activities of international non-governmental organizations and internationally organized protests against economic globalization which have brought into being the World Social Forum and other bodies). They have significant implications for how one is to reconstitute the encyclopaedia today, and how it would function in relation to this emergent global 'public sphere'.

Anti-encyclopaedias: Encyclopaedias Are Good to Think with . . .

It is clear from our arguments that encyclopaedias are devices for ordering the world in a particular way; this is because the way in which they seek to provide an exhaustive listing of

every relevant phenomenon in the known world and show the way they are linked together assumes, as well as institutes, an underlying order. Classification is at the heart of this enterprise of order-giving and sustaining. Yet every classification system is haunted by its exclusions, separations and forced hierarchies, its conversion of fluid emergent processes and events into stable categories. This has proved to be fascinating for those in the arts: what better way to show the absurdity and contingency of our world order than to provide an alternative classification.

One of the oft-cited examples of this arbitrariness is Jorge Luis Borges' discussion of 'a certain Chinese encyclopaedia' entitled the 'Celestial Empire of Benevolent Knowledge'. He tells us that

In its remote pages it is written that the animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies.

Borges' Chinese encyclopaedia is bewildering and disturbing in its capacity to challenge us to 'try and think the world in terms of this if you can'. Yet as we see in the discussion of actual Chinese encyclopaedias (see note 3), the example Borges cites can be seen as only stretching the classifications actually used in Chinese history. His classifications may well seem bizarre and strange from the perspective of modern scientized culture, which tends to see the world in terms of categories such as viruses, bacteria, insects, reptiles, fish, mammals, primates, humans, etc. This is because Borges questions all the various constructs and interpretations we impose upon reality: the ordering of the universe will continue to escape us because the classification systems we use cannot help but be shot through with contingency and arbitrariness and derive from customary practice. This perspective is very much in tune with that of the later Wittgenstein who abandoned his earlier search for a propositional language in which the logic of terms could be shown to accurately correspond to or picture reality, in favour of the view that language is the fabric of our world (see Johnson, 1997). But Borges goes further in the destabilization of our world by suggesting in his fictions the way 'the world out there' is shot through with other strange worlds, which operate on very different metaphysical principles. He does so in a form which crosses between, on the one hand, a short story with its authorial narrative and, on the other, an essay in which there is some attempt to make sense and marshal an argument to deal logically with a series of strange occurrences and phenomena which invade and disturb our categories through the glimpses they provide of the very different order of the fabulous other world. One of the most powerful statements of the glimpses of such an alternative world is provided through a fictional encyclopaedia, *The First Encyclopaedia of Tlön*, discussed in Borges' (1999a) fictional essay 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius'.⁸

As both Roy Boyne and Maria Esther Maciel emphasize in their pieces on classification in this issue, another important literary figure to be fascinated by the act of classification was Georges Perec, who developed a number of amusing systems of classification to illustrate the great temptation inscribed in the idea of viewing the whole world in terms of a single code, although at the same time we know that this doesn't work and will never work.⁹ The challenge to 'think the world' through an improbable set of categories is also central to Georges Bataille, Michel Leiris, Marcel Griaule, Carl Einstein and Robert Desnos' (1995) *Encyclopaedia Acephalica*. This 'headless encyclopaedia', an encyclopaedia produced without an ordering principle or classificatory hierarchies, was put together largely in Paris in the 1930s and 1940s by writers associated with the Acéphale and Surrealist groups, including people from the College de Sociologie.¹⁰ This attempt to produce an encyclopaedia of *heterology*, with its love of the formless, and heteronomy, produced many amusing and astonishing formulations. The encyclopaedia (a compilation from a *Critical Dictionary* edited by Bataille and related texts, which runs to just over 140 pages and includes numerous full-page photographs and images)

included entries on: Big Toe, Civilization, Eye, Formless, Gunshot, Hygiene, Ju-Ju, Man, Mouth, Nightingale, Reptiles, Skyscraper, Slaughterhouse and Spittle. Another contemporary example is the 'encyclopaedic cinema' of Peter Greenaway who remarks that he loves to create his own systems in the form of lists and found the categories of the Borges Chinese encyclopaedia 'healthy' (Maciel, forthcoming 2006). This move away from narrative form to a list, series or catalogue plays with continuity and discontinuity.

The encyclopaedia, then, for many, is the epitome of order, a classificatory device which relies on the alphabetical list to pull together entries that substantiate a world, entries which can be linked together into various subject areas such as disciplines to provide a systematic introduction to a topic. Yet this principle of orderly disciplinary reconstruction belies a number of features of the encyclopaedia which make it less of a clear and visible tree of knowledge and more of a subterranean rhizome. This feature has been seized on by recent anti-encyclopaedists who seek to subvert the enterprise of worlding and show its contingency, arbitrariness and limitlessness. This is a point made by Umberto Eco who, remarking on the 'unlimited semiosis' of the encyclopaedia, even compared it to Deleuze's rhizome, in which every point connects with any other.

According to Eco, the encyclopaedia, contrary to the intentions of Enlightenment thinkers, does not reflect an ordered universe in a univocal and rational way, but supplies rules which are generally myopic and only agree with some provisional criterion of order. In effect, encyclopaedias attempt to give meaning to a disordered world whose criteria of order escape us (Eco, 1999: 337; Maciel, forthcoming 2006).¹¹ This contrasts with the type of order produced by the dictionary, which works to register the properties of words in a succinct manner. Encyclopaedic competence, on the contrary, excludes the possibility of hierarchizing the semantic marks, the linguistic properties and the semes in a single, uncontroversial way in its endeavour to map the life of a culture as a system of inter-semiotic systems.

If we consider the encyclopaedia form as having the potential to pull towards ordered taxonomy, but also towards the opposite pole of incompleteness, then it is a form which becomes relevant for our age. It is consistent with the view that challenges the drive to construct a permanent order of culture in which one is sure of what to put in and what to leave out, and sure of the boundaries between cultures. It could be argued that hypertext has the potential to deliver this mobility into the middle of the encyclopaedia enterprise. Indeed, the links at the end of entries, the various charts on how to read and join-up entries to make introductory textbooks etc. – the ordering impulse – is at the same time a potentially disordering impulse, threatening to take the reader off into the delights of serendipity. It is this dual characteristic of encyclopaedias, of ordering and disordering knowledge and the world, of limiting connections as well as multiplying them, which interests us in this issue and in the larger project.

Emergent Publics, Information and the Archive

These concerns resonate with the longer-term interests we have had in *Theory, Culture & Society* to theorize emergent social and cultural change, manifest in the attention we have given over the last 20 years to: postmodernism, global culture, reflexive modernization, complexity theory, vitalism, and so on. As Karin Knorr Cetina (2005) remarks, both the new global terrorism and the global markets challenge our habitual modes of social science analysis and can best be understood via complexity theory with its emphasis on the major imbalances between cause and effect, unpredictable outcomes, and self-organizing, emergent structures. This contrasts with the earlier dreams of social science to produce general explanations and the achievement of expert control. The management of uncertainty, task predictability and orderly performances were much easier to facilitate in the 'relatively complex' organizations of modern industrial societies. It can be added that it seemed far easier to understand the latter in terms of modes of classification derived from the natural sciences. The emphasis upon a spatial arrangement where stability was thought to reside in fixed categories and traditions, relatively separated and distantiated from one another, favoured the use of stable social science classifications

and the spatial arrangement of knowledge based upon the model of natural history, as noted by Foucault (1970) and others. The interest of the modern form of governance on normalization and regulation within fixed boundaries of social order pre-disposed social scientific knowledge to focus on the orderable and to neglect everything else as noise or incidental. Today's emphasis upon flows, flux, speed and the movement of things into a global far-from-equilibrium state of affairs clearly produces difficulties for any practical ordering of knowledge. This is the world of non-linear dynamics we referred to earlier, mentioned by Ulrich Beck (2002) with his plea for a rethinking of social epistemology to produce a cosmopolitan social science in response to the changes in the ontology of the social based on the emergence of the global. Yet although many share his sense of unease with the inappropriateness of continuing to draw on the conceptual armoury of existing social science categories, not everyone shares his optimism that a new cosmopolitan social science can be constructed.

This also translates into a tension between the educative impulse, which puts a premium on the need to provide some sense of rudimentary conceptual order and clarity in order to teach social science today, and the theoretical impulse, directed towards the theorization of the implications of the emergent global and technological tendencies. Yet, as we have argued, the encyclopaedia form is well suited for tackling these different aims and prospective audiences for re-thinking global knowledge. At the same time, this potential to experiment with the encyclopaedic form has not been evident in the expansion of the numbers of encyclopaedias produced in recent years.¹² One of the most ambitious academic encyclopaedias has been the recent 26-volume Elsevier *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (2001) which contains over 4000 articles commissioned by 52 section editors.¹³ Organizationally, the encyclopaedia seems to have adopted a conventional pyramid structure with commissioning editors appointed to oversee traditional disciplinary domains: sociology, economics, political science, law, anthropology, etc., who in turn commission contributors. Entry writers tend to have been seen as authorities, experts who could put their 'stamp' of validity on to knowledge. The large number of editors and advisors listed were drawn primarily from the United States and Europe, with a small sprinkling of non-western scholars.

A diametric contrast would be *Wikipedia*, a free Internet encyclopaedia in which entries can be written by anyone who so wishes. This openness and de-authorization of the cult of experts is coupled with an open editing system: anyone can over-write an entry. While there is a clear gain in open public participation and dialogue about entries, with the *Wikipedia* conceived as an open site constantly being built, re-built and dismantled, the minimal central editing and open invitation to rewrite is burdened with problems of validity. The need to validate a trustworthy source can be seen as part of a more general problem about the knowledge people take from the Internet. Yet, like the Elsevier encyclopaedia, *Wikipedia* is low on inter-disciplinarity and innovation, since it follows traditional disciplinary divisions which tend to favour the reproduction of knowledge. A key question, then, is how to encourage greater flexibility in the evaluation process whilst resisting existing patronage networks, knowledge monopolies and the reproduction of established classifications. We need to find practical ways to avoid one-way flows of global knowledge in the form of 'theory' from dominant centres, which franchise sub-centres and representatives around the world. Important here is the encouragement of innovation and the incorporation of knowledge which doesn't fit existing classifications. From our perspective, as we contemplate the construction of digital archives, with hypertext links and speed of search and access, the challenge is to understand the medium. That is, we cannot assume the Internet or a notional global digital encyclopaedia to be a neutral content delivery system.¹⁴

In addition to the need to theorize the emergent global public sphere, with the clashing of different knowledges and cultures along with all the difficulties that analysts of multiculturalism and the formation of an appropriate education for global citizens have alluded to, there is the question of how far a public sphere grounded in a shared common stock of knowledge available in digitalized form is possible. It can be assumed that this would be a long way from the type of bourgeois public sphere identified by Jürgen Habermas (1989). In the Habermasian

model of the public sphere, the pull is towards the communicative rationality of the ideal speech situation in which rhetoric, affect and body aesthetics are meant to be filtered out to allow the force of the better argument to become recognized. If a public involves self-organizing open communication amongst strangers, then there may be many emergent forms of public life (Calhoun, 2002). Rather than the model of the global public sphere, it can be argued that it would be more appropriate to think of 'global public life', with the displacement of the term 'sphere' by the term 'life' suggesting the difficulty of separating politics and aesthetics, and cognition and affect. The accent on life, furthermore, points to the potential for information to be conceived as *alive*, as an autopoietic system, or as a complex multiplicity which does not necessarily behave and act as a docile tool but rather is worlding, inventive and generative. A different notion of information is at stake here, in opposition to the conventional view of its neutrality and factuality. Rather, information can be conceptualized as *puissance*, that is, as extensor or producer of capabilities, so that it is relocated within an ontology that regards human beings as prosthetic, technical beings inhabiting informational worlds.

One could thus say that people don't just use digital archives, rather they increasingly inhabit a different informational society which is a digital archive (Brouwer and Mulder, 2003). The digital databases have the capacity to operate in ways which go beyond the ordered grids, knowledge-trees and hierarchies of traditional means of accessing information in libraries and archives. In principle at least, digital archives offer new levels of flexibility and instability and a non-linearity which favours unexpected transversal connections and hypertext jumps which have the potential to offer creative insights and inventions. The New Encyclopaedia Project aims to both investigate and take advantage of this potential for producing creative informational networks, though this requires an education or apprenticeship into new ways of thinking and being, and the provision of new knowledges and critical perspectives, an issue we discuss in the final section.

If we think less of global public sphere and more of global public life, then a key dimension of this life works through digital systems such as the Internet. Increasingly the Internet offers not only new layout and graphics for text along with mobility between sites, but also images, pop-ups and video-clips. It must be admitted that educational activity on the Internet is but a tiny percentage compared to the use of sites that provide trading, pornography, gambling, and chatting or blogging, and downloading music. Additionally, the commodification of knowledge restricts what knowledge can belong to the public domain. Nevertheless an expanding part of the learning experience of a new generation of students is being filtered through this new media form, although relatively few academics have shown an interest in theorizing and thinking through the implications of this process. In this context, we need to take seriously the arguments of those like Maurizio Lazzarato (forthcoming) who seek to investigate the affective and aesthetic character of immaterial labour and the ways in which this is associated with the centrality of visual and informational innovation and invention in contemporary capitalism. Lazzarato argues that video registers this new form of informational digital capitalism most clearly and focuses on the way in which it produces subjectivity not primarily in language, but rather in duration and the body. His argument is that video has the capacity to affect the brain without necessarily passing through explicit forms of representation. According to his theory, video technologies work in real time on perception through delaying, contracting, accelerating, to translate fluxes inaccessible to human perception into images to provide access to a new aesthetic dimension. The editable and reconstitutable video-image points to a shift from representation to the constitution of the world, to the generation of aesthetic assemblages which suggest video and digital technologies take us beyond simulational television culture to reveal new possibilities for invention (see discussion in Toscano, forthcoming). This means, for Lazzarato, that capital has freed time from the repetition of the present (habit/custom) and from the repetition of the past (memory/tradition) to produce a new ontology of time and power, a multiple time of creation and invention.

Whilst there are many problems with this attempt to re-think the relationship of production, technology, time and being post-Marx and post-Gutenberg, it puts on the agenda the

mobility of this relationship and draws attention to what is emergent in present conditions with the shift to 'immaterial labour' and to the different functioning of affect in corporate global capitalism and the new, de-centred and de-territorialized, and in some sense virtual apparatus of rule which characterizes Empire. For Negri (2003), the key move in Marx's theory of 'the real subsumption of labour by capital' – and thus in his theory of value – is the theorization of technology within the conceptual limits of labour power, and thus ultimately within the purview of exchange value within capitalism. This approach neglects the understanding of being as both technical-being and as being-in-time, an understanding that at one level relates technics to time (Stiegler, 1998) and at another level relates cognition to affect. If Lazzarato is correct about contemporary capital's freeing of time from the repetition of the past, one must then take seriously the implication that this short-circuiting of time by capital abolishes the time of the collective and allows the veil of visibility to obscure the collaborative and cumulative nature of work, preventing its coming-into-view, as Arendt might say. A problem then arises as to the process of liberation – the time to come of the creation of a new being out of the productive cooperation of the multitude, in Negri's (2003) and Lazzarato's analyses. For Negri the break with the pre-Einsteinian, and Marxist, concept of time and its relation to production and value implies that 'time cannot be presented as measure, but must rather be presented as the global phenomenological fabric, as base, substance and flow of production in its entirety' (2003: 29). In his development of an alternative view, one which conceptualizes time as multiplicity and as linked to collectivity (Negri notes this view in the Chinese tradition) and as what 'changes the past into the future' (Borges cited in Negri, 2003: 31), he argues for an ontological paradigm of time, namely, as 'the fabric of the whole of being' (2003: 34), and being as temporal being (the reference to Heidegger is explicit in Negri). So the move is towards an idea of constitution and becoming, of decay and invention.

Whilst Negri works through the problems of futurity through the analysis of antagonism – and there are other analytics of the relation of technology, time and the production and mutability of life (for example, Grosz, 2004; Massumi, 2002) – we would like to highlight the point of view of anticipation and orientation in considering the within-timeness of being, that is, the attention to historicity that considers that our past does not so much 'follow along' as 'go ahead' in its tending-towards (Heidegger, 1987: 41). One implication – following still the standpoint of being as a becoming – is that what has been is operative, as equipment, as memory, as tradition, as trace, in the present. Globalization introduces a new scale in this process, involving knowledge and its accumulation as memory and potentiality on a world scale. This suggests the enlargement of the archive to include marginalized or dissident knowledges, along with its continual incorporation and reactivation in the search for new ways of being.

The statement that 'behind all scholarly research stands the archive' now encounters the fact that the archive in question is becoming the global archive. It is also becoming a digitalized archive, one in which the past records and artefacts are not only subject to digitalization but one in which life is 'lived under the gaze of the digital will to archive' (a sort of complicit *Truman Show* existence). Yet one of the interfaces for the archive is the encyclopaedia. In this special issue we are not just seeking to problematize global knowledge but arguing that the relationship between the archive and the encyclopaedia is also unstable and that the space between the archive and the encyclopaedia is worthy of investigation.

Encyclopaedic Explorations

In thinking through the structure of the current special issue and the project at large there are a number of key issues which have emerged.

The New Encyclopaedia Project

The first is the scope and boundaries of the volume and the larger project. The usual way to make an encyclopaedia is to appoint senior editors to gather together discipline editors who make lists based upon the classifications which are seen as relevant. The encyclopaedic device of A–Z listing allows for an expandable series in which material which does not fit the usual

categories can be inserted. It is this exhaustiveness, to potentially be able to find some preliminary information on an unknown item, however obscure, which is part of their appeal. At the same time, there is also often the facility for a disciplinary reassembly of concepts: the using of special index guides to disciplines which provide reading-order lists, which could enable the reader to construct an introductory textbook from the material. In the early days of the project, along with colleagues and postgraduates at Nottingham Trent University, we began by looking at encyclopaedia entry listings in order to think through both the structuring of the authorized knowledge in use and the major absences and exclusions which became apparent if we tried to think more globally. This Sisyphean task was soon abandoned in favour of the focus on clusters, which proved to be a useful initial solution to both the problems of scope and relevance. In effect, it made us focus down from the exhaustive mega-list, to start from where we were located in time and space and the set of conceptual issues with which we were familiar through our interests and work in *Theory, Culture & Society*. Cluster topics such as the media, megacities, consumer culture, religion and food offered the potential of a relatively circumscribed 'middle range' set of topics. Each cluster topic could be addressed as a separate assemblage, which could be thought through in an inter-disciplinary manner. Clusters could be addressed via the excavation of various genealogies along with the delineation of the various interests which have sought to stake out and impose a particular set of classifications, an order of knowledge. The spatial ordering of the knowledge production of the particular cluster topic – the location, direction and intensity of knowledge transmission routes and media around the world, along with their power potential and legitimation processes – was also seen as a significant aspect.

The advantages here are in terms of the problematization of conventional modes of addressing a cluster topic. But also in terms of a potentially deliverable project, which should be centrally seen as a research project, not a book-keeping, data-gathering exercise. Important here is the practical side of the project, the way in which the delineation of the various dimensions of the cluster topic has been addressed in workshops, colloquia and extended editorial group meetings in various parts of the world. If we are arguing for a more dialogical form of global knowledge, then we have to begin the dialogue in our own research and writing practices.¹⁵

It is also important to emphasize that the New Encyclopaedia Project is a *project*, something experimental and in process. The construction of an encyclopaedia of global knowledge is an unbalanced dream worthy of a Borges piece. Yet, rather than completeness and the aporias of remaking the Library of Babel, we would emphasize the essential unfinished and unfinishable nature of the project. The New Encyclopaedia Project should be seen as more of an encyclopaedia in ruins than a bright, shiny new city of knowledge. Or better, the structure is something akin to the megacity (one of our next cluster topics) in its mixture of forms and generation of unexpected emergent qualities and domains, which defy definitive mapping.

The Structure of the Current Issue

Second, the current issue on *Problematizing Global Knowledge*, which is the first volume of the project, should, therefore, be regarded as a prototype which exemplifies these structural dilemmas. In proposing a problematization, we are trying both to draw from the different traditions of critique, recognizing the different stakes for the politics of knowledge across the globe, as well as experiment with new techniques and cross-disciplinary analytical tools. This experimental apparatus is put into practice in this special issue through a structure that works at three interrelated levels. In the first place we have considered knowledge in terms of the broader epistemological framework that determines or circumscribes its production, namely the meta-concepts and meta-narratives that come to operate as foundations or generative ground for any particular corpus of knowledge, to which we have added the need to make visible the sites at which knowledge is variously produced, authorized, disseminated and inserted into a public arena. These three sections – meta-concepts, meta-narratives and meta-sites and institutions – form the major guiding classification within which we can

endeavour to rethink global knowledge. The idea here in highlighting these broad categories is to indicate that principles and assumptions outside particular specialisms, for example an idea of modernity and scientific objectivity and their association with a secular foundation, invariably function as part of the epistemological protocols that determine what kind of arguments may be admissible in establishing legitimate knowledge in any particular discursive formation. Furthermore, broad categories like gender and race have effects right across specialisms. We have tried to encourage contributors, as much as possible, to make these effects visible in the writing of entries and supplements.

At the same time, the sets provide a device for indicating affinities and contrast amongst the material collected; they are recognizable topics, for example, religion, the university, embodiment, science, that refer to areas of debate and concern amongst an informed public. Additionally, this ordering has allowed the editorial team to insert cross-disciplinary approaches within the structure itself. More could clearly have been done here, but we were limited by both space and time. For instance, several of the sets – media, library, hospital, nature, nation are obvious ones – are ‘under construction’. So the entries and supplements in any one set are meant to be indicative of the aims, and to trigger the thought of other possible items that would more fully fill out the sets.

The Supplement

Third, we have sought to guide contributors in the writing of entries and supplements by providing them with a number of documents which outline the project aims and spell out how it differs from a conventional encyclopaedia. We have sought to encourage the writing of entries which have a wider sense of disciplinary and classificatory formation and can provide a sense of the struggles out of which apparently secure conceptual order emerged. The intention has been not to encourage contributors to write as authorities, but more to de-authorize by making visible the contested processual basis of knowledge formation. This should be coupled with an awareness of alternative genealogies, counter-memories and stoppages in the formation of particular conceptual lines.

A key form here is the use of supplements, which should not be considered as dilettantish remnants but more as prisms which make visible another possible configuration of the concept or way in which the entry could have been written. The use of supplements is important, as the logic of the supplement can be said to manifest the critical logic of the project, in so far as it lays bare the relationship between the field of knowledge and the frameworks through which that field is continuously produced. It also points to the unfinished, incomplete nature of entry writing which we have mentioned and is central to the structure of the New Encyclopaedia Project. Indeed, a tension is thus instituted between the entry and its supplements, although within the scope of the new encyclopaedia entries are not proposed as authoritative statements which summarize the latest state of knowledge about specific topics, but already have begun the work of problematization and de-hierarchization.

The supplement thus provides the space for making visible the absence-presence of what has been erased, marginalized, covered over or misrecognized in the emergence of the dominant gaze. This may not entail a direct dialogue and contestation of the entry – for example in the ‘history of the victors’ with regard to elite historiography, or the way a dominant paradigm consigns previous approaches to a history of error as its lapsed or out-of-date past, the way Occidental accounts of knowledge discount the contributions from other cultures that were nevertheless constitutive, or the way cognitivism in the sciences side-lines the affective dimension of existence. More generally, the supplement reveals a lack at the heart of any discourse that attempts to establish itself as self-sufficient or that presents its authority as sovereign or immanently present, as plenitude; this lack nevertheless remains as trace (of a necessary deferral), or of the forgetting of a constitutive ‘outside’ or excess, that deconstructive work brings to the surface. It is also the place where debates regarding approaches and method can be presented to guide the reader. It is thus a point of departure, and can be of more significance than the entry from the point of view of innovation. In the hardback edition

of this issue, which will follow shortly, we have tried to further subvert a sense of fixed structure by inserting quotes and images that open up alternative themes and configurations. In effect, we have sought to supplement the supplements.

The Encyclomedia to Come?

Fourth, the exploration of lines of connection is something which is central to a digital version of the project, something made possible through hypertext. We are only just beginning to think what an encyclopaedia can do. Perhaps, as we mentioned earlier, we need a new term to point to the increased mobility in working the space between the encyclopaedia and the archive. In some ways what is emergent is more of an *encyclomedia* – a circling, returning and spiralling through knowledge in many different connective forms. At the same time we have a degree of ambivalence about the use of this new term. The term loses the '*pedia*', the educative aspect, with its connotations of ethical education and forming of the person. In addition, *media* can cut a number of ways, indicate both extension, the availability of more information, which can mean more facts at the finger tips through new media such as the Internet; but also intensity, the qualitative shifts of levels, the shock of new connections and opening up of new directions/dimensions for creative invention.

Encyclomedia could well operate as a useful additional term to encyclopaedia, pointing to the creative exploration of the space between the archive and the encyclopaedia. The social and cultural sciences today have to deal with mediated everyday life and public institutions, which suggests that the media are both a topic and a resource. It is something academics need to study and theorize to make sense of the contemporary world. Yet they are also something we use in the form of writing and researching devices, and increasingly in teaching and seminars with multimedia presentations to students and colleagues involving images, sound, music, diagrams, video. This centrality of the media points to a number of significant aspects. First, there is creative research practice: the need to learn how to handle and navigate the enlarged archive of academic material (the potential global archive, or inter-archive drawing on the world's digitalized libraries and archives). Second, the analysis of the expanding public and private storage systems, the 'storage-mania' in which ordinary people, as well as corporations, institutions and collectivities, purchase, collect, record, catalogue, classify, edit and store material in digital format (via iPods, webcams, mobile phone photos and clips etc.), as well as exchanging and publishing material in new formats, including Internet sites. The archivist surfaces from curating dusty cardboard boxes in the depths of the library basement into the everyday surveillance and recording of the world illuminated by the light of thousands of screens. This is the dream of the world of ubiquitous media, with embedded communications chips to make all spatial locations smart environments.

Digital media enable us to think beyond the book, or the working desktop covered with piles of opened books, journals and photocopies as our writing resource base, to the screen with its own virtual desktop, writing space or 'window' and Internet connections. Or better, it points to our various modes of to-ing and fro-ing between the two modalities. It is important we attempt to theorize this new process of knowledge formation both in the possibilities for research and writing and also in the presentation of material. This is one of the central aims of the New Encyclopaedia Project. It is important that we explore ways of showing the process of knowledge formation. There is still the tendency to regard an article or book as a finished object, when of course we know this is not the case. There is also the tendency to focus on and interpret the final object, but we know from the accounts of the lives of artists, writers, poets etc. that there are many illuminating turns in the process in which earlier draft material can be seen as of equal significance to the 'final' result. There is an interest in the process of drafting, researching, discarding and recovery of 'rubbish'. Matisse, for example, devoted over a hundred sittings to one portrait, which underwent many radical transformations, which reportedly made the sitter weep over the disappearance of earlier renditions, now forever lost (see Antliff, 1999: 199). With digital recording devices and digital writing and editing devices it is possible for this process of knowledge formation to be made more

readily available, despite the caveats about capturing performance and the everyday mentioned earlier. An article can be linked to its own archive of related material and earlier drafts, as well as inter-archiving to cited material and sources. It is something of this capacity for the Internet that Tim Berners-Lee (1999) had in mind when he envisaged the Internet as a free-net where we could hypertext jump across to every text, before the intellectual property rights and click-and-purchase merchants moved in. Yet something of this still remains possible, and we can envisage the experience of researching and reading becoming less of a linear exercise, with more scoping in and out of a range of related (distant) texts. If the knowledge unit of production for academics ceases to be an object (the book, or article) and more an unstable field, festooned in links and accompanied by its own set of para-sites and commentaries, then the alleged linearity of writing and the alleged integrity of the author, the authority of the author, could potentially diminish in significance.

In the NEP we are seeking to explore some of the dimensions of this process of knowledge formation by experimenting with a prototype which takes its point of departure from the encyclopaedia. The continuum we seek to move along ranges from the creative and innovative dimensions of research and writing we have mentioned above, to the necessity of teaching and writing in succinct and accessible ways, given the responsibility to teach students and be understood by the general public. We would argue that the encyclopaedia, and especially the digital encyclopaedia linked to the archive we have discussed, is a useful device for focusing on the importance of both ends of the continuum.

Notes

1. An implication is the need to move away from the 'one epistemological size fits all' standpoint of conventional social theory, and to search for alternative theorizations more responsive both to developments in other fields and to different assessments of previously marginalized knowledges. It may well be that the work of problematization in these changed circumstances should start with the concept of the 'West' itself, and the dichotomies it inscribes between the western and the non-western, the modern and the non-modern. There was a time when these dichotomies had a productive purchase on categorizing, and indeed constituting, differences in values and ways of life, expressed in terms of notions of tradition and modernity or development and underdevelopment. But globalization not only disrupts all such dichotomies, it has brought to the fore processes of exchange and interaction that are obscured by the older conceptual framework. It has also made visible, against the thesis of the 'clash of civilizations', the heterogeneity and hybridity of cultures and the effects of diasporic movements, which should caution us against reconstituting differences in terms of essentialisms. So problematizing has to do with de-centring such categories and the generation of new approaches in theory (see Therborn, 2000, on global inter-communication).
2. Other important compilations were the *al-Hanafi*, in Persian (1524), the encyclopaedia of arts and sciences, composed in Arabic and translated into Turkish by Tashköprüzade (1495–1561), and the *Kashf az-zanum (Dissipation of Doubts)* composed by the Ottoman scholar Haji Khalifa, which eventually filtered through to the West and became a major source for d'Herbert's *Bibliothèque orientale* (Burke, 1996: 202–3). These encyclopaedias circulated in manuscript form and not print, hence their availability was restricted. In the Ottoman Empire, the sale of non-religious books in Arabic was permitted, but these had to be imported from the West until the early 18th century when the first press was established in Istanbul.
3. The 類書 Chinese encyclopaedia tradition goes back to the Han Dynasty (2nd century BC) with the *Erh-ya*, the oldest known Chinese dictionary. The first encyclopaedia appears to have been the *Hyang-lan (Mirror for the Emperor, 220 AD)*. It is interesting to note that the expression 'emperor's mirror' is similar to the term 'speculum', which was frequently used in the titles of encyclopaedias in medieval Europe (Bauer, 1966: 677). This and other encyclopaedias, such as the *Pien-chu (Pearls of Literature, 7th century)* and *Pei-t'ang shu-ch'ao (Excerpts from Books in the Northern Hall)*, produced by Yü Shihnan (558–638), used a similar category system to the *Erh-ya*, involving 19 categories such as the emperor and imperial princes, the empress and imperial consorts, the art of government, music, home life and body care, ships, food and drink, etc. (It is this classification system which is parodied in a fantastic way in the Borges short story about 'a certain Chinese encyclopaedia' which is used by Foucault to begin his discussion in *The Order of Things*.) In the Song Dynasty (960–1280), a period of cultural stability in which the Confucian bureaucracy with its

examination system was strengthened, encyclopaedias flourished. One important work was the *T'ai-ping yü-lan* (Emperor's Mirror from the Era 'Greater Peace'), compiled by a committee under the direction of Li Fang. The table of contents is listed under 55 main categories, with over 5000 headings and 12,000 chapters. The intention was to place the whole literary and scientific knowledge of the period in abbreviated form in a single work. In the Ming period (1368–1644) this endeavour was massively exceeded by the *Yung-lo ta-tien* (Greater Handbook of the Era 'Eternal Joy'), which had the aim of assembling in a single handbook the entire sum of Chinese writings for posterity. A rough draft, the *Wen-hsien ta-ch'eng* (Great Collection of Literature and Holy Writ), was composed by a committee of 2169 scholars, and was a giant work planned to consist of 22,900 chapters in 11,000 volumes (Bauer, 1966: 685). The text was written out in preparation for printing, but abandoned due to cost. Today only 855 chapters remain, less than 4 per cent of the original. One encyclopaedia which did survive was the *Chi'in-ting ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng* (Collection of Pictures and Writings from Antiquity and the Modern Period Compiled by Imperial Command, 1725), which ran to 852,408 pages in its first edition.

4. In the western tradition, encyclopaedia meant 'encyclical education', derived from the Greek word meaning 'the circle of learning' in the arts and sciences, as found in Plato's Academy in Athens with his notion of the full education that he believed every intelligent young man should undertake. In ancient Rome, the older Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* (AD 77) has been referred to as 'the first of the vast encyclopaedias' (Collison, 1964: 21). This started with a volume of contents and sources, followed by 36 volumes dealing with cosmography, geography, ethnography, anthropology, physiology, zoology, botany, medicine, mineralogy, metallurgy and a history of fine arts (Steinberg, 1951: 6). Encyclopaedias sought to provide an all-round education within the bounds of a single work and were organized in the way of a system. In effect they offered 'do-it-yourself courses' (Burke, 1996: 195) or a handbook. The high Middle Ages has been referred to as 'the apex of encyclopaedism', a time in which a complete collection of all knowledge still seemed a realizable dream (Yeo, 2001: 5). Interesting amongst the great medieval encyclopaedists is Vincent of Beauvais (d. 1264) with his *Speculum Maius* (The Greater Mirror). The work consisted of three books, seen as 'mirrors' of nature, history and doctrine. The use of the image of a mirror reveals the confidence that it was possible to collect material to provide a genuine reflection of the structure of the world. And one should add Hegel's 3-volume encyclopaedia that introduced the concept of process into classification, thus the idea of change against the idea of fixity, albeit subject to the dialectic.
5. The *Encyclopédie*, which was seen as the great textual embodiment and symbol of the Enlightenment, was acknowledged in the prospectus of 1750 as being impossible without Chambers. Indeed the initial plan had been to produce a translation of Chambers' work, but Diderot and d'Alembert in the end envisaged a grander work with entries by famous scholars. They also reworked or took directly many articles from the 2-volume *Cyclopaedia* (Lough, 1980). The *Encyclopédie* ran to 35 volumes (including 11 volumes of plates, a 2-volume index and a supplement of 5 volumes). By the time the first volume was published 2000 people had subscribed, doubling to 4000 with the publication of the final 10 volumes (Collison, 1964).
6. This culminated in the 28-volume *Dai-Hyakkajiten* (Great Encyclopaedia) published by Heibonsha in instalments between 1931 and 1935.
7. This process began in the 1930s prior to independence, stimulated by the need to provide a counter-history to that of the British Imperial rulers. It has continued down to *The Indian Encyclopaedia: Biographical, Historical, Religious, Administrative, Ethnological, Commercial and Scientific*, edited by Subodh Kapoor (New Delhi, Cosmo, 2002), and the massive 110-volume *Encyclopaedia Indica: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh*, editor-in-chief S.S. Shashi (New Delhi, 1998).
8. In the brief section on language and literature it was noted that 'the literature of Uqbar was one of fantasy' and that its epics and legends never referred to reality, but to the imaginary region of Tlön with its 'transparent tiger and towers of blood'. Tlön, in contrast to our materialist view of the world of things and linguistic emphasis upon stable states and nouns, provides an idealist world, as all the planet's languages and thought presuppose a world that 'is not a concourse of objects in space; it is a heterogeneous series of independent acts'. This world is 'successive and temporal, not spatial', consequently the language contains no nouns, but 'impersonal verbs, modified by monosyllabic suffixes (or prefixes) with adverbial value'.
9. Linnaeus, who established the basis of modern taxonomy in the 18th century, constantly ran up against the problem of 'the unclassifiable' to the extent that his contemporaries complained of the 'volatility' of his model, the various editions of *Systema Naturae* (1735), which changed in the face of his constant discovery of new diversity in the animal world demanding new zoological differences that would not fit into the pre-existing categories (see Maciel, this issue). See also the discussion of

- Linnaeus by Manuel DeLanda (2002: 42), who criticizes this way of forming biological taxonomies, with its aim to reconstruct a fixed and continuous natural order. Rather, he argues we should reject static categories and essences and focus on species as historically constituted individuals.
10. It is interesting to note that Walter Benjamin participated in the College de Sociologie in the 1930s. His major unfinished work, *The Arcades Project* (Benjamin, 2000), reflects a good deal on the problem of devising a theoretical frame for handling and classifying the multiplicity and labyrinthine character of Paris. In the end, Benjamin opted for the arbitrary 'degree zero' of classification of the alphabet, which he used to label the various cardboard boxes he used to collect his bric-a-brac of cuttings, photographs, images, handwritten notes, leaflets, magazines, tickets and handbills which provided the traces of the popular culture of the city which he sought to order in a way which let the fragments speak and deliver their half-intelligible allegories (see discussion in Featherstone, 1998, 2000). There is clearly an encyclopaedic imagination at work here.
 11. Umberto Eco has also discussed the encyclopaedic novel in *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*. Encyclopaedic novels such as James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and Thomas Mann's *Dr Faustus* can be seen as adopting a medieval model of reproducing the rules of cosmic order which first entails the cataloguing of the objects in the world. Joyce and Mann both used extensive 'encyclopaedic' citations and incorporated unacknowledged excerpts into their work.
 12. In addition to conventional encyclopaedias of the social sciences, social theory, humanities etc., there has been a wide range of specialist topics such as *Encyclopaedia of Terrorism*, *Encyclopaedia of the Homeless*, *Encyclopaedia of Social Measurement*, *Encyclopaedia of Women and Gender*.
 13. Described in a review in *Contemporary Psychology* as 'the largest corpus of knowledge about the social and behavioral sciences in existence . . . the social science equivalent of the Egyptian pyramids . . . one of the great wonders of the scientific world . . . the web-based version of the Encyclopedia fully unleashes the power, complexity, and organization of this monumental work' (cited on the Elsevier website).
 14. This is evident in one of the earliest attempts, H.G. Wells' 'World Brain', in the 1930s, which argues for an integrated world education. Wells envisaged a 'Permanent World Encyclopaedia' which would be a new world organ for the collection, indexing, summarizing and release of knowledge linking together all libraries and archives. In addition, it was intended as a 'planetary memory for mankind', containing a visual record of human knowledge, ideas and achievements. It would be useful for professionals in universities, but also for schools, colleges and ordinary people at home. This would lead to common understanding, the intellectual unification of humanity and ultimately world peace (Wells, 1938). The hierarchy of authoritative knowledge and its centredness on western canons are not put into question. Little thought is given to the medium and questions of translation.
 15. The New Encyclopaedia Project has been under way since 2001 and colloquia have been held at: Hitotsubashi University in June 2001; Cambridge University in July 2001; Nottingham Trent University in August 2002 and August 2003; Kobe University in October 2002; Tokyo University, Yonsei University, Korea University, Seoul National and Kyoto Bukkyo University in October 2003; Singapore in April 2004, December 2004 and March 2005; London in February 2005; and Tokyo in July 2005. The New Encyclopaedia is a collective project and the following people have contributed to the organization and discussions to date: Mike Featherstone, Couze Venn, Ryan Bishop, John Phillips, Scott Lash, Shunya Yoshimi, Chua Beng Huat, Pal Ahluwalia, John Hutnyk, Maria Esther Maciel, George Marcus, Aihwa Ong, Shiv Visvanathan, Li Shiqiao, Fan Jinghua, Andy Wernick, Roy Boyne, Bryan S. Turner, Vikki Bell, Nicholas Gane, Roland Robertson, Rob Shields, Susantha Goonatilake, Mike Hepworth, Kenichi Kawasaki, Shujiro Yazawa, Hidetaki Ishida, Tatsuro Hanada, Tomoko Tamari, Tetsuo Maruyama, Kiyomitsu Yui, Haejoang Cho, Gilsung Park, Reimon Bachika, Myrian Sousa Santos, Ian Donaldson, Wiljan van den Akker, Tetsuo Nishiyama, John Tomlinson, Roger Bromley, Neil Turnbull, Neal Curtis, Abe Kiyoshi, Pheng Cheah, Achille Mbembe and Richard Shusterman. Many people have helped with this issue, which has been a major undertaking; the editorial group would especially like to thank the following for their help, encouragement and support: Robert Rojek, Cheryl Merritt, Fern Bryant, Susan Manthorpe, Natividad Mateos Lucero and Neil Turnbull. Neil Curtis in particular as managing editor made a tremendous contribution to the planning, coordination and editing of the issue. Tomoko Tamari also played a crucial role as researcher on the project, not least in sustaining the links with our Japanese colleagues (Shunya Yoshimi and his associates at Tokyo University deserve a special mention) by organizing numerous meetings, telephone and video conferences. But above all, this issue would not have been possible without the support of our co-editors, Ryan Bishop and John Phillips, who injected tremendous intellectual and organizational energy into both the New Encyclopaedia Project and this issue at just the right time in 2003. The current structure of the issue is the outcome of both the use of digital communications

technologies (emails, video and telephone conferences) and the rare luxury of a number of long working meetings in Singapore and Nottingham, in which the four editors were able to talk through and elaborate the form and structure of the issue in detail. We are also grateful to Nottingham Trent University and the National University of Singapore for the many direct and indirect ways they have supported the New Encyclopaedia Project.

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Classification

Roy Boyne

Abstract First thoughts about classification inevitably turn to the simultaneously mundane and extraordinary ambition to capture the universe of all that there is and has been. This dream of the universal has two basic modes (and so the process begins!). First, I will follow the spirit of *theos* and *logos* as represented by the Platonic embrace of totality enshrined in Socrates' scrupulous rejection of rhetorical dishonesty. Second, I will address the later part of the march to subjectivity as expressed by the mechanics of atomism and Cartesian reduction. Following this move from theology to ontology, from in other words the post-synthetic to the post-analytic, I will connect with the sociological destruction of such pretensions to absolute classificatory veracity – a necessary pre-requisite for the engagement of reflexivity and classification to be found in the work of Georges Perec.

Keywords classification, identity, representation, subjectivity, universals

Introduction

Durkheim and Mauss (1969: 5) thought that classification has a history. To be more accurate, it has histories. I will refrain from attempting to classify all the histories of classification that research might produce; for that would surely take us into Borges' *Library of Babel*. Instead, I will provide just two examples. For some mathematicians, classification analysis is used to identify structured groups within data. Mathematical techniques of cluster and classification analysis are used in economics, medicine, biology, astronomy, marketing; indeed all disciplines and projects where pattern recognition matters (consider the link between CCTV and face recognition: a surveillance technology that is in its infancy). Conversely, staff in the CIA think that classification is concerned with marking and protecting information vital to national security. Roosevelt was responsible for the very first Executive Order, EO 8381, signed in March 1940, which specified the framework for handling secret US information of military significance, and which, for example, gave the basis for handling the details of the Manhattan Project.

We are at the provisional end point, then, of a number of histories. The particular history, if indeed it is singular, that I am concerned with is that of the encyclopaedia. Although I am not concerned with the encyclopaedia as such, but with its transcendental presuppositions, and would like to offer three instantiations of the a priori thinking that has undergirded the theory and practice of encyclopaedism.

- It may have been possible to believe in the premise of the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900, that its 18 groups and 121 classes of items exhibited stood without need of qualification or justification.
- It remained the case in the late 1940s and 1950s that the US academy was the site of the project of a unified science which would incorporate the social sciences.
- In the 1960s the incorporation of the study of languages and communication under the general rubric of semiology was a serious intellectual aim.

These three rapidly traversed examples follow a transcendental logic that Perec describes in the following terms:

So it was imagined that the entire world could be distributed according to a unique code, that one universal law would reign over the totality of phenomena: two hemispheres, five continents, masculine and feminine, animal and vegetable, singular plural, right left, four seasons, five senses, six vowels, seven days, twelve months, twenty-six letters. (Perec, 1989: 155)

This dream of the universal, Perec tells us, does not, did not and never will work.

In what follows, I will pursue this dream of the universal in both of its modes. First, I will follow the spirit of *theos* and *logos* as represented by the Platonic embrace of totality. Second, I will address the mechanics of atomism in the case of Cartesian reduction. I will follow this shift from theology to ontology, from the post-synthetic to the post-analytic, with the destruction of these pretensions to absolute classificatory veracity. This destruction was contained, from the beginning, within sociology.

Platonic Classification

The opening problem of classification is inescapably connected with the totality of human knowledge of what exists. What are the criteria for genuine knowledge? How is the totality of this genuine knowledge mapped? The known history of such encyclopaedic concerns begins with the pre-Socratic philosophers. It is generally said about them that enquiry into the nature of the cosmos, what its essence might be, is where Thales and Anaximander began. Heraclitus, who made the famous observation that one cannot step into the same river twice, thought that flux was the key to cosmological understanding. This did not mean an evacuation of guiding principles. On the contrary, he thought of war and also of fire as elemental. The Heraclitean position is that any given state of affairs is but a temporary resolution of the conflict of opposing forces. In contrast, consider Parmenides. The core of his thinking was the recognition of a divine ‘motionless heart of well-rounded truth’ against which is set the opinions of mortals; the latter will be tested to destruction. The seeds of law, doctrine and dogma are encapsulated in Parmenides, while those of dialectic, debate and compromise emerge from Heraclitus. The work of Socrates and Plato feeds from both traditions, taking us from imagination and myth into epistemology, and the first glimmerings of a reflexive understanding of classification.

The major part in Plato’s (n.d.) late dialogue *The Sophist* is taken by an unnamed stranger from Elea. He is introduced as a disciple of Parmenides and also of Zeno, who was a pupil of Parmenides. The dual influence becomes clear as the stranger deploys a combination of logic and unquestioned assertion concerning the detailed operations of the world in order to bring out the distinction between philosophy and sophistry. Robinson and Denniston summarize the core of the dialogue as follows:

Sophistry entails falsehood, which entails ‘not-being’, which seems self-contradictory. ‘Being’ is no better; it raises difficulties alike for pluralists, monists, materialists, and immaterialists; it is neither rest nor motion, yet everything must either rest or move. The solution is the doctrine of ‘communication’. Some things communicate with each other, so that we can sometimes truly say ‘A is B’. (1971: 11)

Applying the doctrine of communication means investigating to find out the precise class and subsequent sub-classes to which the object of the enquiry belongs. In this dialogue between an accomplished stranger and the young Theaetetus, the aim is to define through classification what a sophist is. The essential identity of the sophist is established by determining the class to which it belongs. This is not a procedure that Theaetetus will know. It is, if not a new form of thinking entirely, at least an exercise at a new level of rigour and complexity. He will need some coaching. So they start with an apparently simple and familiar case. What is the definition of an angler? Are anglers acquisitive or creative? Do they proceed by exchange or force?

Is their method open or concealed? If they hunt live prey, is it land or water-based? Do they net, spear or hook them? Thus the stranger from Elea takes Theaetetus through the Athenian equivalent of a platform game, and, having traversed the various levels one by one, sums it up as follows:

Within expertise as a whole one half was acquisitive; half of the acquisitive was taking possession; half of possession-taking was hunting; half of hunting was animal-hunting; half of animal-hunting was aquatic hunting; all of the lower portion of aquatic hunting was fishing; half of fishing was hunting by striking; and half of striking was hooking. And the part of hooking that involves a blow drawing a thing upward from underneath is called by a name that's derived from its similarity to the action itself, it's called draw-fishing or angling – which is what we're searching for. (Plato, n.d.: 241)

Proceeding now to the real task, the stranger soon defines the sophist as a hunter, whose weapon is flattery and whose prey is young wealthy men. But this is no end to the matter. Further consideration reveals the sophist to be capable of being classified in other ways. If seen as a practitioner of exchange rather than a hunter, he comes to be seen as a virtue merchant, trading in his own or in others' wisdoms. And yet another line can be drawn from the subdivision of the forms of acquisitive expertise, now classifying the sophist as a member of 'the money-making branch of expertise in debating, disputation, controversy, fighting, combat and acquisition' (Plato, n.d.: 246). The sophist is, the stranger observes, a complex beast.

The question for us, in regard to the matter of classification, appears to be whether it is the apparent many-sidedness of the sophist or the seeming singularity of the angler that is paradigmatic? In fact, what Plato does in this dialogue is to show that the pursuit of understanding through the search for what something *is* need not be about finding the essential identity of the thing. It can equally well be about discovering connections, that there is a link between the hunter and the sophist, but also between the merchant and the sophist, and so on. In this way, Plato transcends the Parmenidean injunction that the truth is not reached by tracking what something is not. Parmenides had written, '... you can neither know what is not (for it is impossible) nor tell of it' and 'Only one story of the way is still left: that a thing is' (Coxon, 1986: 52, 60; see also Heidegger, 1992). Now, Plato moves beyond this search for the absolute core of the existent, and begins to pursue its understanding through its connectivities elsewhere. It is at this point that the very possibility of classification is born as the pursuit of defined associations. Classification is not about equivalence but about association, and Plato's rejection of the Parmenidean insistence on the one single story affirms – to Plato's own consternation – a fundamental link between associative classification and the narrative imagination.

There are dangers here. A movement away from Parmenidean essentialism might invite caprice and falsehood. How are we to tell which associations are truthful? Plato does not pose nor answer the question clearly, but he does recognize the importance of discernment and discrimination in the search for a true understanding of the classes into which things fall. The stranger says:

... he who can divide rightly is able to see one form pervading a scattered multitude, and many different forms contained under one higher form ... This is the knowledge of classes which determines where they can have communion with one another and where not. (Plato, n.d.: 31)

Plato thought there to be a true order of classes for any given phenomenon but only had rhetorical method available to him for arriving there. Hence his recourse to general qualities of discernment, and his subsequent clarification that discernment and discrimination are operations of purification. Also, it is here easy to see why the differences between the true philosopher and the problematic sophist would be of great concern.

The philosopher is the one who 'can divide rightly' and determine where 'communion' is possible and where not. Defence against false classification would be enshrined in education,

the teaching by rote of the true understandings and laws of the city. The defence against falsehood, at the time of the birth of classification, is a major concern of domestic politics, as we can see in *The Laws* (1970: 292), in which Plato writes: ‘change, we shall find, except in something evil, is extremely dangerous’. This comment, made while discussing education, makes complete sense only if we understand that there was then no secure *method* for arriving at or testing classifications. Education was the means of hanging on to those that were established. The concept of research was not yet born. Education was social defence.

Cartesian Classification

The Eleatic stranger in *The Sophist* began the work of classification with the whole. The totality of human endeavour, abbreviated in the Greek context to the term that is translated as ‘art’ or ‘expertise’, was then divided into smaller constituent totalities, and these again into those that were further inferior. There is no natural stopping point for this process, except that determined by its object and purpose. There was no need to distinguish between different kinds of anglers in *The Sophist*, and hence the example could naturally stop where it did. The aim of the example was the placing of what was known in its proper place within the wider universe of known things. The process was not propelled by curiosity but by administration. It was filing rather than research. When one comes to contrast Plato and Descartes, one finds the latter to proceed differently in three basic respects.

In the first place, Descartes had been in active pursuit of a method for confirming the validity of his apprehensions of the world. He had laboured to develop a thesis about the nature of the mind and its inherent ability to apprehend the world clearly. In *The First Meditation*, the extended reflection which leads to the phrase *cogito ergo sum*, Descartes’ failure to render apodictic anything other than the certainty of his own existence reinforced the need for methodical care. His hunting ground was empirical reality, but its verities were not secured by his philosophy. Unlike Plato who sought understanding on the basis of a faith in timeless form and its apprehension by philosophy, Cartesian certainty would, at least in the realm of the objective, be achieved by following rules of procedure. In his *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, Rule 12 tells us that our ‘intellect, imagination, sense perception, and memory’ allow us ‘to intuit simple propositions distinctly’; Rule 5 states: ‘The whole method consists entirely in the ordering and arranging of the objects on which we must concentrate our mind’s eye if we are to discover some truth’; and Rule 7 warns us to be sure not to leave anything out: ‘in order to make our knowledge complete, every single thing relating to our undertaking must be surveyed in a continuous and wholly uninterrupted sweep of thought’. The Cartesian method, then, begins with the suspicion of established usage and understanding, insisting that such be checked by breaking down these views into their component parts in order to be able to stand on the firm ground of simple intuitions. As he put it in *The Discourse on Method*, he resolved to conduct his thoughts:

in an orderly way, beginning with the simplest objects and the easiest to know, in order to climb gradually, as by degrees, as far as the knowledge of the most complex (1968: 41)

The second difference is already implicit in the foregoing. Plato began with the complex and divided it up, deriving from it groups of less complexity. Descartes, in contrast, aspired to begin from basic elements. Rule 20 continued: ‘. . . we first reduce complicated and obscure propositions step by step to simpler ones, and then, starting with intuition of the simplest ones of all, try to ascend through the same steps to a knowledge of all the rest’ (1968: 20). There is a good example of Descartes’ method at work in the last thing that he published, *The Passions of the Soul*. He takes issue with previous classifications of the passions, especially with that found in Plato’s *Republic*, and finds that there are six primitive passions, all of which relate to the function of leading us ‘to want the things which nature deems useful for us, and to persist in this volition’ (1968: 349) These six primitive passions are wonder, love, hatred, desire, joy and sadness. He goes on, in his analysis, to show that esteem, contempt,

generosity, vanity, humility, veneration, scorn, hope, anxiety, confidence, despair, jealousy, irresolution, courage, fear, remorse, derision, envy, pity, tranquillity, repentance, gratitude, ingratitude, indignation, anger, pride, shame, impudence, disgust, regret and cheerfulness are all modalities or mixtures of the six primitive passions. Whatever the merits of his analysis, the paradigm is clear: theory of passions, classification of the elemental kinds, survey of the entire field in terms of element, allotrope and hybrid.

The third difference between the Platonic and Cartesian approaches to classification is now evident. Cartesian intuition of simple truths simultaneously allows and is reinforced by a fundamental understanding of pan-ontological processes. These processes are seen as unfailingly mechanical. The functional basis of the classification of the passions is meant to be (whether or not it is so is beyond our scope here) subordinate to a mechanical world view. In his treatise on light, Descartes discusses the elements of fire, air and earth in terms of 'the size, shape and motion of their parts' (Descartes in Cottingham et al., 1984, Vol. 1: 89). He then goes on to say the following:

If you find it strange that in explaining these elements I do not use the qualities heat, cold, moisture and dryness – as the philosophers do – I shall say to you that these qualities themselves seem to me to need explanation. Indeed unless I am mistaken, not only these four qualities but all others as well, including even the forms of inanimate bodies, can be explained without the need to suppose anything in their matter other than the motion, size, shape and arrangements of its parts.

In demonstration of this, as it were, Descartes' account of the six primitive passions is elaborated in terms of their bodily concomitants, and all are 'caused, maintained and strengthened by some movement of the spirits', which are, for him, 'the finest parts of the blood' (1968: 333, 331).

The Sociology of Classification

Although Descartes does move the underlying potentiality of classification from the administration of the given toward the orchestration of the possible, there remains much more to be done. In particular, it will be necessary to test the remaining links between classification and truth. Our understanding of this begins with Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss (1969).

Durkheim and Mauss introduced dirt and contamination into the perception of the classification process. They thought that classification is 'a process into which all sorts of foreign elements enter' (Durkheim and Mauss, 1969: 8). Classification is not something which happens naturally. They wanted to know how classifications came about. They tried to look at the most fundamental classifications to see how they were constructed. They thought that fundamental meant primitive, and in *Primitive Classification*, they argued that the most primitive forms of classification are to be found in Australian tribes, and their general conclusion was that their classifications reflect their social structure:

The individuals of the clan, the creatures of the totemic species, and those of related species, all these are nothing but diverse aspects of one and the same realities. (1969: 20)

They saw that the primitive classificatory function appeared slow to change. They were linking its rhythms to those of social change. In the aboriginal context that had been extraordinarily slow. They tried to test the notion that classification systems and social systems form a unity. They did this for Australia, North America, and finally subjected it to what they thought of as the most difficult test of all: 'the astronomical, astrological, geomantic and horoscopic divinatory system of the Chinese' (1969: 67). If the premisses of their own analysis are accepted, that the structures of the simplest societies will reveal themselves clearly reflected in classificatory and religious systems, while those in later societies will be less likely to be clearly mirrored within such definite frames, then what they find in their researches is confirmatory. When looking at the Zuni of North America, they find a division of space into seven regions, and they find that reflected within the social system. As they put it, 'this division of

the world is exactly the same as that of the clans within the pueblo' (1969: 44). When it comes to the exceedingly complex Chinese case they move from a simple position where the classification reflects and is the social arrangement to one where any single classification is less revelatory and is just a part of the social arrangement. So, in the Chinese case, following a brief analysis of the complexities of the 12-year cycle which moves from the year of the rat through tiger, dragon, dog and finally to pig, they comment, 'we clearly have to do with a multitude of interlaced classifications which, in spite of their contradictions, grasp reality closely enough to provide a fairly useful guide to action' (1969: 73).

One problem with their research in the Australian, North American and Chinese cases is that their evidence base is secondary and always potentially unreliable, if only because it was often collected under conditions of methodological compromise. However, this should not obscure the importance of the sociological insight that classificatory systems are both part of society and also potentially expressive of fundamental social dynamics. Durkheim and Mauss (1969: 83–4) coded this conclusion in their statement that systems of classification are inevitably hierarchical (a view which prefigures deconstruction, and predates it by more than half a century). But they did not really explore that insight. That was left to be developed with the advent of deconstruction in the 1970s. To see what did follow, one needs to move forward to the work of Lévi-Strauss (1962).

For Lévi-Strauss, the advent of society is already the advent of classifications. For 'primitive' societies the origins of the classificatory systems are largely forgotten. But, in some way, the classified orderliness of social existence is reproduced from generation to generation, and this fact is by no means undermined or weakened by the citation of those societies undergoing radical transformations or by those in a state of war (*pace* Heraclitus). We have been taught this lesson again and again, by civil wars across the world. If classifications are reproduced, from generation to generation, how does this happen? Lévi-Strauss rejected Durkheim's Platonist conception of a collective conscience detached from the individual members of the society, and adopted Marcel Mauss's adaptation that the sociological structures the psychological through the process of upbringing. The deeply sociologically saturated upbringing which is characteristic of any process of socialization shapes and constructs individual minds so that the 'objective world' is understood from within a particular framework of classifications. Lévi-Strauss did not agree with the ethnocentric and developmentalist view that 'primitive societies' employed false assumptions and inadequate systems of classification which could be shown to be false and inadequate when compared to the systems of 20th-century Europe. Although the latter systems might be more complex than the former, they did not necessarily relate along the same continuum since the essential characteristic of the ordered framework of assumptions, in either case, was not its adequacy to some mythical 'real world' but, rather, its very order. At some level, the specific detail of a social structure is less important than its being as classificatory structure, as patterned, as reproducible. As Lévi-Strauss (1962: 15) put it, 'Any classification is superior to chaos, and even a classification at the level of sensible properties is a step towards rational ordering'. What Lévi-Strauss calls the 'Neolithic paradox' illustrates the point:

It was in Neolithic times that man's mastery of the great arts of civilisation – of pottery, weaving, agriculture, and the domestication of animals – became firmly established. No one today would any longer think of attributing these enormous advances to the fortuitous accumulation of a series of chance discoveries or believe them to have been revealed by the passive perception of certain natural phenomena . . . what would happen if copper ore had accidentally found its way into a furnace[?] Complex and varied experiments have shown that nothing happens at all. The simplest method of obtaining metallic copper which could be discovered consists in subjecting finely ground malachite to intense heat in a pottery dish crowned with an inverted clay pot . . . (1962: 13–14)

We do not know what set of classifications of the world allowed for the discovery of copper, but we do know – Lévi-Strauss implies – that there had to be one; and, in some way, that

classification system would have been carried in people's minds in much the same way that grammatical classifications are (mostly) unwittingly carried in the minds of language users. The sociological realization that the relation between classification and reality is not that of attempted duplication with changes explained by increasing verisimilitude constitutes a definitive break with both Platonism and Cartesianism. It is, interestingly, now reflected in the mathematical understanding of classification theory, where one mathematician discovering four clusters in a data set defines their reality not in terms of their underlying referents, but in terms of the methodological conventions employed within the mathematical community.

Doing Classification

Plato saw the subversive potential in re-classification (Murdoch, 1977). Even Descartes could apprehend the possibility of order 'among those objects which do not precede each other naturally'. Lévi-Strauss thought classification to be rather like a form of magic, in the sense that it is not how classification reflects the world which matters, but rather its effect on the world deriving from its internal arrangement. There is an extant model for thinking this through. It is enshrined in the group called *OuLiPo*, an abbreviation for the phrase *Ouvroir pour littérature potentielle*: workshop for potential literature.

OuLiPo was formed in 1960, following a colloquium on the French language, at Cérisy-la-Salle. Its leader and inspiration was Raymond Queneau (incidentally the editor of the *Pléiade* encyclopaedia), and his interest was in the intersections between poetry and mathematics, and also in the study of language as it is spoken on the street. While *OuLiPo* was modelled on the French mathematical group *Bourbaki*, which was comprised of a number of anonymous mathematicians, it was not a secret society although it did have very strict rules; for example, resignation was impossible. Even death did not mean withdrawal; it only permitted absence from meetings. In March 1967, Georges Perec was invited to join the group – only its second new member since its inception seven years earlier. When Perec gave an unheralded talk at the University of Warwick a couple of months later, he described his 1965 publication, *Les Choses*, in terms of a jigsaw puzzle whose pieces included work by Barthes and Flaubert. The conception that Perec had was that he should write the text that completed the picture, which would then be made by the pieces he started with and the one he had fashioned. His interest was in putting things together. Perec was, however, also located within that lineage which seeks to emancipate classification from its functions for social utility, freeing it for the creation of serendipitous wonderment. He stopped short, however, of declaring that re-classification would somehow illustrate the road to social revolution. Whether this was a rejection of sociology or of political will is a judgement we shall have to come to.

Michel Foucault thought incomprehensible the world which Borges summoned up in his 'The Analytical Language of John Wilkins' (1993), where the Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge divides the creatures of the world into:

- those that belong to the Emperor,
- embalmed ones,
- those that are trained,
- suckling pigs,
- mermaids,
- fabulous ones,
- stray dogs,
- those included in the present classification,
- those that tremble as if they were mad,
- innumerable ones,
- those drawn with a very fine camelhair brush,
- others,
- those that have just broken a flower vase,
- those that from a long way off look like flies.

However, fantasies of alternative orderings of things are clear to see within the narrative tradition from Homer onwards. What they may always fail to do is escape the imprint of their time, although it may not always be easy to find and read its signs. There was, then, a touch of willed naïveté about Foucault's citation of Borges. He knew such a list could be read, even if the reading was beyond the reader at a particular juncture. Perec was uneasy with this sociological truth. His uneasiness has three sources. First, he had an understanding of everyday life in emergent consumer society as programmed and somewhat lifeless (the final sentence of *Les Choses*, a quasi-ethnographic treatment of the everyday life of a young Parisian couple, reads, 'Mais le repas qu'on leur servira sera franchement insipide'). Second, he had a poet's desire to imagine other places and, third, he saw that even imposed classification systems were capable of operative perversion and innumerable forms of parody. Perec was well aware that there is a difference between classification and its subsequent use, and he provided an extended example of this difference when he tried to record everything he'd eaten and drunk over 12 months, placing his notes in his *Attempt at an Inventory of the Liquid and Solid Foodstuffs Ingurgitated by Me in the Course of the Year Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Four* (he ate beef, chicken, pork, paté, cheese, tart and cake, rabbit, fish and offal, drank 141 specified bottles of wine and admitted a failure to record how many other casual verres de rouge he had drunk; he seemed to take pastis or a glass of cognac or eau de vie every other day, but hardly a bottle of beer a month, and he may have been a 'pudding man', listing pies, tarts, mousses, charlottes, babas, gateaux, ice creams, and sorbets [Jack, 2004]). The interest in life, thought and classification is a constant in his work, appearing not only in his text *Penser/classer*, to which we now turn.

Perec begins with the apparent paradox that thinking is not in control of what is thought. He begins by rehearsing some fairly obvious moves: thought is fleeting, incomplete, fragmentary. Should we not preserve its granulation rather than try to put it in some sort of order? If that is avoiding the issue, we can take this line of thinking into apparent depth by positing a line from thinking to the unthinkable, and from classifying to the unclassifiable. If it is here already a question of starting again, then perhaps we should begin in a more practical way – with a few questions. When I think have I already been engaged in classification, or is it vice versa? Do I think differently when I am explicitly trying to classify? How do I classify the verbs of classification? Perec could have gone back to Plato or Descartes for a lesson or two, but instead he leaves his list – which there seems little point in translating, unless to remind ourselves that there are wider classification resources at our disposal – suspended (and is this act of suspension not already part of an operation of classification?):

Cataloguer, classer, classifier, découper, énumérer, grouper, hiérarchiser, lister, numéroter, ordonnancer, ordonner, ranger, regrouper, répartir . . . subdiviser, distribuer, discriminer, caractériser, marquer, définir, distinguer, opposer, etc. (1989: 154–5)

He knows that the Inuit have a number of words for ice, that the English have more words for a residential street than the French, that both have more than the Inuit, and that if you walk into a confectioners and ask for a packet of sweets, then you will be asked which kind you want. He does not, however, draw the explicit conclusion that context is determinant in some way, although he might have done, since his implicit conclusion regarding the 18 groups and 121 classes which ordered the contents of *la grande Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1900 is that they derived from a necessary *dirigisme*. On the contextual conditioning of Shônagon's nine kinds of disagreeable things (the ninth kind – things disagreeable to see – is illustrated by the dirty interior curtains of a high dignitary's ceremonial motor car), Perec says nothing, but does reflect that such a listing is not a classification (he might have gone on to wonder what it would have meant for these details to have been signalled in an index, and did retain an interest in such paraphernalia that were part of the text, but outside it in some way [Magné, 2004]). By extension, the same is true of the sorrows of Zachary McCaltex, whom, Perec tells us, was, among other things, half-devoured by a wild cat. And, by further extension, he notes that neither a collection like Robert Kaufman's 7495 different kinds of cigarettes nor the kind

of enumeration one finds in *The Guinness Book of Records*, exemplified by Perec with Walter Cavanagh's 1003 valid credit cards, are classifications. His musings suggest family resemblances, and one other thing – perhaps some of the classifications we take for granted and use are at root mere collections whose contents could be otherwise. This might be true of dictionaries of biography, but also of the rules of grammar (not Perec's example, which is of an algorithm for creating aphorisms, created by Marcel Benabou). This is indeed Perec's provisional conclusion, 'that the response to the question of classification is both completely obvious and utterly obscure, that it has to do with trial and error, suspicion, chance and coincidence' (1989: 173).

What conclusion can be drawn if the classificatory process is so aleatory? Perec sought the limits of self-determination by hypothesizing a complex and rewarding life that would not engage in the arbitrary game of re-classification. It is possible to think that this was a rejection of the illusions of both sociology and politics. This rejection is to be found in Perec's masterpiece, *La vie mode d'emploi*, a 700 page written pictorialization of the inhabitants – both animate and inanimate – of the 10-level house at 11, rue Simon-Crubbellier. The fulcrum is Bartlebooth's grand project, the devotion of his life to a discrete task, sufficiently arduous to be compelling, but both capable of completion and sufficiently self-contained and self-cancelling in its completion to have no pretence at contributing to any sense or hope of social significance. In 1925, Bartlebooth will take one lesson a day for 10 years in the practice of watercolour painting. Between 1935 and 1955, he will travel to 500 seaports across the world, producing one watercolour of each port. After each is done he will send them, one by one, to a master craftsman, Gaspard Winckler. Winckler will turn each watercolour into a wooden jigsaw puzzle of 750 pieces. From 1955 to 1975, Bartlebooth will complete the puzzles at the same rate as they were painted. As each puzzle is completed, 'the seascape would be "retexturized" so that it could be removed from its backing, returned to the place where it had been painted – twenty years before – and dipped in a detergent solution whence would emerge a clean and unmarked sheet . . .' (1978: 119). This work of vanishing labour is without hope or energy for an outside – which in all its detail is re-presented in the form of descriptions of the lives of those who live in the house, extending in giddy fashion into the decorative, physical and architectural themes running through every room/story of the house/novel, so that the work is more akin to a super-complex narrative *Sudoku* than perhaps anything else (see Perec, 1979; Levy, 2004; Motte and Poucel, 2004: *passim*).

Perec, explaining his own construction methods, along with Levy, Magné and others, point out that 42 categories are used in each chapter, one of which is highlighted in some way, with the other 41 being subject to variations, 10 in all, from room to room, with every chapter including two quotes drawn from two lists of authors and a single allusion to one of a list of 10 works. Perec and Bartlebooth appear to be strategically opposite, with the former laying out his methods for all to see, and ruminating on what epistemological structures could underlie his work, while Bartlebooth's plan is to be consumed in his systematic life but leave no trace of it. In both cases there does seem to be willed submission to an arduous regime of production. Bartlebooth's all-consuming, logistically exhausting and ultimately traceless exercise cannot be completed, since otherwise we would not now be considering it as a part of the history of classification. What Perec's work brings us to is the difference between making and using classifications, and thus perhaps the two basic approaches to the history of classification, which is – uncomfortably – already to make and operate a classification system.

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Scientific Classification

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Keywords classification, gene, genome, natural kind, species, taxonomy

It is often supposed that one of the goods delivered by successful science is the right way of classifying the things in the world. Surely there is something right about this: any body of scientific knowledge will include ways of classifying, and will not serve its intended aims unless the classifications it embodies reflect real differences and similarities in the world. The standard paradigm for such a successful scientific classification is the periodic table of the elements.

However, there is also much potentially wrong with the supposition just mentioned. Most importantly, there is a highly questionable implication of there being some uniquely best classification. Classifications are good or bad for particular purposes, and different purposes will motivate

different classifications. It may be that there is such an ideal classification for chemistry, but if so it is because of the specific aims implicit in the history of that discipline. Chemistry aims at the structural analysis of matter and if, as appears to be the case, all matter is composed of a small number of structural elements, a classification based on those elements will be best suited to these purposes. It is also often the case that chemical structure will be the best guide to the properties of kinds of matter, but not necessarily. Two quite distinct chemicals are referred to as 'jade' and, despite some serious debates on the issue, Chinese jade carvers have decided that both are real jade (LaPorte, 2004).

This illustrates the general point, which becomes much more obvious when we move from chemistry to biology, that classifications devised for different goals can be cross-cutting and overlapping (Dupré, 1993: part 1). There remains among many biologists and philosophers the hope

of finding the ultimate and uniquely best classification of organisms, most recently conceived in terms of the speciation processes of Darwinian evolution (e.g. De Queiroz, 1999). However, it is at the same time becoming clearer that there is very likely no such ideal classification. There is no reason why a classification that reflects the origins of the things classified should coincide exactly with one aimed at the ecological relations of those things, and it is increasingly perceived that these can and do diverge (Dupré, 2002: chs 3–4). This possibility becomes even clearer in view of the difficulties that are emerging in the project of evolutionary-based classification. Speciation was once seen as an all or nothing affair leading to complete isolation of one group from another. It is now clear that for micro-organisms, in particular, there is very little such isolation, and genetic material moves in many ways from one kind of organism to another. In fact it has become common to conceive of the genome of an ecosystem (the soil of an area, or a body of water) rather than the privatized genome of an individual organism (e.g. Venter et al., 2004). The classical picture of speciation applies quite well to some of the most complex multi-celled organisms, such as mammals and birds, though much less well to plants. An important movement in biology is to transcend the anthropocentrism that takes the peculiarities of our own corner of the living world as the model for all.

The recognition that even within science there is no objectively given classificatory order allows the realization that there is nothing inherently inferior about the biological classifications developed by non-scientific folk for non-scientific purposes. This point has been obscured for philosophers by the highly influential proposal by Hilary Putnam (1975) that ordinary language terms for naturally occurring kinds of thing or stuff were primitive attempts to refer to the kinds that science would eventually delineate more accurately. My own view is that science is generally quite unable to do this, and that ordinary language terms are generally just fine as they are for the purposes for which they have been developed (Dupré, 2002: chs 1–2).

A graphic illustration of what I have in mind here can be gained from reflection on the wisdom taught to all young children that science has discovered that whales are not fish. No doubt this wisdom long antedates Putnam's proposal, and shows that such intuitions about the achievements of science are widespread. Nonetheless it is very difficult to provide a convincing rationale for the 'discovery' that whales are not fish. 'Whale' in ordinary language refers to all the members of one branch of the family

Cetacea (the baleen whales) and the larger members of the other branch (the toothed whales). The smaller members of the latter group, dolphins and porpoises, are not generally referred to as whales. Large cetacean is not a concept that has any great biological significance. 'Fish' is much worse. Even assuming it does not encompass shellfish or jellyfish, there are three groups of aquatic vertebrates generally thought of as fish, but groups that have diverged for hundreds of millions of years. In fact a lungfish, being part of the aquatic lineage from which terrestrial vertebrates evolved, is more closely related by descent to a whale (or, for that matter, a human) than it is to a salmon or tuna. In short, since these are not significant scientific terms it is impossible to see how science can have discovered facts about their reference.

A final problem with scientific classification, raised by the formulation with which this note began, is that 'things' are often distinguishable only after classification, rather than presenting themselves to be classified in full-fledged thingness. So, for example, it is obvious to common sense that a tree is an individual thing. But from one biological perspective a copse of elm trees, all suckers from the same root system, should be seen as a single individual. A more interesting example is the recent development of the concept of a gene. The more science finds out about the workings of DNA inside living cells, the harder it is to find principled ways of dividing the DNA into components suitable for classification into anything related to the historical meaning of 'gene' (Dupré, 2004; Moss, 2003; Stotz et al., 2004). Of course this is not normally a problem for molecular biologists in the context of their professional lives, but it can lead to serious misunderstanding of many things they say.

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Generative Classifications

Luciana Parisi

Keywords antigenealogy, microvariations, rhizome, self-organization, symbiotic sex, turbulence

With Darwin's (1993) *The Origin of Species*, historical processes of individuation challenged Linnaeus's 17th- and 18th-century taxonomic practices of classifications, in which time played no role. In the Linnaeus classification system, the movement of time was subordinated to the fixed and hierarchical order of nature predicated on types or essences (Plato's transcendent essence and Aristotle's natural kinds). In other words, the classification of types, ordered according to principles of resemblance, identity, analogy and opposition, defined continuity and fixity in nature (Deleuze, 1994) resting on a congealed version of time – an eternal becoming the same – where no variation can happen.

Darwin's theory of evolution marks a breaking point in taxonomic classifications as it inserts historical events back in the formation of kinds highlighting that movement or change in time defines variations in species. In other words, species, far from being fixed types, are individuals composed of unique features statistically accumulating over time in relation to the population or collectivities (e.g. reproductive collectivities) of which they are part. In this sense, individuals are the results of accidents in history, of movement in time. Darwin's theory of evolution opens up the classification of types to processes of speciation where variations in populations and between populations define the genealogical evolution of the individual. Thus species are the result of

variations in the movement of time. By bringing back variations in individual species, Darwin brings back difference in genealogical classification. By opening types to variations in populations, Darwin also exposes the idea of degree of perfection, or hierarchical order in nature, to relations between rates of change. Rates of acceleration and deceleration vary from species to species according to divergent territories, nutrient sources, births, deaths, migrations and so on. Thus, movement in time is reintroduced by accounting for the relation between populations and between their velocities of variation. In other words, the Darwinian 'descent with modification' introduces variations in practices of classification and thus suggests the construction of a genealogy of the individual accounting for its collective formation in the movement of time.

However, there are at least two important yet problematic aspects of Darwinian evolution that explain the process of speciation and its genealogical classification. On the one hand, the action of sorting the ill- from the best-fitted adaptation performed by natural selection and, on the other, the centrality of sexual reproduction, which guarantees the isolation of the gene pool of a species from external genetic influences. In a sense, Darwinian descent with modification relies on an entropic notion of time whereby the threat of increasing accumulation of variation marks the tendency towards disorder in nature, which is, however, constantly re-balanced by natural selection through the elimination of the unfitted. Such entropic notion of evolution ensuring speciation by regulating variations indirectly coincides with the centrality of sexual reproduction, which ensures the isolation of one gene pool from the rest. In

other words, constant regulation and filiative reproduction define the genealogical classification of variation (read difference).

Whereas genealogical classification does account for variations in evolution, it still subjects variations to natural selection as a sort of reactive device against their disordered proliferation and to sexual reproduction that constantly redirects variations in a filiative genealogy. Here the range and scope of variations is not determined in advance. For Darwin, variations occur randomly. Yet, there are limits to sustainable variations depending on their viability and reproductive success. In other words, variations that attain some evolutionary advantage defined by natural selection and their endurance in sexual transmission will not be lost in evolution. The relations between populations and their diverse rates of change and between species and territories then remain somewhat limited to a predetermined notion of difference as always already actualized in an individuated phylum and lineage.

Genealogical classification in Darwin's evolution then seems to miss out the capacity of difference to generate difference. This is a point of contention between Henri Bergson's 'creative evolution' and Darwin's emphasis on natural selection and adaptation. For Bergson (1983), natural selection acts as an external force that negates the self-differentiating capacities of adaptation in the individual. In other words, in Darwin's evolution difference is always already given, actualized or predetermined by a negative force of selection. Bergson rather argues that difference is the result of continual processes of self-differentiation – i.e. of the capacity of the organism to differentiate itself from itself under certain pressures and conditions. Hence, adaptation is never passive but is the outcome of the virtual actions of the environment on the organism whereby the latter unleashes unprecedented potentials of differentiation. Variation in evolution does not derive from a tendency towards accumulation regulated by natural selection. Rather variations are imbued with potentials to generate new variations. Far from a tendency towards collapse (disorder or entropy), evolution for Bergson is a tendency towards the continual regeneration of variations linking together the past with the future in a continual splitting of time. Each present variation emerges from the double yet coexistent tendencies of time towards the past and the future. Here the generative capacities of variations entail that evolution far from deriving difference from filiative genealogy – i.e. from already actualized differences linearly transmitted from parents to offspring – rather exposes difference to duration outlining its heterogeneous composition and

virtual differentiation. In this sense all variations – and thus not just the best fitted ones – are motors of evolution. The process of speciation here entails a notion of difference that is open to its own becoming in duration or non-linear continuity, rather than linear development, between the past and the future. Thus, difference in duration brings into question filiative genealogy. It points at the anti-genealogy of difference: difference is always collective and always under construction in relation to a field of potential variations in non-linear evolution. Difference between species and between members of the same species therefore always already partakes of a heterogeneous plane that virtually links all differences. In this sense, the classification of difference is confronted by the continual generation of novel variations by means of intensive self-differentiation.

This notion of self-differentiation can also be explained through the notion of autopoiesis – or self-making – as used by Maturana and Varela (1980). Maturana and Varela argue that autopoiesis precedes evolution and reproduction. Autopoiesis defines the circular interactions of heterogeneous elements, which are at the core of the organization of life. The notion of recursivity or circularity indicates preservation by repetition, defining the way autopoiesis is conserved at every point as organisms evolve. Even if structures change – defining what Maturana and Varela call 'structural drift' – organization is conserved. In this sense, self-organization cuts across the scale of evolution from single cells to cellular aggregates, whereas structure relates to the specific order of cellular organization. This process of self-organization explains the emergence of novel variations beyond natural selection and passive adaptation.

For example, Stuart Kauffman's (1993) biophysical study of evolution highlights how autopoietic – autocatalytic – genetic networks generate novel variations at the edge between order and chaos. Autopoietic organization explains the emergence of novel patterns of variation in non-linear dynamics of evolution. Rather than explaining novel variations in evolution as the result of natural selection sorting best from ill-fitted accumulating variations, non-linear dynamics points out that the momentum of bifurcation or declination from linear trajectory is the source of emergence of new variations in evolution. Prigogine and Stengers (1984) define this momentum as turbulence. They draw on Lucretius's notion of the *clinamen*, the slightest movement in the angle of declination of a laminar flow initiating turbulence (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Lucretius, 1994; Serres, 1982).

Kauffman's analysis of non-linear dynamics of evolution argues that rates of variation accelerate

at bifurcation points (critical threshold of change), challenging the assumption that natural selection sets order on the gradual accumulation of variations. In contemporary evolutionary biology the role of acceleration and deceleration in evolutionary rates has become crucial to understand variations within the same population. Difference here entails differential speeds. The velocities of variation have also indicated the phenomena of long jump adaptations 'where genetic alterations jump beyond the correlation length of the landscape' or beyond the margins of territorialization to produce new variations (Kauffman, 1993: 117). Thus, variations are not the outcome of natural selection, but emerge through the parallel network of self-organization between populations and territories poised at the edge of a phase transition from one state to another. Kauffman compares these points of transmission values to singular zones of intensity existing at the phase transition between gaseous and solid states (too little and too much chaos or order). He argues that ecosystems (composed of populations and territories) may need to be poised at the edge in order to maximize their emergent computational capacities (1993: 237).

Far-from-equilibrium dynamics in self-organizing genetic networks expose the co-evolution and co-adaptation of organism and environment. These non-linear dynamics explain ecosystems as composites that are themselves connected to one another through the molecular velocities of evolutionary rates. Selection does not impose an order of fitness to these networked systems. Rather, it is immanent to their regulatory circuits as it acts at singular degrees of order. Kauffman suggests that at the heart of a living system is a network of channels that is able to catalyse its own reproduction. Hence, the genome, rather than a small aggregate of individual genes directly selected by a superior order, is a complex adaptive system composed of networks of genes and their production that interact with one another in regulatory circuitry. The network dynamics of genetic organization also challenges Dawkins's model of evolution based on the unit of selection, the genetic material acted upon by natural selection. This dynamics reveals that even a single cell is a cooperative colony that is not independent of the environment, and does not emerge from a gradual accumulation of variations.

Thus, structures, forms or individuals are the indeterminate results of self-organizing networks of microvariations. Macro forms of life are generative to the extent that they are imbued with potentials triggered from the turbulent dynamics of molecular self-organization. This implies no linear correspondence between micro and macro

levels of process and vital activity. Only indeterminate differentiation can account for the generative process of individuation. Individuals are generative macro forms of life that do exhaust but intensify molecular potentials to differentiate. Hence what changes is not just the micro-organization of macro forms of life. The latter are open to turbulent variations too. In this sense, the structure is itself generative, open to transformation.

Generative individuation entails not only self-organization and co-evolution (or structural coupling) between organisms and environments, but also what lies in-between, in the middle of species, lineages and phyla. A generative sense of classification also implies variations stemming from the symbiotic connection or parasitic relations across bodies from distinct evolutionary kingdoms. This is more than highlighting the existence of hybrids in evolution. Symbiotic variations point to a contagious plane of evolution whose individual outcomes never resemble the kingdoms they were derived from. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) define this symbiotic alliance as a 'machinic phylum': a transversal evolution linking kingdoms by means of contagion, a source of generative variations or becomings where each species results from thousand of symbiotic combinations. Hence individual classification can only imply a multiplicity of layers whose singular connection generates an individual. In other words, a machinic phylum explains generative evolution in terms of a networked architecture open to change according to the movement of microvariations composing it through their transversal symbiotic alliances. Symbiosis shows that the distinction between environment and individual is violated by the intersection of widely divergent species that have no genetic relation and that do not simply co-operate but combine, merge for long periods and generate novel metabolic systems. Symbiosis as a source of novel individuation occurs at many levels of scale enmeshing two or more heterogeneous populations followed by the eventual co-evolution of the partners.

Lynn Margulis (1971) re-elaborated the theory of endosymbiosis in the 1970s to argue that the motor of variation and novelty in evolution is placed in far from equilibrium bacterial networks of communication that connect species, lineages and phyla. Bacteria have no species and are not individuals. They are colonies of open communication ready to re-engineer themselves under certain pressures. Their reproduction bypasses the genealogical tree of sexual mating. Rather, for bacteria a quick contact is enough to send and receive information across the entire bacterial genome. Margulis defines this transmission as bacterial sex. Bacterial sex lays out a machinic

phylum of connection between micro and macro scales of evolution, where an individual species is always traversed by micro levels of variations, which are sources of its own potential mutation. Here difference does not only entail collective differentiation but processes of continual transmutation, i.e. mutations emerging in the middle zone of connection, the phase space of transition between one order of difference to another. In this sense, classifications can become rhizomatic mappings of self-organizing structures open to their own potential mutation on a contagious plane of transition across evolutionary scales.

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The Collection

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Keywords colonialism, Darwin, gaze, memory, order, power/knowledge, similitude, the private and the public, the zoo

In the novel *The Collector*, John Fowles tells the story of a man who moves from collecting and preserving butterflies to 'capturing' and 'preserving' women. In this slippage from the 'normal' to the pathological, the man adapts techniques and knowledges that follow the same logic underlying the process of constitution of the collection generally speaking. In associating collecting with power, domination, the erotic, excess, and, at the extreme, with pathological compulsion and repetition, the tale takes us away from the comforting picture of the collector as the devoted and patient searcher for expert knowledge to reveal the intimate connection between cognition and affective economy.

In a different vein, Benjamin's reflections on the collector bring out another side of this connection, specifically when he makes visible the fact that the rehabilitation of the obsolete object for pleasure that motivates the collector rescues the object from the flight into the oblivion of the past to which it is condemned by the proliferation of objects in modern consumer culture. The collector thus amasses the past, her own and the community's, gathering it for a rebirth to the present that at the same time renews a subjective link with the past and rescues, or wishes to rescue, a loss.

Underneath the search for knowledge we find the territory of the unknown: secret knowledges, unavowed pleasures, and their mysterious affinities. The thirst for knowledge, after all, constantly threatens to engulf those who cannot be satisfied with the incomplete and the mundane, those who recognize the abyss of ignorance that lies under every display of certainty, and who must therefore go in search for the lost object of a (usually disavowed) desire. Such longings betray the relation to identity and belonging, and thus, to being, so that knowing, being and desiring are seen to form a triptych repeating at another level the co-relations of truth, goodness and beauty. They are driven by impulses and yearnings that have conditioned the assembling of most of the collections that today establish a monument to past efforts to gather together knowledge of the world and its treasury of objects and deeds. We are drawn to them today to learn and to be amazed. But they each have a tale to tell that reveals much more about modern culture and subjectivities than meets the eye: tales that enable one to rewrite the history of the concept in such a way as to bring to light the relation of knowledge and power, of reason and passion; at the same time, these accounts bring into view the relation of culture to what Heidegger called the ordering of the orderable.

It is this question of the relation of order and culture that I will principally address, on the grounds that every order assumes a view of a whole world, and a way of life, whether that be the picture of species as related to each other according to the metaphor of a tree – as in one of Darwin's early models of speciation – or of human 'races' related in terms of a linear model of development that places Europeans at the forefront and grades others according to the European idealization of itself which is intrinsic to this imaginary.

Perhaps the first question to address is that of what makes a collection a collection. We know there exist innumerable collections about every manner of object, from bus tickets to stamps, from paintings to animal species; they ubiquitously appear in museums, libraries, art galleries, archives, zoos, scientific laboratories as well as in private homes. One may even loosely refer to the books in one's own library as a collection, especially if they have been gathered in terms of specific categories or topics. The immediate problem concerns the approach that would enable one to speak in general terms about the collection as a category. The broader context here is of course that of locating the collection as a meta-category in the mechanisms and processes whereby the knowledge that we take to be authoritative has been produced in the modern period. However, if the term is to have any usefulness beyond reference to a heap of objects brought together in one place, it must at the very least indicate the attempt to classify according to a rule of sameness or similitude, for instance, a butterfly collection, and a rule of difference, for example, which insect does not count as a butterfly, but is a moth or a fly.

So, are we to assume that rules already exist that enable one to select amongst objects to be included in a collection those that show a similarity according to more or less clearly defined categories? Yet, when one considers a collection like that of Darwin's barnacles, or his beetles, one finds that the labour of establishing the collection itself involved developing tools and concepts for determining which item belonged to the category. A dynamic relationship existed therefore in this case between the process of collecting and the process of classification; new knowledge emerged out of that processual dynamic, the one operating as condition of possibility for the other.

Does the same apply to collections involving different kinds of objects, say, stamps, or do most collections arise from already well established categories and practices? And what work of classification occurs in the process of producing a collection? For example, a stamp collection is not simply a large bundle of stamps thrown together, but is made up of separate entries determined by reference to countries and periods or value and so on. Similarly, a zoo, as a collection of animal species, would be arranged according to considerations of place and species and habitat. In other words, an ordering of the objects is involved in all cases. Today, collections for display are increasingly rearranged according to themes that curators and the managers of the culture industry decide will entice the spectator, so that the question of order answers different imperatives than a respect for epistemological protocols, an interest

in historical authenticity or the search for adequacy from the point of view of categorical representation.

Now the question of order connects in a very direct and central way to, on the one hand, the idea of the knowable and orderable, and, on the other hand, to a world view. Collections find a place within this epistemological framing, not in every instance lending support to its logic, but providing enough evidence to enable one to interrogate the collection from the point of view of the meta-categories operating to constitute the modern architecture of knowledge.

To begin with, I will consider a case fairly typical of the process of emergence of collections. It is that of the collection of prints that the British film critic and writer Alexander Walker put together from the 1960s that he bequeathed to the British Museum. Here is an example of the individual connoisseur driven by whatever obsessions and enthusiasms, guided by his own flair and eye for the exceptional or the representative – of style and period, and so on – acquiring what he liked or could, all the while balancing his own acuity with the advice of experts, to produce what is now regarded as an incomparable collection of prints, not least because it gives us a trace of the shifts in style in print since the First World War, a history that interested Walker. It has now joined many other collections to be part of the public treasury and archive of artworks. The correlations of order, classification, authority, knowledge and pleasure in the emergence of collections are played out at different levels in the Walker collection, circumscribing an arena in which are intertwined the private and the public touching on the economy, aesthetics, biography and memory.

To bring out other facets of the processual dynamic I noted earlier, let us turn once more to Darwin's collection of beetles and barnacles. We know that in amassing these collections Darwin corresponded with scientists and amateurs all over the world, his task made possible because of the existence of the British Empire, so that the latter must be regarded as a vital condition of possibility for the theory of evolution (Venn, 1982). It is a (largely ignored) fact that the colonial empires had consciously put in place apparatuses and networks of communication and agencies to make possible the formation of communities of scientists and explorers, inter-connected through a grid of information and exchanges along which knowledge and objects could flow across the globe; they were part of an imperial governance. Such activities were supported by grants, and by an army of functionaries and local workforces facilitating the travels and maintaining the daily existence of scientists and experts of all kinds. Darwin's account of the voyages of the *Beagle* makes clear his utter dependence on this invisible colonial apparatus for his work as researcher. The emergence of various scientific organizations throughout Europe, such as the Geological, the Zoological and the Linnean societies in England, became the discursive sites where the discoveries and research from around the world could be communicated to an informed public; they operated as nodes for authorizing new knowledge and experts. Thus, by the 19th century, every new discovery, every variation in species, in geology, in culture and peoples could be efficiently disseminated to the scientific community in the West as well as to the furthest reaches of the European empires. Darwin's accounts of his work show how the questions that were at the forefront of his researches – about genera and type, about the set, about completion on a world scale, about difference and variation established globally – were not only central to the testing of universal rules of classification and the articulation of theory in the life sciences, but arose from the store of information and specimens that colonial administrations systematically and assiduously collected and made available. They allowed Darwin to construct a map and a model of dispersion, to examine in minute detail the matter of variation and adaptation to specific environments. The problem of natural selection already framed the whole enterprise, so that it is clear from the accounts which we have that, in establishing his collections, Darwin was driven by a compelling hunch about evolution, a thought over-determined by theories and practices in every other field he had researched: in geology, morphology, botany, natural history (Lyell, Hooker, Henslow, Lamarck, Herder), in the organic world (Hume, Lamarck, Sebright, Chambers), in language (Stewart, Smart), in aesthetics (Reynolds), in morality (Mill, Martineau); they all pointed to change and evolution rather than fixity and permanence as a universal process. Underlying the

work of establishing the collection was his idea of variation and selection occurring universally in nature, an idea arrived at well before the *Origin of Species* (1859), written as rough notes in the *Notebooks* (1837–39), and as a *Sketch* (1842); for him it revealed the fundamental condition for an explanation of the evolution of species through adaptation and inheritance. Thus, behind his obsession with collecting barnacles lay the search for the evidence for evolution and the need to build up a polemical apparatus in view of the assaults he was sure would come from the advocates of Natural Theology and creationism once his discovery was made public.

In my second example I will deal with the zoo as a collection of animals. The zoo is a European invention, developing from the menageries that the rich amassed as curiosities to impress and entertain. A genealogy of the zoo reveals the correlations between notions of social order inscribed in world views and the classification of species and their disposition in groups for the gaze of the spectator. Animals, according to Hardouin-Fugier and Beratay (2004), were a source equally of delight and terror, on the one hand appearing to show the evidence of a family resemblance in accordance with the doctrine of the 'great chain of being', on the other hand, offering the spectacle of an alien and ferocious 'other'. Both views were compatible with the location of 'man' at the apex of the system and as the unique creation with a claim to legitimate dominion over all species. In Darwinian times, as we know, the doctrine of the 'uniqueness of man', founded in the Scriptures, was fundamental in the debates about the acceptance or rejection of the theory of evolution. The debates in England often relied for evidence on the behaviour of animals kept at the London Zoo, especially the chimpanzees and other simians. Furthermore, a relation to social history is uncovered when we compare the rational disposition and the method of display of the animals in European zoos. The French designed geometric cages for the specimens and ordered them according to their interest in breeding and in the taming of nature (a rationalist logic evident also in Housmann's designs for urban spaces), while in England in the 19th-century zoos were designed within an imaginary that fitted in with the ideal of the landscaped garden – itself, of course, a different approach to the project of the control of nature: more Romantized and pastoral, closer to the affinities of land and wealth and power that a landed gentry was predisposed to sense. It should be noted, furthermore, that the relationship with colonialism, implicit all along, was explicitly recognized in the Paris 'Exposition Coloniale' of 1931, which presented the zoo as a colonial showcase displaying French dominion and expansion.

My examples may appear idiosyncratic, quite removed from the collections of works of art and cultural artefacts that are the usual fare in the typical museum or gallery. Yet when one examines the process of accumulation of such objects one finds, to begin with, the extent to which they were often acquired in the process of conquest and colonization as booty, for instance the Elgin Marbles, or trophy, for example Egyptian antiquities, or objects of curiosity for the cosmopolitan public, or as evidence of domination and superiority. The latter (occidental) ideology is clearly at work in the collections of bones and anatomical parts of the colonized kept in a variety of institutions in Europe and the USA, avowedly in the interest of 'science', but classified and displayed as part of establishing the superiority of the West and the 'white man'. One also finds that a large number of collections were put together to demonstrate the idea of an order or a truth in the world, to be established and diffused as knowledge amongst the general public through display. An Enlightenment cosmopolitanism lies invisibly in the background of this thirst for global knowledge, combining the imperial thrust (self-delusionally benevolent, as in Kant) of an expansive modernity with the yearning for a new order (as in Humbolt's appropriately titled *Cosmos* (1846) that Darwin read with interest). From post-Enlightenment, time, knowledge and power became more systematically bound together in the modern worlding of the world. In this way collections participate in the formation of subjects as part of the technologies of the social and through the constitution of a gaze, as I shall discuss below.

For instance, to take a typical case, what makes the Turner Collection at the Tate Gallery in London a collection is that, as opposed to a single painting of Turner, it claims to be a

representative sample of the painter's oeuvre, covering his range of themes, the shifts in style and technique, the forms he explored. The Collection is also accompanied by notes that explain and analyse the paintings by reference to the oeuvre as a whole and to painting as a form; these provide a knowledge to serve as guide, so that the viewer is educated in the 'proper' way to experience aesthetic pleasure and exercise a critical faculty at the same time.

Today, collections are increasingly deployed both as the object for a public gaze, thus, as spectacle for consumption, and to function as a pedagogical device. Although every collection is a source of knowledge, the pedagogical has often been either an incidental or an implicit element rather than an objective implicated in the design and display of the collection. Of course when commercial interest is the determining factor, commodification becomes the dominant value. Even so, a set of rules comes into play that involves expertise, namely in deciding about quality, and about what is worth exhibiting, how to organize the objects, how to market the items or the exhibition, which objects should be protected from deterioration and so on. So, what is seen as a collection is a set of objects already ordered in terms of public and/or scientific interest, or in terms of consumerist appeal to a public, or by reference to what it contributes to an idea of a nation's history or cultural heritage and so on. Clearly, power, whether as political power or as authority, plays an active part in determining what will be the content and shape of collections.

To develop the question of the relation to knowledge and to subjectivity that collections produce and enact, I want to focus on the point of view of the gaze. I mean the gaze to indicate both the sense of a subjective positioning and the sense of a framing, in the strong sense of an ordering that circumscribes a world. In cultural analysis, the idea of the gaze has been developed from Lacanian theory to apply to the spectator, as in Laura Mulvey's (1975) theorization of the positioning of the viewer constructed by the (film) text independently of the viewer. The text itself, because of the way it has been put together, and the assumptions it makes about subject positions – assumptions that themselves have determinate effects for the construction of the text – provides the positions from which it can be 'read', namely, by enabling the viewer to gain access to the 'structure of feelings' inscribed in the text and thus to follow the narration from the point of view of the narrator. There are of course counter-textual strategies for refusing particular subject positions, by bringing critical tools such as those of deconstruction to bear on the reading.

I would like to extend this notion of the gaze to refer more explicitly to the process of identification and to the epistemic subject (Venn, 2002). When applied to the case of Darwin's collections, it is clear that the viewer is meant to locate herself either in the place of 'Darwin' the scientist of universal processes, looking at the specimens from the standpoint of his perspective, inscribed in the way he classified and organized the specimens in his collections, or else in the position of the historian of science/ideas – and the curator and the archivist – informed by narratives about the theory of evolution and its place in the location of human beings in the grand scheme of things, or about what is a 'good' exhibition. Identification is performatively enacted in the process of viewing. The viewer as subject looks at the display either within the frame of reference of the scientist or within a frame that brings into visibility the Darwinian collection and his work in relation to the wider perspective of a historical framing of scientific findings and concepts. In both cases, specific subjectivities are called into play with appropriate attitudes and values.

In the example of the zoo in the 19th century, the public gaze was over-determined by the frame of reference in which Europeans located themselves as masters of the universe, in a privileged place with regard to living organisms and other 'races'. The viewer was interpellated both as the rational observer, willing to share in the great experiment of controlling nature, including the realm of animals, and as the superior, civilized being who has escaped the state of nature depicted by the specimens on display, and now has dominion over the world. Non-white spectators at the zoo would have found it difficult to identify with the gaze it constituted, given their location as inferior beings, closely related to the simians which were part of the display. Today the standpoint of habitat and concern about cruelty to and lack of respect

for animals are supposed, ideally at least, to motivate the framing of the zoo as a particular kind of space (though commercial interests have ways of subverting or by-passing such principles). The guide notes and explanations attempt to position the viewer as this concerned, responsible and democratic subject. It is reasonable to claim then that in diffusing particular kinds of knowledges and in forming subjects for such knowledges, collections operate mainly through the construction of a gaze, though the latter works effectively only in correlation with other apparatuses, for instance that of education, which prepares the subject for the practice of viewing and valuing collections in determinate ways, though clearly the subject positions or identities constituted by the gaze can be refused, provided mechanisms for such dissident disidentifications exist in the culture.

As a category, then, the collection stands at the threshold of a number of domains: it is part of technologies of the social, participating in the formation of identities and of publics, yet at the same time it functions as the visible trace intimating the invisible and haphazard history of knowledge whilst remaining as testimony to yearnings and pleasures that weave biographies into the history of communities and their deeds. Collections are monuments and archives, the repository of a past and the legacy to be preserved. They inscribe the having been of a culture, preserving it for the present and the future, so that the knowledge and the memory that it inscribes can continue to be the object of a reflection on the way of life of the collectivity. Within the context of a global knowledge, such a reflection should trigger the work of memory aligned with working through in the psychoanalytic sense, that is, aligned with a critical hermeneutics.

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Classification and Human Language

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Keywords form, function, gender, grammar, language

Classification has a prehistory. Long before people were writing about classification, or listing classes, they were *doing* it, whenever they spoke.

The human propensity to classify the world is

reflected universally in language, at many levels and in many ways. At its most fundamental, all languages minimally distinguish the pronouns *I* and *you*; many (if not most) languages accord special grammatical privileges to *I* and *you*, opposed to the rest of the world, and yet others put the dividing line somewhere else, maybe including dogs but excluding insects in a privileged 'human and most animate' category. Regardless of where the line between 'privileged' and 'less privileged' lies, the

tendency towards classification is rife and only just begins with the special status of *you* and *me*.

The parts of the body, as a group or in parts, can reflect classificatory principles: when fingers and toes are ‘blossoms of hands’ and ‘blossoms of feet’ respectively, as they are in many languages of central Indonesia such as *Tukang Besi* (Donohue, 1999), we can see the classification of the body into equal upper and lower parts. Foley (1997) describes this upper and lower division for *Watam*, showing that all parts of the upper limbs have a classification that is perfectly parallel with the lower limbs. The classification of the extremities of humans (fingers and toes) and the extremities of plants and animals (wing-tips and blossoms) into the same units also reflects a pan-species set of classificatory principles. The use of the same lexical item to specify ‘grass’, ‘leaf’ and ‘hair’, or the use of the same lexical item to express both the start and the end of a process (such as a single item covering ‘tree/wood/fire’, or a single word for ‘stomach/faeces’, as is common in New Guinea) signifies a division of the world into perceived classes, just as much as does its absence in those languages that do not collapse these terms.

Without formal gender we also find formal and functional classification, and the two systems meeting. In the One language of Papua New Guinea the animal world is classified into *tolla* ‘birds’, *mulu* ‘meat animals’, and *pompone* ‘water dwelling creatures’. Another functional classification applies as well as this locational system, and, for instance, a cassowary, which although winged and feathered is flightless, is counted as a *pi'i mulu* ‘ground animal’, while a *saumu* ‘tree kangaroo (generic)’ is a *tiri mulu* ‘upper animal’. Other *pi'i mulu* are the mammals of the ground: rodents, pigs, wallabies, while other members of the *tiri mulu* group are all the flying birds. Likewise various *oini* ‘bandicoot (generic)’ are classified as *tiri mulu*, *pi'i mulu*, or *folu mulu* ‘water animals’ based on their habitat. While they are all *mulu*, in opposition to *pompone* and *tolla*, certain of their members can be functionally grouped with *tolla* or *pompone* based on their behaviour, rather than their structure.

The most obvious, and overt, expression of classification in language, and the one that has received the greatest attention from linguists and others, involves gender. Dividing the world into masculine and feminine (and more) parts is overt classification at its most obvious. The basis for the classification can be formal (based on the perceived salient shape: long, thin objects are masculine, short and squat objects are feminine), functional (women’s tools versus men’s tool, for instance), or a mixture of the two. In *Skou*, a language from New Guinea, the world is classed as feminine or non-feminine, and these two poles

contrast in dynamic ways. While non-feminine is the unmarked category, semantically, feminine represents the natural, the biological, the unordered and unpredictable. The land, with all its mysteries, is classed as feminine, while the transparent sea is non-feminine. A canoe is an ordered, societal tool, crewed by men, that is used to travel on the sea; it is classed, however, as feminine, in order to maintain an opposition with the predominantly non-feminine environment. Similarly water in its natural state, a river or a pool in the jungle, is classed as feminine; but when brought (typically by women) into the village, another feminine domain, it is reclassified as non-feminine, to maintain a distinction with ‘wild’ water, and a distinction with its new environment. (Non-feminine domains include food gardens, non-feminine by virtue of their being typically tended by men, houses, situated in ‘feminine’ villages but built by men, and islands and mountain tops, non-feminine on the basis of their shape.)

And the apparently arbitrary can enter the picture: in *Burmeso*, while third persons can be masculine or feminine, all first persons (*I, me*) are feminine, and all second persons (*you*) are masculine. Here the classification has moved from the formal and functional to the purely grammatical. Interestingly, native speakers often create ad hoc explanations for these classification systems, even in the face of counter-examples; I have heard Dutch speakers ‘explain’ the (to them) ‘masculine’ versus ‘feminine’ gender system in terms of shape characteristics of the nominals concerned, even in the face of clear counter examples. This parallels the continued citation of what has become (in some circles) known as ‘The Great Eskimo Snow Hoax’, in which Eskimo languages are asserted to have a vast number of words for snow (or ice), whereas in fact not only do the Inuit (or Eskimo) languages not have any such vast store of lexicon, but English contains at least as many lexical roots for these concepts, at least in the English spoken by avid skiers. As Pullum (1991) points out, people always have enough words to describe the world around them; a typographer recognizes more words for different fonts than does the average academic, but we do not find this exceptional or noteworthy. The use of classification as a tool in categorizing the world around us is so pervasive that we cease to think of it as categorization. Examples, such as the divisions of the natural world in One, which branch and then rejoin in parallel and overlapping systems, suggest that perhaps life in a society without such continual categorization of humans into archetypes such as doctor, professor, brick-layer, politician, etc. allows for a more complex conceptualization of the non-human world as well. But conceptualize it, and classify it, it does.

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Classification in French Social Theory

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Keywords Comte, dualism, Durkheim, Encyclopédistes, French exceptionalism, Lyotard, Rousseau

In attempting to represent *le modèle politique français* recently, Pierre Rosanvallon (2004) has argued that the exceptionalism of the French political tradition lies in the continuous oscillation between 'Jacobin' state-centredness and civil society, between 'political' and 'civil' democracies. Similarly, the French intellectual tradition in the modern period can be characterized as a continuous oscillation between the rationalist a priorism of the Cartesian tradition and the biological experientialism of Rousseauism. This epistemological oscillation is apparent in competing attitudes towards encyclopaedic classification.

The legacy of Cartesian dualism – the separation of the mind from the extended material universe – made possible the accumulation of objective knowledge by the Encyclopédistes. Diderot's entry on 'Encyclopédie' in Volume V of the *Encyclopédie [Encyclopedia]*, 1755, defined the goal of the venture as being to 'rassembler les connaissances éparses sur la surface de la terre, d'en exposer le système général aux hommes avec qui nous vivons . . .' (to gather together the knowledge which is scattered over the earth and to display its general system to the men with whom we live). Diderot was not proposing a (Linnaean) classification of objective (botanical) phenomena, nor, like his fellow Encyclopédiste Rousseau, author of *Emile*, was he emphasizing the subjective frame of reference of knowledge construction. Rather Diderot sought to order dispersed knowledge, as a contemporary antiquarian, without

claiming either to organize things-in-themselves or to say anything about the principles of organization with which people operate.

The indigenous French philosophical tradition did not itself generate a Kantian resolution of the relationship between a priori and empirical knowledge. It was Comte – with little interest in epistemological questions – who sustained the endeavour of the Encyclopédistes, commencing, in 1829, the series of 60 lectures which were to be published as the *Cours de Philosophie Positive [Course of Positive Philosophy]* between 1830 and 1842. After offering general preliminary remarks and then giving lectures on mathematics, Comte provided an account of knowledge based upon a differentiation between the 'sciences des corps bruts' (of raw bodies) – astronomy, physics and chemistry – and the 'sciences des corps organisés' (organized bodies) – physiology and social physics or sociology. The principle of organization of Comte's classification of knowledge remained objective but it had become historical rather than a-temporal. In past historical periods, humans had had recourse, first of all, to an explanatory frame of thinking that was theological and, next, to one which was metaphysical, and it was only in the present that a comparable frame, based on positive scientific observation, was now in the process of establishing itself. In expounding this 'law' of the three states of development of human thinking (to which corresponded systems of social organization), Comte claimed that it showed that *at every epoch*, some theory is necessary to link observed facts and also that at the *origins of human mental development* it was impossible for theories to be generated simply from observation. At its birth, Comte claimed, the human spirit was saved by theology from the impasse which was the

consequence of the need for theory to observe facts and the impossibility of generating theories from facts.

Rousseau's affectivity had performed a compensatory function to relieve the austerity of the contractual relationship between individual and general wills for citizens in the post-revolutionary political state. Born of Catholic parents in the revolutionary period, Comte tried to establish a new social and intellectual order based upon a-theological and non-metaphysical observation. The classification of knowledge required a principle of order. Increasingly, the evolutionism which had enabled Comte to periodize intellectual history and classify developed human knowledge came to provide possible access to universal principles of order underlying the classificatory practices of all historical periods. Lévy-Bruhl was born in the year in which Comte died (1857) and Durkheim was born one year later. Both were influenced by German philosophy as well as by the work of Comte. Durkheim showed no interest in Comte's late attempt to counter social disorder by recommending a 'Système de Politique Positive', involving the establishment of a religion of humanity. Instead, in *De la division du travail social* [*The Division of Labour in Society*] (1893) and *Le Suicide* [*Suicide*] (1897), Durkheim identified the need for a new principle of social order – based on 'organic' rather than 'mechanical' solidarity – which was in tune with the bourgeois socialism of the leaders of the Third Republic. This went alongside an attempt to question the 'mechanical' systems of intellectual classification. By reference to ethnographic records of Australian aborigines, Durkheim and Mauss analysed some primitive forms of classification in *De Quelques Formes Primitives de Classification* [*On Some Primitive Forms of Classification*] (1903) and Durkheim published *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* [*Elementary Forms of Religious Life*] in 1912 in which he made clear in his Introduction that he was attempting to make a contribution to neo-Kantian epistemology. The analysis of primitive classification was an attempt to challenge the dominant assumptions of logicians and psychologists, but, in spite of its superficial interest, instead, in the social constitution of classification, it remained attached to the agenda of Enlightenment transcendental idealism. Lévy-Bruhl was different. From the publication of *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* [*Mental Functions in Inferior Societies*] (1910) until his death in 1939, Lévy-Bruhl sought to show that 'primitive mentality' involved participatory knowledge acquisition rather than detached, objective classification.

Levinas (1957) contended that even Lévy-Bruhl remained enclosed within the epistemologi-

cal straitjacket of the Western European intellectual tradition. The reception in France in the period after the 1930s of currents of German thinking – the work of Hegel, Marx, Husserl, Nietzsche and Heidegger – has tipped the philosophical balance away from objectivist classification. If the binary oppositions of Lévi-Straussian structuralism suggest a mid-century resurgence of classificatory systems, then the postmodern rejection of meta-narratives necessarily entails the enactment of dialogic difference rather than classificatory consensus. Here the work of Lyotard was crucial in the 1970s in *Discours, figure* [*The Discursive and the Figurative*] (1971) and *Dérive à partir de Marx et Freud* [*Derivations based on Marx and Freud*] (1973) and culminating in *La condition postmoderne* [*The Postmodern Condition*] (1984), in harnessing his knowledge of the phenomenological tradition as evidenced in his *La Phénoménologie* [*Phenomenology*] (1991) to question the dominance of consciousness in the work of Husserl and to question generally the supremacy of objectivist explanatory discourses. This linked with the developing work of Deleuze and Foucault and helped to resuscitate the significance of the work of Bergson, so much so that Habermas felt the need to draw differently upon the German intellectual tradition to counter-act, in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Habermas, 1987), the anti-rationalist tendencies of contemporary French social thought. In the middle, spanning both camps, is the reflexivity of Bourdieu, which seeks to preserve primitive classification by subjecting superimposed objectivist classifications to a form of sociological reduction, deploying sociological discourse as phenomenological practice more than realist explanation – thereby integrating or accommodating the opposed cognitive and affective orientations which have always co-existed in the French tradition from the beginnings of the Western European scientific revolution.

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Rubbish, the Remnant, Etcetera

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Keywords biopolitics, classification, composability, difference, error, noise

The Differential Machine

Every system of classification works on the basis of rules of inclusion and exclusion. Whether these be pragmatic, e.g. the classification of snow by the Inuit, or theoretical, e.g. the periodic table, they operate on and constitute differences, they establish boundaries, and ground judgement and action. Yet although the process of inclusion necessarily implicates rules of exclusion, hardly any system of classification is founded on an explicit theory of difference. Differences proliferate from already existing processes of differentiation (say, in phylogenesis) and of the ordering of the objects of the world. Their redistribution and grouping in taxonomies is correlated to a scale of importance and visibility, say, human beings according to a notion of superior and inferior 'races', so that the need to categorize inscribes a normalizing thrust and a system of value. Of course, in the course of this ordering of the world, even more objects are simply consigned to the heap of the unimportant or irrelevant; they fill up the category marked 'the rest', in short, they become rubbish.

As a concept, rubbish trails in its wake a number of other categories that metonymically resonate with it, namely, those of the remnant, the remainder, the marginal, noise, etcetera. The common ground linking this metonymic chain is the implication that the norms of the normal, and the criteria that determine the canonical, function to consign all objects that do not fit these norms to the domain of the abnormal, the untypical, the pathological, the surplus. These resemblances allow us to glimpse only the semblance of rubbish for, as movement, rubbish is dissembled in the trace where it endures. Rubbish, as one knows, is difficult to get rid of, it accumulates, even if kept out of sight: in attics, dumps, silos, the seabed, camps. This happens not just with 'spent' nuclear

material, or the cast out detritus of consumer culture, or carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere; it happens with weeds invading the ecological artifice of the modern garden and with the multiplication of germs dissipated through points of their accumulation like hospitals. The process of producing rubbish is endemic, and its accumulation awaits the 'accident'. At some point it becomes excessive, and it then emerges as a challenge to the whole system, the disavowed trace that erupts to put into perspective the calculations that have ordered its dissimulation.

Today rubbish has taken a new dimension, for, the production of obsolescence that Benjamin thought characteristic of the consumer culture has become intensified because of the accelerated speed at which the must-have objects of desire must be discarded as the signifiers of yesterday's fashion, and the degree to which identity and worth have become locked into this machinery for constituting the signs of desirable identities. Consumer goods carry news of difference that we have become attuned to hear, sensitized by the language of advertising that assigns value to these objects according to the arbitrary scales of fashion and the self-referential process of creating the distinctions of taste. An economy of abjection drives this consumerist apparatus for recognition whereby those who have must display their wealth through the obsessive acquisition of the (sometimes admittedly exquisite) trinkets that confer provisional prestige and worth, while the have-nots can only window-shop and fantasize ownership of what would bring them into visibility, at least from the point of view of the gaze constituted by the operation of teletechnologies. A new imaginary is being created, grounded in the hyperreal world of teletechnologies and the mass that they constitute, mediating the affective relation between the subjective and the social and public, and so correlating that relationship with the process of recognition. This imaginary functions as relay for the new machinery of desire that produces objects for it and for consumption. This is of course far from the little that most people need: 'all we want is to

be able to live in dignity’, as a supporter of Subcommandante Marcos once put it. The tragedy of corporate capitalism is that untold misery is inflicted on millions globally as an integral part of a system for producing consumers with large disposable incomes who can then pig out on disposable goods to feed the existential need for recognition, generating even more rubbish. The problem, then, is to theorize rubbish in a way that enables one to rethink the fact of difference – of class, gender, race, culture – alongside the fact of co-dependence and thus to bring into visibility the constitutive relation between the visible and the invisible.

The Point of View of Error

This relation reappears in a different form in the case of the constitution of knowledge. Every category, we know, involves a process of abstraction whereby variations that do not alter a function or that contravene the rules of belonging are discounted. For instance, in deciding what is or is not a chair, one may apply a simple rule, for example, that of objects that have been made for one to sit on, though one may then have to add other conditions for the sake of precision, say, to distinguish between chairs and beds. What seems particularly challenging is not this kind of problem about categories and classification, but the fact that what escapes categorization and taxonomies often betrays one’s ignorance and challenges existing theories. Thus, the Genome project has revealed that there are far fewer genes for explaining the characteristics and behaviour of humans than expected by positive science and its assumption of univocal causality. It was thought that each biological characteristic and every personality trait would have ‘its’ gene, a neat correspondence that would have satisfied the demands of discrete functions prescribed by positivism. The discovery cuts the ground under the advocates of simple explanatory models of life and adds weight to the theories that emphasize complexity, compossibility and a ‘flat ontology’. An interesting aspect of the new knowledge is the fact that there seems to be a lot of surplus genetic material present – 95 percent of the genomic material – seemingly serving no purpose, and thus conforming to what existing models of life understand as noise. This ‘non-coding’ or ‘conserved’ DNA, symptomatically called junk DNA, now appears to contain a wealth of information and functions essential for the working of the coding DNA (that codes for amino acids, and thus for protein production), for example, it seems to regulate the process of development and differentiation by switching on and off particular genetic activity.

Explanations that simply invoke lack of information and the provisionality of scientific knowledge miss the deeper level of the epistemological issue. For instance, if instead of the assumption of the individualism of the gene in genetics, an assumption in solidarity with a whole world view sustaining an egocentric ontology and an instrumentalist idea of nature, theory proceeded from the standpoint of the inseparability of ‘individual’ entities from the ‘surrounding’, that is, if it assumed the primacy of the relational character of being and life, theory would recognize the imbrication of human beings, and the knowing mind, in the world, implying also the impossibility of an omniscient knowledge (Prigogine and Stengers, 1979). A similar point can be made about what is called dark matter, namely, matter that calculations determined by astro-physical theories tell us must exist in the universe, yet that no theory can explain and no instrument can detect so far. What was supposed to be empty space is now thought to be filled by this recalcitrant stuff; is it rubbish or is it the signifier of the insufficiency of current theories, or indeed the evidence that the whole conceptual framing of science so far needs to be recast? It may well be that, given appropriate transformation in the bigger epistemological picture, junk DNA will turn out to be the equivalent of dark matter concerning the process of formation of life and world. The problem is not only that the dominant model of knowledge assumes that the way existing theories cut up the world reveals an underlying essential reality, it also implicates an ontological difference between what a particular knowledge makes visible and what it casts into the shadow, granting ontological priority to the former.

The point is that when one pays attention to the reality of the process whereby knowledge is produced, one finds that a history of errors is far more enlightening than the narrative of an untroubled rationality motivating the machinery of the progressive accumulation of knowledge. As Bachelard and Canguilhem have demonstrated, the history of errors, that is to say the history of the failures, the wrong hunches, the theories that did not convince, the obstacles that provoked new thinking, the paradigms that have become limiting rather than innovative, reveals much more about the indeterminate, collective, constructed, ludic character of the process than the authorized history of knowledge that deliberately casts them into the oubliette of errors, to be forgotten in the clutter of neglected archives. Error in science is not rubbish, it is productive, both as a necessary aspect of the process of constituting new knowledge as well as from the point of view of an epistemological history of the sciences. Error is

democratic: it opens towards heterogeneity; it allows newness to come into the world.

The Standpoint of the Relation to the Other

Another set of issues, this time relating ontology to ethics, appears when one considers other terms in the metonymic chain. Agamben (1999), in *The Remnants of Auschwitz*, examines the ontological and discursive status of the human subject reduced to bare life in the concentration camps. The prisoners, already denied a name and any kind of dignity, were so systematically dehumanized and brutalized by the Nazi regime of terror that the weakest had become the living dead, the *müselmann*, the speechless and thoughtless non-men, who no longer cared what happened to them. For the SS men these barely alive beings had become 'garbage', while for other prisoners they had become the figure of abjection, for they embodied both the disposable subhumans of fascist biopolitics, as well as the dread of the death beyond death of what possibly awaited every Jew in the camp. No one could bear to gaze upon them. Agamben discusses the paradox of this existence to which no one can properly bear witness yet that must remain as testimony. The *müselmann*, he says (1999: 48), is the 'complete witness', occupying the non-place and threshold between man and non-man; she/he/it is 'an indefinite being in whom not only humanity and non-humanity, but also vegetative existence and relation, physiology and ethics, medicine and politics, and life and death continuously pass through each other'. It can be argued that this being functions as the exception, the point where the question of ethics begins, that is, the point at which one is obliged to ask what it means to be human at all. But this is not an abstract philosophical question, for it is triggered by the shame that the witness has for retaining any dignity at the sight of those who have been stripped of all dignity, 'the shame of the survivors in the face of the drowned', as Agamben's (1999: 63) reference to Primo Levi's testimony shows. And now, Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib have become the latest in a long series of instances of what Arendt has called the 'banality of evil'; they oblige us to decide whether the culture and the calculations that are capable of inflicting this

suffering can still qualify as human – bearing in mind that the inhuman, as Lyotard (1991) has shown, inhabits the human. I will argue that ethics begins here for two reasons, first, because it intensifies the question of what living with dignity means, and second, because it insists that one must respond to the plight of the drowned, by bearing witness to the suffering of the other, that is, it challenges us as to the question of our responsibility for our fellows, particularly when one poses the question from the point of view of the constitutive relationality of being.

The principle of security that drives the current militarization of the social in the name of a 'war on terrorism' is producing its own regimes of terror, invested in a biopolitics that has allocated to itself the right to give life and to give death, that is, to produce new remnants. This strategy dispenses with frontiers and international laws in its post-Clauswitzian militarist logic of a total war on whoever and whatever does not conform to the norms of socialities founded on fundamentalist certitudes. The watchword seems to be: assimilation or extermination. Today, the names of the drowned and the remnant have multiplied and spread across the globe: the stranger, the refugee, the asylum-seeker, the deportee, the ethnic other, the destitute thrown out of her land or deprived of a livelihood by the advances of neoliberal privatization and marketization. It is another army of the human surplus or 'rubbish' which global governance plans to discipline and regulate, or else disperse into the invisibility of non-places like camps, bidonvilles, favelas.

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The Unclassifiable

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Keywords *Atopia*, classification, encyclopaedia

According to the dictionaries, the word ‘unclassifiable’ means what cannot be included within a class or category; what cannot be precisely defined or qualified. It has therefore an intrinsic affinity with the Greek word *atopos* (α-τοπος), which, besides referring to that which is not fixed in any place, also characterizes what is strange, extraordinary, inopportune (Bailly, 1950: 303).

Roland Barthes (1990: 34), in *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, uses the word *atopos* to designate ‘the unclassifiable, of a ceaselessly unforeseen originality’. For this purpose, he explores the double sense of the word *topos*, which in Greek means both place and discourse. By the force of the negative prefix *a-*, *atopos* would therefore mean not only what cannot be confined in a single place, but also what ‘resists description, definition, language, which is *maya*, classification of Names (of Faults)’ (Barthes, 1990: 35). And to this he adds the idea that the *atopos* is always the unqualifiable, as it is very difficult or even impossible to speak of it or about it.

In *The Pleasure of the Text*, Barthes (1973) returns to the word *atopos*, now converted into a working concept, in order to discuss what he calls the ‘*texte de jouissance*’, that is, the text that defies the *doxa* and veers away from the arrangements of language. To articulate this concept, he starts from the idea that language is regulated by a ruthless *topos* that always makes it come from some place, from a space delimited by the laws of grammar and the dictionaries. *Texte de jouissance* would be, in this sense, that which proclaims the fallacy of this *topos*, that which destroys or even contradicts its own discursive category, its genre, defying the canonical structures of language itself. In opposition to the texts connected to a comfortable practice of reading, the a-topical (or unclassifiable) text would potentially make the reader uncomfortable and shake his/her foundations. It is from these considerations that Barthes formulates his concept of *écriture*.

Paradoxically, the unclassifiable can also be associated with the idea of *heteropia*, since we can also use the word unclassifiable to designate what may be included (even if provisionally) in several

places at once, given the often contradictory diversity of its parts. In this case, all the categories in which it might be included are insufficient to accommodate it. In each category it maintains its troublesome difference, its explicit alterity. In this sense, since it moves among various *topoi*, it does not allow itself to be enclosed in a single one.

But would not the unclassifiable leave open the possibility of the creation of new categories that could include it, since the taxonomic systems themselves are not definitive? We might argue that the unclassifiable exists because the available and legitimated systems of classification are insufficient and are not able to contain the complex diversity and multiplicity of the world, since they obey above all the principles of similarity. As Foucault (2000: 14) said in *The Order of Things*, ‘the history of the order imposed on things would be the history of the Same – of that which, for a given culture, is both dispersed and related, therefore to be distinguished by kinds and to be collected together into identities’. In other words, every taxonomy requires the principle of the least possible difference among things to sustain itself. Still, thanks to that which resists the laws of taxonomy, that is to say, difference, such systems are always in the process of reformulation, revealing their insufficiency and precariousness.

Georges Perec (1999: 139–205), in *Penser/Classer*, develops an amusing theory of systems of classification – as Roy Boyne shows in detail in the entry *Classification* – evincing how tempting the idea of distributing the whole world ‘in terms of a single code’ is, although we know that ‘unfortunately, this does not work, has never even begun to work, will never work’ (Perec, 1999: 190). In other words, he recognizes the fascination of the act of classifying at the same time that he proclaims its instability. But he believes that admitting the precariousness of the criteria of classification ‘won’t stop us continuing for a long time to come to categorize this animal or that according to whether it has an odd number of toes or hollow horns’ (Perec, 1999: 190). It is the consciousness of this paradox that leads him to adopt humour and irony in order to, as Boyne states, ‘emancipate classification from its functions for social utility, freeing it for the creation of serendipitous wonderment’.

In one of the essays of this book, Perec even makes an inventory of possible taxonomical criteria (some of which are quite absurd) to

organize his library. But he ends up admitting that ‘nearly three-quarters of the books have never really been classified’ (Perec, 1999: 153–4), because they are difficult to put in order or impossible to classify. From this circumstance arises the need to create a new category for them, that of the *etcetera*, which is in fact a category used by Borges in his famous essay ‘The Analytical Language of John Wilkins’ (Borges, 1999: 229–32), which is also mentioned by Boyne in the *Classification* entry along with some critical references to Foucault’s interpretation of the Borgesian text. In this essay, as it is known, the Argentinian writer, to describe the ambiguities, redundancies, arbitrary nature and deficiencies of the Wilkinian linguistic system, evokes an apocryphal Chinese encyclopaedia that classifies animals in a dozen unusual categories, listed in alphabetical order. The *etcetera* is inserted precisely in the L category.

The fact that Borges’s *etcetera* comes not at the end of the list, as would be expected, but before the last two categories, inevitably grants it a more solid status within the whole, which creates even more surprise in the reader and breaks with the predictability of the very classificatory logic of conventional systems. Whence the questions: would this *etcetera* be the *topos par excellence* of the ‘unclassifiable’, and, by extension, the category that is lacking in all the taxonomic systems in general? By combining the rules of classification with the parodic laws of fiction in the same discursive space, would not Borges be showing that a classification of the universe or of knowledge that is not arbitrary, provisional, and conjectural is not possible, since all surveys/orderings tend, in their limits, to reveal the character of what is naturally uncontrollable and unlimited?

We might mention, as an example of this insufficiency of taxonomic systems, the fact that Linnaeus – who established in the second half of the 18th century not only the bases of modern taxonomy but also a binomial system of nomenclature in the field of Natural History – himself repeatedly revised and enlarged his *Systema Naturae* (1735), to the extent that his contemporaries complained of the ‘volatility’ of his model, which changed with each edition, in the face of the proliferating diversity of the animal world and consequently the discovery of new zoological differences that would not fit into the categories already defined (cf. Ritvo, 1997: 15).

We might also recall the *frisson* that the discovery, in Australia, 1799, of the platypus caused in British scientific circles right at a time when taxonomy was enjoying enormous prestige and was rigorously supported by the laws of triumphant rationality. Considered a puzzling animal, the platypus caused perplexity in the naturalists of the

time by being a hybrid creature of about 50 cm, with no neck, with webbed toes, a beaver-like tail, a duck-beak, a flat body covered with a dark-brown coat, and posterior limbs equipped with poisonous spurs. The females lay eggs but feed their young by internal nipples. Thomas Bewick, a British naturalist of the time, observed: ‘the platypus is an animal *sui generis*: it appears to possess a threefold nature, that of a fish, a bird and a quadruped’ (Ritvo, 1997: 3). We could add that it is an a-topical animal *par excellence*: unclassifiable, strange, extraordinary, original and inconvenient – a challenge therefore to the zoological canon and systems of classification.

Harriet Ritvo (1997), in *The Platypus and the Mermaid – and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination*, says that this animal was first described as a mammal, which triggered a controversial taxonomic debate in scientific circles. Dissected by anatomists, it was even included in the class of amphibians, although many scientists saw in it an ‘astonishing union of the characteristic distinctions of all the classes’ (Ritvo, 1997: 3), a union that, centuries later, would continue to stimulate the thought and imagination of theorists of taxonomy such as Umberto Eco, who in 1997 adopted the animal as the ‘hero’ of his book *Kant and the Platypus*. He even argued that, contrary to what was thought, the platypus was not made from an amalgam of all animals, but all animals were made from a part of the platypus. He asks:

How could one reconcile the beak and webbed feet with the fur and the beaver tail, or the Idea of beaver with the Idea of an oviparous animal; how could one see a bird where there was a quadruped? Kant would have found himself in the same situation as Aristotle when, after drawing up all possible rules for distinguishing ruminants from the other animals, no matter which way he turned, he never managed to find a place for the camel, which eluded all definition by genus and *differentia*. Had Aristotle tried to make one fit, he should have had to chase another ruminant, the ox, out of its own definitory space. (Eco, 1997: 81)

Here, Eco shows that due to the lack of sufficient criteria for classification, the definition of an unknown phenomenon often ends up by being formulated through analogical approximation, which leads us to claim that the imagination comes in where classification fails. In the lack of criteria to precisely define an unknown object, one has to invent new forms – metaphorical or not – to describe and specify it.

In this aspect, the fantastic descriptions of the fauna of the so-called New World made by the 16th-century European travellers are exemplary

models. In their accounts, the monstrous images of the tropical animals were not contaminated only by recollection of the fantastic texts of the old bestiaries, but also derived from an epistemological insufficiency. In that time there was no satisfactory taxonomic system that could offer the necessary scientific underpinnings for the radical alterity of the Latin American animals to be rationally named, described and categorized. As Foucault explained, the knowledge of the period constituted ‘an unstable mixture of rational knowledge, notions derived from magical practices, and a whole cultural heritage whose power and authority had been vastly increased by the rediscovery of Greek and Roman authors’ (Foucault, 2000: 48). If, on one hand, the rationality in which the modern western world would come to recognize itself was already taking shape, on the other, this rationality still did not discard the taste for the extraordinary and the respect for ancient knowledge. It is in this way that the first attempts at careful inquiry of the animal kingdom made by Renaissance naturalists were an amalgam of descriptions, classifications, citations, fables, mythological stories, possible and impossible observations about the use of animals both for medical experiments and for magical practices. This was an amalgam that could be defined as a kind of encyclopaedic knowledge. In this sense, it could be conceived as the most appropriate model for including an unclassifiable animal like the platypus. As Umberto Eco (1999: 226) states, the encyclopaedic model – which is ‘uncoordinated by nature, with an uncontrollable *format*’ – makes possible a flexible and inexhaustive multiplicity of knowledge, even if controlled by certain principles of organization like the placing of entries in alphabetical order.

Considering the ‘unlimited *semiosis*’ of the encyclopaedia, Eco (1984) even compared it to Deleuze’s rhizome, in which every point can be connected with any other point. According to Eco, the encyclopaedia, contrary to what the Enlightenment thinkers proposed, does not reflect an ordered universe in a univocal and rational way, but supplies rules, ‘generally myopic’, so that ‘according to some provisional criterion of order’ it seeks to give meaning to a disordered world whose criteria of order escape us (Eco, 1989: 337). In this sense, such a model would clash with the dictionary scheme, which, by circumscribing its references in a linguistic order, works to register the properties of words in a succinct manner. Encyclopaedic competence, on the contrary, definitely excludes ‘the possibility of hierarchizing the semantic marks, the linguistic properties, and the semes in a single, uncontroversial way’ (Eco, 1989: 333–7), serving to map the life of a culture as a system of interconnected semiotic systems.

Therefore, as a taxonomic device, the encyclopaedia – taken in its dimension of incompleteness – offers itself as the most adequate model for an unclassifiable age like the present, in which the borders between cultures, languages, genres, arts and disciplinary fields intersect, expanding more and more into the hybrid and the transdisciplinary. This is a ‘hypertextual’ era, in which the speed and multiplicity of information explicitly de-authorizes and disestablishes the very idea of classification, demanding a reshaping of knowledge beginning from a more open, dialogical, and even paradoxical perspective, as if today everything were under the restless sign of the platypus, of the unclassifiable.

In the field of contemporary arts, this new ‘hypertextual’ horizon can be identified, for instance, in the encyclopaedic work that Peter Greenaway has been doing in his films, operas, installations, artworks and literary texts. By employing an intricate net of transdisciplinary knowledge, several aesthetic languages, cultural references and diversified technological resources, he has come to convert his oeuvre into a sort of cross-media project with multiple entrances, connections and unpredictable ramifications. In order to do that, he has incorporated some taxonomic procedures – in the format of lists, catalogues, numberings, inventories, statistical censuses, etc. – to show ironically the insufficiency of these devices for a satisfactory ordering of the multiplicity/diversity of the contemporary world. This can be seen, especially, in his recent project called *Tulse Luper Suitcases*, a kind of ‘encyclopaedia of encyclopaedias’, which includes three feature films, a television series, 92 DVDs, CD-ROMs, several books, some art exhibitions and Internet sites, all built up based on a sophisticated technological apparatus and audacious aesthetic procedures. The three films of the series, with plenty of narrative artifices, intertextual references and technological experiments, constitute a new kind of cinema that gets away from the limits of the screen to expand in several other artistic spaces, bringing to the cultural setting of this new millennium a provocative model of open and rhizomatic encyclopaedism, tuned up to the heterogeneous (and unclassifiable) space–time of contemporaneity.

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Language

Ryan Bishop and John Phillips

Abstract In this article we outline the ways in which questions of language have both revealed problems with conceptions of knowledge and suggested constructive ways of addressing those problems. Having examined the limitations of instrumental notions of language, we outline some alternatives, especially those developed from the middle of the 19th and throughout the 20th century. We locate forceful and influential philosophical interventions in the writings of Nietzsche and Heidegger and foundational revisions in the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and his structuralist inheritors. We also chart the parallel path of literary theory from Mallarmé through Blanchot and post-structuralism to deconstruction. We conclude, after making some observations about the politicization of language in the works of feminist and postcolonial theorists, with some remarks about how the question of language helps to problematize global knowledge.

Keywords competence, discourse, feminism, language, linguistics, literature, post-colonialism, poststructuralism, sign, speech, structuralism, writing

A common starting point when answering the question of language is often a consideration of its function. The common sense response to the question of what language is for is likely to be that language functions as an instrument of communication. This common sense response is not so much a matter of universal perception but more a symptom of how knowledge is currently produced. It is given powerful support by linguistics, which aspires to be a kind of scientific knowledge, and so treats language as something that can be made into an object of knowledge. The assumptions that language is an instrument of communication and that it can be made the object of scientific knowledge follow apparently quite naturally from the most pervasive attitudes towards modern knowledge. Knowledge is attributed to a knowing subject who is capable through his reason of making judgments about his objects. One of the tools or instruments at the scientist's disposal would therefore be his means of communication, without which this special knowledge would have no means of dissemination.

These assumptions are questionable on several grounds. There is much at stake here because, if language turned out *not* to be just an instrument for communication, and if it was *not* possible, after all, to turn language entirely into an object of science, then we would be faced with a situation of discourse that was more powerful and more fundamental than scientific discourses are currently capable of comprehending. We would need to develop an alternative attitude to knowledge.

Language would be perfectly fit as an object of science only if it was reducible to the instrumental function of communication. And, in empirical and formal terms, that is exactly what language seems to be. We might question its efficiency and we might question whether it is entirely suited to this function. But so long as we have an instrumental attitude towards it, language provides us with what we're looking for: an instrument. There is something peculiar in this fact. The way we use language tends to encourage us to see it as essentially what we use it for. If we use language as an instrument then it certainly seems to be an instrument.

When we communicate (I send a message which someone else understands correctly and perhaps acts upon) language certainly seems to be an instrument for our communication. So perhaps, when science takes language as an object of science and establishes a theoretical or a practical linguistics, all that it is capable of studying is the way *it uses* language. The only object that linguistics knows under the term *language* is the instrument of communication that the scientist uses in order to disseminate its knowledge.

Modern philosophies of language, which include those of Rene Descartes (1984/5) and John Locke (1997), differ in their explanations; yet they always assume that language functions as an instrument of communication, which the human subject learns to use. Descartes argues that the ways in which humans use language reveal an a priori rational determination, while Locke assumes that words represent the ideas that are generated by experience. In both cases language expresses or represents a prior mental activity. Language thus functions as the basic medium of communication.

Alternatives and subversions of these philosophical accounts also emerge, drawing on several earlier traditions. Taking exception to the assumption that language functions primarily to communicate and that once we perfect language we can complete the project of assembling all knowledge for all time, Jonathan Swift launches a series of satirical pieces aimed precisely at the circumscription of language and language use, as well as the political implications of such delimitation. In his 1726 novel, *Gulliver's Travels* (Swift, 1995), the protagonist visits a 'School of Languages' in which projects to improve language include one that will 'shorten Discourse by cutting Polysyllables into one, and leaving out Verbs and Participles; because in Reality all things imaginable are but Nouns'. Another attempts to abolish words altogether, using the things they represent instead, as a means to achieve a 'universal Language to be understood in all civilized Nations, whose Goods and Utensils are generally of the same Kind'. The satire is aimed at kinds of *nominalism*, typical of the 18th century, which would reduce the function of language to empirical reference. The constitution of language as an object and an instrument for communication embedded in a scientific project to routinize and universalize all knowledge is taken to its absurd reduction in this section of the novel when people of much import and business must be accompanied by various bearers of their objects (that is, their words rendered concrete) and the vast amount of time required for them to sort through their goods in 'conversations', all done in the name of rationalization.

Developments in several strands of literature, philosophy and linguistics since the 19th century have made it difficult to maintain instrumentalist assumptions. The field of literature again poses the most persistent challenge to conceptions of language that treat it as secondary and external to some more essential inner quality of experience or thought, which it would thus express or decorate. At the end of the 19th century, Stéphane Mallarmé (2001), in conjunction with his continuing formal experimentation in verse, develops a complex response to the question of language. For Mallarmé language is the basis and foundation for literary art because it is also the very essence of the world. Maurice Blanchot (1995 [1943]) reveals how important Mallarmé is for a French theoretical tradition that acknowledges the challenge of aesthetics. After Mallarmé, he argues, we must acknowledge that it is language itself that is expressed in language:

The nature and dignity of language are expressed both by man, who reveals himself in a dialogue within which he discovers the event that is his foundation, and by the world, putting itself into words in an act that is its deep origin. The error would be to think of language as an instrument whereby man acts or manifests himself in the world; in reality it is language that positions man, by guaranteeing the existence of the world and his existence within it. (Blanchot, 1995 [1943]: 45)

For Mallarmé (developing a strand of thought that is already present in his precursor Baudelaire) language manifests two faces: there is the everyday circulation of words whose function is exchange and communication, acts which exhaust the word; and there is another side, revealed by the poet and novelist, which presents, in language, that power of language that

cannot be understood – which resists knowledge and understanding but which nonetheless *gives itself* for those purposes. Awareness of this dichotomy grows with yet more intensity as the 20th century proceeds through its increasing emphasis on technology and instrumentality, in the work of Roland Barthes (1986), Julia Kristeva (1984) and other members of the *Tel Quel* group, who build on both Mallarmé's poetics and later developments in structural linguistics.

Also towards the end of the 19th century, Friedrich Nietzsche turns to the pre-Socratic philosophers to pose his own set of problems, this time from within the philosophical tradition. His project would prove important for Martin Heidegger, whose meditations on language also deploy the pre-Socratics. In each case, the exploration of earlier traditions supplanted by the Socratic understanding of Truth reveal a partially suppressed understanding of language and its relation to the formation of knowledge, in contrast with the direction taken by scientific knowledge after the 17th century. In his 1873 essay, 'On Truth and Falsity in their Ultramoral Sense' (1964), Nietzsche displays a pre-Socratic sensibility that posits the flux of the world and limits of human knowledge while still remaining grounded in active deployment of reason, argumentation, and critique. The pre-Socratic fondness for paradoxes and metaphors to challenge staid assumptions about knowledge and the nature of the world inspires Nietzsche to assert in this essay, much as the pre-Socratics did, that Truth is not predicated on universal absolutes but rather on conventions codified for specific purposes of society and residing in 'a mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms' (1964: 174). The idea of the perfectibility of knowledge is thus undermined by the very instrument that was meant to lead to its completion: language.

Heidegger's sense of the grounding nature of language is already clear by the 1935 article, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', which features the key distinction between *world* and *earth*. He works through three rather different kinds of artworks – Van Gogh's *Shoes*, a Greek temple, and poetry – but the third kind, poetry, clearly best exhibits, for Heidegger, the literary and thus linguistic grounds not only of art but of Dasein's *world*. His reading shows that art can be regarded neither as merely an aesthetic object designed to give pleasure or to portray beauty, nor as a kind of thing with the addition of aesthetic beauty. Rather, art discloses the nature of things. In the case of poetry, because the matter or *earth* of poetry is language and because language is what gives Dasein names for beings, then poetry has the power of addressing the possibility of human communications and relations. The relationship between *world* and *earth*, when it takes the form of linguistic innovation, manifests the embattled relations between concepts and words when they are formed and form each other. Poetry reveals the conditions through which not only artworks but all other kinds of communicating and all other kinds of thing are possible at all. For this reason Heidegger increasingly privileges *Dichtung* (poetry and, in a more extended sense, the power of invention) in his later works (1971, 1975). The disclosing of being – if it is to be achieved in any way that eludes the classifying, calculating procedures of modern knowledge – must be an evidently singular event each time.

Meanwhile, the posthumous publication in 1915 of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1983) is often regarded as the foundation of modern linguistics; but the work has had two rather different long term consequences. They correspond to a distinction that is made early in the lecture course, between *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* ('language') designates the abstract differential system that must be presupposed as the internalized and unconscious condition for individual language use. It thus represents the 'work of a collective intelligence' [*l'œuvre de l'intelligence collective*], in so far as it is beyond the will of any individual to change it. *Parole* ('speech'), on the other hand, designates individual acts, statements and utterances. These are the events of language use, which manifest a speaker's ephemeral individual will through his combination of the conceptual and the formal aspects of the utterance. De Saussure points out here that the single word 'linguistics' therefore covers two radically different kinds of study. The study of *parole* would be entirely focused on individual utterances, using all the available resources of formal and empirical study to analyze – usually within a specific language – actual statements. The study of *langue* would be focused on the

general conditions of possibility for all languages and all uses of language. The *Course in General Linguistics* thus follows the second route in this inevitable ‘bifurcation’, setting out in what has become a decisive historical event in knowledge the groundwork for all attempts to grasp the basic conditions of possibility for language and language use.

De Saussure identifies the basic unit of language as the sign, which he divides between a signifier (formally recognizable mark) and the signified (what the mark might at any time mean). He observes that people used to think of language as a correspondence between word and thing. The thing, though, has nothing at all to do with how language functions – it is irrelevant:

A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern [*image acoustique*]. The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer’s psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. (1983: 66)

So the minimal unit of the language system is the sign, which is made up of two sides – an abstract image of a sensible form (the signifier) and an idea or concept (the signified). A physical manifestation of writing or the sound of speech would each time manifest a repeatable and thus recognizable mark of some kind, to which there must correspond a sense of what it might mean.

The distinction between *langue* and *parole* creates an *object* for linguistics, because it produces a kind of undetermined space for the generation of theories of *langue*, which can then be applied to actual events or formal examples of language use. However, *langue* remains, even now, an ingenious theoretical fiction, which is susceptible to nuanced and subtle speculations but admits to no absolute decision as to its fundamental nature. If nothing else the *theory* of *langue* and *parole* demonstrates the conditions on which it is possible to invent theories (of language). This discovery continues to inspire speculation on language, aesthetics, politics and society.

The French linguist Emile Benveniste (1973) is celebrated for establishing a fateful distinction, based upon the difference between *langue* and *parole*, between what he calls the subject of the *énonciation* (represented by the *signifier*) and the subject of the *énoncé* (represented by the *signified*). In two influential arguments Benveniste focuses on the role and implications of the ubiquitous first person pronoun (and its reciprocal second person), used at least implicitly in every language known to man and woman. He concludes that language is not something the human subject *uses*, but rather, the human subject is something only made possible by language. In his 1958 article, ‘Subjectivity in Language’, Benveniste underlines this point:

We are always inclined to that naïve concept of a primordial period in which a complete man discovered another one, equally complete, and between the two of them language was worked out little by little. This is pure fiction. We can never get back to man separated by language and we shall never see him inventing it . . . It is a speaking man whom we find in the world, a man speaking to another man, and language provides the very definition of man. (Benveniste, 1973: 224)

We need to be careful here, because when Benveniste says that language provides the very definition of man, we must not assume that we know what language is in its entirety. At this stage language provides us with the definition of man only because of the peculiarity of personal pronouns. The foundation of ‘subjectivity’ is determined, according to him, by the linguistic status of *the person*:

Consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. I use *I* only when I am speaking to someone who will be a *you* in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of *person*, for it implies that reciprocally *I* becomes *you* in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as *I*. (1973: 224–5)

So the linguistic basis of subjectivity would not be found in those aspects that constitute either

its lexical content (meaning) or its formal and grammatical rules; it would only be discoverable in the *exercise* of language and as a precondition the relationship to *the other*. This account of language implies an irreducible division corresponding to that between enunciation and statement (*énoncé*). The subject of the statement seems fixed in time, a snapshot of a moment that has immediately passed, already fading in its enunciation; the speaker is already in principle out of the picture and all that remains is his representative in language.

In a further development, the concept of *linguistic competence*, introduced by the linguist Noam Chomsky in 1965, is intended to address certain assumptions about language, especially in structuralist linguistics, which understands *langue* as an unconscious system. Chomsky is concerned to establish instead a science that would study what he calls ‘the language faculty’, in analogy with other mental faculties like logic, which as a kind of intuitive reasoning power requires no accumulation of facts or skills in order to develop but rather seems to be present and fully functional in speakers fluent in a language. Competence defines the system of rules that governs an individual’s tacit understanding of what is acceptable and what is not in the language they speak. The empirical and formal realization of *competence* would be *performance*, which thus corresponds to diverse structuralist notions of *parole*, *utterance*, *event*, *process*, etc. Competence thus defines what Chomsky refers to as an innate grammar of language use that is applied variously across languages and institutions.

In the absence of a model, so far, for an innate *universal* grammar, one might nevertheless suppose that a capacity exists that contingently gives the speaker access to whatever syntax or other kind of competence might be required by environmental needs. Then it would follow that competence no less than performance was institutional in some way. The concept of *discourse* helps bring to light interesting correspondences between Chomsky’s theoretical formulations and those of Michel Foucault, to whom he is more often opposed. Foucault in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) adapts the notion of *archive* to account for those rules that govern what we know and what we can say, but which we cannot, for that reason, ever describe. These rules function not as part of an innate faculty, as Chomsky understands it, but as a ‘system of accumulation, historicity, and disappearance’ (1972: 130). The archive thus designates what Foucault calls the ‘historical a priori’ – historical conditions independent of both knowledge and experience that nonetheless help to determine them.

These various and often incompatible trends in linguistic speculation help to focus on a rather more involved problem of knowledge: the question of the relationship between *transcendental ideas* and *empirical experience*. This more technical way of addressing the problem of the relationship between *theory* and *experience* both allows more precision in identifying its nature and helps to focus on how theories of language play a decisive role in its elaboration. If we, as many ancient and modern philosophies have done, accord primacy to ideas, then we assume that language functions in a secondary and derivative way with regard to them. Ideas thus exist in at least a semi-permanent state independently of language, along with the world and its things. Language is nothing but a medium. As we have seen, theories of language since the 19th century have made it difficult to maintain these assumptions. Something of an immanent language dwells in each of us as a condition for our knowledge and experience. Yet, if we, on the contrary, assign primacy to some aspect of language, as has been a tendency in some fields of social and cultural theory, then we repeat the gesture of traditional philosophy in reverse. Language and its institutions are regarded as *the* determining factors in human experience. The historical or institutional a priori, regarded as an internalized and unconscious system, takes over the role once reserved for the transcendental sphere. Ideas of materiality, historical specificity, cultural relativity and perspectivism are substituted for older ideas of the soul and universal reason.

The philosophy of Jacques Derrida (1974, 1987) is notorious for having problematized *both* of these positions. The first, which he designates by the shorthand of *logocentrism*, assigns primacy to the idea independently of language (i.e., a transcendental signified that escapes the substitutability of language). *Logocentrism*, in this case, would not simply be a mistake made by careless philosophers of the western tradition. Rather it is the condition we all must find

ourselves in, as we occupy a subjective *present* while engaging with a world of beings we experience on our outside. The tendency of *logocentrism* is to project the experience of presence to a transcendental exterior, and it leads to speculations about ideal and eternal realms unmarked by the fateful mortality we experience in life. The second position is manifested most clearly by the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, though Derrida discovers the same tendency in writers as varied as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Levi-Strauss and, of course, de Saussure. The position here assigns primacy not to the idea but, on the contrary, to the *signifier*, the formal marker of language without any natural or necessary reference to anything it might mean. The tendency here is to project the experience of presence onto a material marker (the signifier rather than the signified, the body rather than the mind). The signifier, of course, is Lacan's shorthand for the function of the symbolic order, which inscribes us as subjects and as subject to it. Lacan refers to this function as the *phallic* function, because the elaboration of the theory involves a linguistic revision of Freud's Oedipus complex. Lacan substitutes the 'lack in the signifier' for the role of the penis and the fear of its symbolic loss in the castration complex, as the origin of our access to the social order. Derrida thus coins the term *phallogocentrism* to designate the repetition of logocentrism under the sign of the sign itself, its putative replacement. Derrida offers several different (substitutable) terms to designate the conditions for this kind of *substitution*, which simultaneously repeats that which it putatively replaces, including: *supplement*, *deconstruction*, *archi-writing* and *trace*.

Much that is central to the critiques posed by postcolonial and feminist studies takes language as the prime location of cultural, political and intellectual struggle. Homi Bhabha (1994), for instance, examines the various ways in which the subject of a proposition and the subject of enunciation reveal identity formation in regimes of stratified power relations as resulting from discursive and performative practices. Within a colonial context, this can take the densely ambivalent form of mimicry, by which the words of the colonizers are repeated by the colonized subjects, thus clarifying how regimes of truth are not reducible to propositions. The context of the utterance cannot be discerned from its content. The specificity of its moment of articulation raises questions of authority surrounding truth and representation. This leads to a significant shift within postcolonial studies. The purpose of critical inquiry then becomes an understanding of the conditions that make specific forms of knowledge possible. Bhabha, in 'The Other Question', states that his 'reading of colonial discourse suggests that the point of intervention should shift from the ready recognition of images as positive or negative, to an understanding of the processes of subjectification made possible (and plausible) through stereotypical discourse. To judge the stereotyped image on the basis of a prior normativity is to dismiss it, not to displace it, which is only possible by engaging with its effectivity' (1994: 67). In this manner, Bhabha moves beyond the easy identification of oppressive discursive practices, such as racial stereotypes, in order to shift our attention toward the conditions that make possible the specific 'regime of truth' in which these discursive practices transpire. Postcolonial discourse then would examine the productive elements of colonial discourse, its poesis, and thus interrogate the conditions that bring it forward, conditions that posit colonial discourse and anti-colonial discourse at the same time, and would do so not to judge either one by a predetermined set of normative standards but to understand how they are possible at all.

Likewise feminist scholars have used language as an object of inquiry into public discourse. Following from the work of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1998, 2005), Helene Cixous (1986) and others explore how subject positions of gender are structured within language. The terms 'man' and 'woman' function as binary terms, a binary opposition replicated in a whole host of oppositional pairs found in the social and symbolic domain of language: masculine/feminine, culture/nature, reason/emotion, active/passive, moral/immoral, phallus/vagina, power/weakness, presence/absence etc. In each instance, the terms on the left side of the slash resonate with one another, metonymically invoking each with the articulation of any one. Woman, therefore, also carries associations within the Symbolic of nature, passivity, emotion, irrationality, weakness and, perhaps most importantly, absence. Thus, within the Symbolic,

these terms function not as neutral terms of binary oppositions of equal status, but as indicating the structure of value-laden hierarchies. The Symbolic, ordered by the phallus, the male-dominated set of codes within society articulated through language, reveals authority as essentially 'phallogocentric'. Some theorists combine this insight with 'logocentrism' and borrow Derrida's term 'phallogocentrism'. However, the term is, at times, somewhat mistakenly interpreted as revealing the structure of western cultural systems, and therefore as providing a means for constructing an alternative knowledge regime. Phallogocentrism does reveal this structure, but by doing so, shows the impossibility of overturning the metaphysics it depends on without substituting it with another metaphysics. And in this double-bind we learn nothing about western cultural systems necessarily, but more about the role of metaphysics in the formation of knowledge generally. Building on these insights, Cixous (1986), Irigaray (2002) and others show how women, as both biological beings and terms within the Symbolic order, create disturbances within the rigid ordering principles of the Symbolic by their very constitution within it. Through the constitution of women as 'woman', the rigidity of the larger cultural system is rendered vulnerable by its own terms. The means by which feminism uses the rules of the language game, to show how they cannot be upheld on their own terms, provides an essential strategy for the critical engagement of knowledge formation and authorization.

Some arguments suggest that language serves as a tool for the containment and control of feminine sexuality. As the psychoanalytic doctrine of the castration complex – and its correlative in the 'lack in the signifier' – suggest, feminine sexuality is constituted in language as a kind of absence. Somewhat paradoxically, it is marginalized within the Symbolic as residing *outside* it. The response to this is varied; at its most effective it mobilizes the force of this *outsideness* as a way of exceeding and ultimately replacing what Cixous calls 'this Phallogocentric Performing Theater' (1986: 84). Female sexuality can be regarded as a site of *jouissance*, in the untranslatable French term, a kind of joy or pleasure (on the analogy of orgasm, the *petit mort*) which exceeds the normal pleasures of a traditionally constituted subjective ego. *Jouissance* designates a kind of erotic pleasure that operates outside patriarchal discourse. To the 'spurious' phallogocentric notion of bisexuality (the 'fantasy of complete being', the joining of two gendered halves) Cixous opposes 'the *other bisexuality*, that is to say, the location within oneself of the presence of both sexes . . . the non-exclusion of difference' (1986: 84). Thus, the predicates of feminine sexuality operate in much the same way as do the predicates of *writing* in relation to the positivity of language, like the absences that, as Derrida observes, are necessary possibilities: the *a priori* possible absence, in the mark of language itself, of sense, of referent, of addresser, and of addressee. Cixous mobilizes this fact of inscription – which operates both inside and outside language as the mark of its possibility – in her notion of *écriture féminine*: 'her writing can only go on and on, without ever inscribing or distinguishing contours' (1986: 88). And so the positivity of linguistic theory (for which the terms of language are always signifiers and signifieds, messages sent and received, etc.) are complicit with theories of gender and sexuality, which posit similarly profound delimitations. The exclusion of the conditions of *their difference* (rather than the positive – male – or negative – female – terms) thus correspond to the exclusion of *writing* that Derrida discovers animating theories of language from Plato to Levi-Strauss and including those of Rousseau, Condillac, Hegel and de Saussure.

The exclusion of *writing*, of course, turns out to be the exclusion of that which relates, that which connects one thing to another, one text to another, an addressor to an addressee, as well as friends and lovers to each other. The written mark – as the *trace* of another – thus disappears, even as it gives itself to whatever relation one posits, and so is easy to gloss over, to miss, to negate, to marginalize and to exclude. At the same time, it functions by reserving itself, failing incessantly to connect and to establish for once and for all the last relation (it can only go on and on). The possibilities of language, then, are tied to possibilities of knowledge too, beyond all positivity. The condition – both within and beyond language – of all our relations would be the inextinguishable, yet incalculable and always as yet undetermined,

relation to the other. Coming to know *this* would thus be a precondition for proceeding towards the idea of a *global* knowledge and towards the realization that such knowledge in the positive sense must remain unfulfilled.

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Rhetoric

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Keywords argument, Aristotle, catachresis, context, dialectic, enthymeme, invention, knowledge, persuasion, power, syllogism, universalism

It is posed and it is posed.
But in nature it merely grows.
– Wallace Stevens, ‘Add This to Rhetoric’

I begin this entry by posing that rhetoric teaches one how to begin, even or precisely when beginning seems impossible. Modern study of rhetoric in western tradition begins inevitably with Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (and in English, George Kennedy’s edition is indispensable). Given the vastness of the tradition and the brevity of this entry, readers should also turn, for other places to begin, to the anthology of primary texts well assembled by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, *The Rhetorical Tradition*, and to an introductory textbook such as Renato Barilli’s *Rhetoric*. Aristotle begins, in the form of an enthymeme (a rhetorical syllogism dispensing with the need for logical certainty), by empowering the reader: ‘Rhetoric is an *antistrophos* [“counterpart”, “correlative” or “converse”] to dialectic; for both are concerned with such things as are, to a certain extent, within the knowledge of all people and belong to no separately defined science’ (1.1.1; 1354a). Dialectic, he writes, is about testing and maintaining an argument, while rhetoric is at the same time about defence and attack – everyone knows how to defend and attack, ‘to a certain extent’, but everyone can also learn how to practise them better. Rhetoric should be available to all, then, and its remit is ‘such things as . . . belong to no separately defined science’. Both points – concerning empowerment, on the one hand, and non-identity, on the other – make it easy to see why rhetoric should have been viewed with such suspicion and hostility from its very beginnings; the history of rhetoric is, indeed, inseparable from the history of anti-rhetoric.

Aristotle’s opening sentence, with its ‘all people’, might be taken to imply an ethnocentric universalism, but at the beginning of the next chapter he gives a justly famous definition of rhetoric that qualifies any such implication: ‘Let rhetoric be [defined as] an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion’

(1.2.1, emphasis mine; 1355b). Context is paramount; there is no rhetoric without context. Part of the value of Aristotle’s definition is thus that it tells us the definition cannot be located ‘in’ Aristotle but must be referred elsewhere: to that context in which one already is. The ‘available means’ – which, let it be added, may prove incommensurate with the intention to persuade – cannot be specified or programmed in advance. Most rhetorical terms (including of course ‘rhetoric’) are derived from Greek, and since no ancient Greek context can be experienced by a modern reader, their use is in each particular case and to a certain extent an inevitable catachresis (i.e., a misuse). It is not so much a question of finding the right words (though that, invention, is also part of rhetoric) as of realizing that there is nothing outside context, a realization that can be upsetting or liberating, depending on one’s point of view (another part of rhetoric).

In the context of an encyclopaedia, the position of rhetoric is an awkward one. In other times and places, it has been possible to conceive an encyclopaedia without or even against rhetoric, or more precisely to conceive an encyclopaedia as a body of transmissible knowledge in which ‘rhetoric’ would figure merely as an entry. In the work of Peter Ramus (1515–72), for example, rhetoric is a mere ornament or supplement to the body (knowledge) thus ornamented or supplemented. It would be premature to claim that this binary model has been left behind, but also futile to attempt to defend the integrity of rhetoric, since it has none. Rhetoric blurs boundaries, including its own, and can never be fully separated from sophistry. Today, rhetoric is mostly taught in instrumentalized and commodified form; the counterpart to the urgent critique of instrumentality (how to do things with words) and commodification (how to make money with things), though, is the equally urgent resistance to pseudo-literacy, illiteracy, and language death around the world. Rhetoric is always already struggle, and the stakes are high even when that struggle appears internal to readers unfamiliar with its history.

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Writing

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Keywords appropriation, Derrida, distancing, eurocentrism, language/linguisticity, Plato, Ricoeur, text/textuality, translation theory, voice/self-presence, writing

Even to address the question of writing presents a daunting prospect. As with any of the central aspects of human-language use, simply to attempt to define the basic object of study may appear a fatally hubristic enterprise. Whether regarded as amorphous totality or endless accumulation, there appears no stable external vantage from which the proliferation of discrete graphic entities may be mapped, ordered, or mastered. The worldliness of script seems potentially limitless: incorrigibly plural, intransigently diverse. As such the problem necessarily becomes one of writings, and the movement between both individual texts and the apparently incommensurate cultural traditions out of which they have emerged.

The problem of writing, if narrowed for pragmatic convenience, and approached anthropologically, becomes a question of genealogy: the chronology of ethno-linguistics from the Sumerians onwards (c. 3000 BC). From this perspective, its most verifiable origin would be book-keeping. The stark recitation of name, commodity, and amount develops into tax records, military instructions and imperial administration: a practical mnemonic, primarily a device for information retrieval, and a tool for state-building, and as such the prerogative of bureaucratic functionaries rather than a shared and distinctive human capacity. Writing implies recognition but not necessarily inclusion or even comprehension (evident in the Egyptian genre of tomb-inscription

designed only to be read in the Pharaoh's afterlife). Even its utility value could fluctuate wildly: in AD 764 the Japanese Empress Koken printed one million dharanis or Buddhist charms to celebrate her new dynasty: a six-year project, entirely unread, followed, perhaps understandably, by a 200-year hiatus in printing.

Mediums of inscription varied: pottery, skins, sometimes metals, subsequently waxed tablets. Continuous script became possible after the breakthrough of papyrus: a necessary condition for widespread literacy was the boom in its production after the Ptolemaic dynasty took over Egypt, establishing a major trade with their original Greek culture. The Chinese probably borrowed the concept of script from the Middle East, but were the first culture to produce an approximate equivalent of paper: the technique of pulping silk and spreading it over frame containers (first described in AD 105) was kept a state secret and monopoly for several hundred years. With this, as with many other technologies, Chinese innovation preceded Europe, but remained undeveloped due to a lack of commercial exposure to market forces and the maintenance of a high degree of centralized control.

Even in this area the ratio of hard evidence to speculative conjecture renders hypotheses of origin irreducibly metaphorical if not metaphysical. This is the option that will be adopted for the remainder of this brief survey. It will begin with the problematic classically established in Plato's *Phaedrus*, look at Derrida's commentary, the *Pharmakon* (1972; translated 1981), and examine two possible lines of response in Ricoeur's recent work, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2004) and *Sur la traduction* (2004).

The Greeks had possessed some kind of rudimentary script from around 2000 BC; writing took on a new authority with the appearance of

inscriptions on public monuments from around 700 BC, designed to be viewed rather than read. Overall literacy rates were probably very low: estimates suggest that perhaps 15 percent of the adult male population by 480 BC were semi-literate, reducing to around 5 percent if women and slaves are included. Demographically, at least, Plato in his dialogue *Phaedrus* may have been unduly alarmist. During his lifetime, however, two major developments in writing occurred: a massively enhanced ability to formulate abstract concepts, and the division of historical from fictional narrative (Thucydides crucially asserting the primacy of documentary sources).

Polemics such as Plato's represent a counter-tradition positing the spoken voice as guarantee of authenticity. Such a position, however, overlooks both potential duplicity within the context of verbal interchange (the figure of the Sophist), and the creative augmentation of meaning permitted by the durability of inscription (most obviously in Plato's own dialogues). The opposition of speech and text does not apply, for example, to Egypt, where all script was verbalized by the scribe-witness; and private reading only emerges as a prominent social practice after both Socrates and Plato, with Aristotle a bibliophile par excellence, and a new generation of intellectuals such as Hippocrates using writing as a means of knowledge transmission.

According to Plato, *Phaedrus* recites a work on the duties of a lover to Socrates who insists he must have been reading from a presumed written original. Words retain a majestic silence; they are fixed, cannot be modified through interaction or response, and so are always a potential mode of imposition. The performative paradigm is that of law-making. Conversely the medium of writing may be regarded as too promiscuous: drifting, open to competing interpretations, subject to no single forum of arbitration. Thus it may prompt responses from an inappropriate addressee, and be spurned by those towards whose attention it is directed. It means simultaneously too much and too little and so both assumes and relinquishes authority. (Socrates' famous misgivings on this point, it should be noted, would have been shared by approximate contemporaries such as Confucius and the Indian Brahmins.)

A second classic passage introduces the myth of the *Pharmakon*. The Egyptian king Thamus goes to the god Theuth to assess the usefulness of various human arts. Writing will make the Egyptians wiser and improve their memories. However, it will also produce forgetfulness because it will allow dependence on external written marks and therefore the mind's own powers of retrieval and recognition will decline. The semblance of wisdom

will displace truth itself: pupils will read without the oversight of a teacher and so remain unaware of their own lack of genuine judgement.

As Derrida argues, discussion of the intersection of the spoken and written word is particularly prone to a self-annulling nostalgia for origins (evoked only through the medium which is to be repudiated). (Empirically, oral ability and power of retention undoubtedly weaken with the onset of literacy, though this is counterbalanced by the acquisition of higher-order structures of categorization.) Yet if writing may be regarded as a form of internalized constraint, erasing certain modes of communal participation in knowledge, it also serves to emancipate from, or at least empower negotiation with, spatial and temporal limits. If it may be linked plausibly to the reign of onto-theology, through religions promoting text in order to preserve sacred scripture, this also has the effect of a democratic (rather than deconstructive) dissemination of the word.

Hence the constitutive ambiguity of writing as poison and remedy seized upon in Derrida's commentary, *The Pharmakon*, one of many bravura performances from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Writing is saved from Plato's indictment at the cost of rendering it indistinguishable from sophistry, which is thereby instated as the normative condition of language. Running polemics are directed against both a Platonic-Husserlian ideality of meaning (from a broadly Heideggerian perspective) and various scenarios of anthropological fabrication. Origins of language narrated in terms of empirical acquisition or proto-social contract assigning meaning to sound lack explanatory clarity compared to the premise of the system being always already there. Writing as cultural stage must be distinguished from methodological postulate, the latter seemingly inseparable, in Derrida's account, from a Eurocentrist bias, though this fails to take into account the evolution of either Asian traditions (the process of adaptation of Chinese script in Korea and Japan), or the almost exclusively propagandistic and sanguinary functions of Mesoamerican writing, alternating between sanctification of the monarch and commemoration of human sacrifice.

The history of texts (as governed by a seemingly a priori principle of indeterminacy) shows an alarming proclivity to swallow the history of history per se: 'textuality being constituted by differences and by differences from differences, it is by nature absolutely heterogeneous and is constantly composing with the forces that tend to annihilate it' (Derrida, 1981: 98). This process is 'reined in by metaphor, metaphysics and theology': thinking outside it would bring the closure of an entire metaphysical epoch with

unforeseen but presumably headily utopian results: ‘the future can only be anticipated in the form of an absolute danger’ (Derrida, 1974: 4). Obviously a degree of circumspection is required before buying the whole package, which takes the opposition between speech and writing as paradigmatic of a whole series of oppositions structuring the field of Western metaphysics, with the prior term privileged over the latter: soul/body, inside/outside, presence/absence, light/dark, truth/falsehood, form/matter. There is no point of mastery over this textual system into which any individual is always already inserted. Meaning is determined not by authorial intention but by formal exigencies of a logic of play (jeu, chance, gamble) whose outcome remains unpredictable. These displacements become a model for any dialogic context: hence writing paradoxically takes priority over speech.

Ricoeur seems to come from a more sober if not repressed tradition. He remains committed if not to univocal meaning at least controlled polysemy, and also to the concept of text as subject to a dialectic of explanation and understanding. Writing permits distanciation, the condition of formal analytic procedures. Yet his most recent work displays striking continuities with the deconstructive perspective both in acknowledged indebtedness and governing problematics.

The origin of writing can only be left to myth. It will be not the object of a science but only of a history which is recited, a fable that is repeated. There is no alternative but to accept the condition of original separation: ‘the writing of beginnings presupposes itself as already existing in order to think of itself at its birth’. The fundamental question raised by the myth of Babel is simply why more than one language exists. Rather than opt for theological extrapolation of the fallen word, this condition of what Derrida terms ‘absolute heterogeneity’ poses the task of translation, with the acceptance of loss permitting the work of world-making. So rather than a move from inscription as singular artefact to omnivorous textuality, the ethical imperative of writing may be defined in terms of endless but specific transitions between texts.

Derrida’s reading of *Phaedrus* insists on tightly coordinating the different functions of key terms in different contexts. Ricoeur accepts the potentially infinite contextualization: the translator must move to and fro between words and phrases to the level of the spirit of an entire culture. Even apparent coincidence may be deceptive, concealing multiple refigurations of key terms (‘*maître-mots*’). One never finishes explaining, but this process posits an address outwards to another who

shares neither our language nor our beliefs. The problematic can be stated phenomenologically as the spacing of signs within the temporal continuity of the verbal flow. For Derrida (co-teacher of a seminar on Husserl with Ricoeur at the Sorbonne at one point), the Husserlian premise of the inevitable externality of the phonetic/graphic signifier with regard to the animating intention is reversed. Plato may have dreamt of a memory with no supplement; but rather without the supplement, no memory. ‘The exteriority of writing’ produces ‘its power of maleficent penetration’ and ‘that process of doubling in which we are fatally entrained’.

For Ricoeur, this externality (or, in his preferred term, ‘distanciation’) is what permits the interrogation of the document, and so resists the vulnerability of verbal dialogue to bad faith. Furthermore there may be a positive function of writing as monument: an element of the sacral and liminal. It should not be required to replicate the process of living memory: it survives the death of the writer not as a betrayal but as a form of commemoration, a material trace signifying those who have lived. The archive, product of bureaucratic convenience, also allows the living to be defined through and alongside the dead: ‘history continues to be born from the taking of distance which consists in the recourse to the exteriority of the archival trace’.

Derrida’s exegesis is heavily reliant on reactivating resonances of the original Greek, with subsequent movement between writings regarded as merely the attempted neutralization of the play of language. Ricoeur refuses this broadly Heideggerian ideal of regression to meaning: translation is not an occlusion of etymology but a restoration of force (‘*pulsion*’). Invoking Quine’s model, the compatibility between any two writings could only be measured by invoking a third text, an ideal language which does not and cannot ever exist: there will always be a split (‘*écart*’) between equivalence and exact adequation. The original is only ever replaced by another original: the dream of perfect correspondence only ever leads to bad translation. The only legitimate criticism lies in an effort to retranslate, a desire which indicates a surplus of energy. Dissatisfaction indicates neither the inadequacy of prior attempts nor the discovery of hitherto concealed secrets: but as an impulse to make one’s own language less provincial and exclusive, open it to the point of view of and so welcome the stranger. The project thus achieves exemplary ethical status: the refusal of self-sufficiency by moving between writings becomes a kind of birth (‘*natalité*’), counterbalancing the funereal power of the text as sepulchre, signifying but also preserving the memory of those who have

been. The Enlightenment ideal of transparent classification, the universal library, must be abandoned along with any messianic pursuit of an eschatological purity. It must be replaced by an ideal of hospitality ('hospalière langagière') which combines love of one's own language with acceptance of otherness. Resistance is motivated by fear and hatred of the outsider, seen as a menace to our linguistic heritage and identity. The movement between languages may appear insurmountable (as in Chomsky, 'bien infranchissable'), but the empirical rejoinder is in this case a devastating one: since translation exists it must be possible. This in turn becomes the ethical ideal of conduct to others within one's own language, towards those who are not strangers: it is always possible to say the same thing otherwise ('autrement dit', perhaps better translated as to and for the other, otherly).

The interest of this recent position lies partly in its reformulation of Ricoeur's earlier hermeneutics founded on the dialectic of explanation and understanding of writing conceived in terms of singular artefacts. Instead of a move to generalized textuality (or linguisticity if one prefers Gadamer), it now posits endless transitions between specific writings. Rather than the deconstructive or Heideggerian unmasking of false

origins, acceptance of our condition within writing (as 'nomads errants') implies an opportunity for creative reconstruction and ethical openness to the other. Writing implies writings. This in turn entails a world of divergent but not therefore hostile or incompatible languages and traditions: comprehension of that multiplicity may then become a model for ethical openness to the other both within and outside our own heritages.

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The Politics of Metaphor

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Keywords boundary, common sense, politics

Metaphor, like any good metaphor, has more than one face: it is, after all, the very stuff of possible worlds promised or denied. It may free or imprison us; it may trumpet its presence or infiltrate unnoticed. We are understandably ambivalent. One moment it appears to be the embodiment of language; the next its betrayer. It indeed troubles us. Little wonder that metaphor can suddenly be seen as the foundation metaphor of politics itself.

There are two related vectors of the politics of metaphor. One is the ostensibly academic question of the place of metaphor, and hence its meaning. Common western thought still welcomes metaphor, after Aristotle, as an attractive accoutrement of things rhetorical but of having no place in other discourse. We are instantly in the politics

of boundaries. Conventional wisdom (and common academic practice) today still insists that metaphor stay in its proper place; elsewhere it is *persona non grata*.

The Greek tradition gives the modern world a second lean on the issue. Aristotle also saw metaphor as providing a change in perspective, of telling us something new. It is not just a manner of words, it is about thoughts, new thoughts. He was lavish in its praise: it is 'one thing that cannot be learned from others – it is a sign of genius – [it] implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars'. Paul Ricoeur, like many others, echoes this sentiment today.

The face of the metaphoric new is one of strangeness, even of a disconcerting incongruity. It upsets the established order. New metaphors may well enthuse those ready to pursue difference; but they frighten others wanting to maintain some existing order of things. Two political moves regularly follow.

A fear of the current world being challenged is harnessed against the new. Vested interests happily nurture the anxiety. A second weapon, ostensibly more cerebral, is the accusation that ‘common sense’ (a powerful western metaphor – does it exist elsewhere?) is being challenged by the language of the new, as ideas that have been around for some time eventually become internalized as the natural order of things, as truth itself. The unfamiliar, the seemingly absurd notions of a new metaphoric association, can be easily dismissed by ridicule or by a solemn defence of the transparently ‘obvious’: that which any ‘reasonable’ person knows to be the case.

New, bold metaphors always need to struggle before they in turn may become accepted as reasonable, and eventually become the new common sense. Nietzsche (1909: 173–88) saw this pattern clearly: ‘What then is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms – which after long usage, seem to a nation fixed, canonic and binding: truths *are* illusions of which one has forgotten they are illusions’ (original emphasis).

Things academic can suddenly erupt into the corridors of power, into parochial or global politics. The nexus between knowledge and politics is a critical one. From a conservative position scientific and scholarly pursuits must remain free of politics (meaning political debate) – not dissimilar to the faith that art and politics ought never mix. (In our own historical epoch the legitimate location of politics itself is constantly being compressed but rarely noted or debated.)

Nevertheless, conservatives face a difficulty here. Metaphoricity as creativity has no natural location, hence no obvious boundary. So actual debate shifts its location to allow new boundaries to be erected, it being now argued that with age and usage metaphors die, and we are left with dead metaphors, which no longer can be called metaphors. We have instead, it argues, literal language. (‘Boundary’ has become another powerful metaphor of the western tradition.)

So ‘literal’ language remains the established norm, and metaphoric language the exception, the bold aberration which may well produce new thought and language, but which through repeated usage eventually ends a shadowy half-life as dead metaphor, as a return to the literal.

But is there anywhere a place for boundaries? If metaphor perceives similarities in dissimilars, or relations between things before unapprehended, metaphor is nothing more or less than any thought which sees or makes relations, connections, classifications between things. They are our ‘ways of knowing’. From there it seems difficult to disagree with Paul Ricoeur (1976: 22–3) when he argues

that if metaphor ‘displaces a certain logical order’ it must be ‘the same as that from which all classifications proceed. The idea of an initial metaphoric impulse destroys these oppositions between proper and figurative, ordinary and strange, order and transgression.’

Accordingly I want to argue that all thought and language is metaphoric. Most metaphors are old; some others are new and these shape the next wave of knowledge and action in the world. All boundaries evaporate. That is not simply an innocent, scholarly point; it has profound political implications. It cuts the ground from under conservative thought (scholastic and political) that only it argues from a position of superiority – whether in the name of the ‘literal’, ‘common sense’, ‘natural’, ‘true’ or ‘right’. But no metaphor has a status higher than another. They are all perspectives on things, each with its own use, beneficial or destructive, with limited or comprehensive application, of short or enduring life. Likewise the value of each metaphor varies and fluctuates. A metaphor’s fate is a matter of inspiration, imagination and luck; at the same time it is also a result of persuasion, power, the times, and ultimately of human choice. To adopt one metaphor invariably inhibits consideration of others. In all, metaphors are a mixed blessing; as Heidegger would say of language, a use of metaphor is also an abuse of metaphor. But we have no other option. It is all we have.

Aristotle proposed a fourfold metaphoric system of thought and language: metaphor (he used that word generically and particularly, as I do), metonymy, synecdoche and analogy. Debate on number and name continues two thousand years on. Gerard Genette lent his authoritative voice recently to the position that metaphor must be considered in at least three forms.

I want to propose seven, all of which relate to each other intimately:

Metaphor: the classing together of two or more things because of some common property; this includes formal typologies and concepts.

Homology, isomorphism, analogy: appreciation of a repetition of a relationship, like Aristotle’s original illustration: A is to B as C is to D. A common one only occasionally expressed in words but frequently embedded in action and attitude is ‘we’ is to ‘them’ as ‘known’ is to ‘strange’ as ‘clean’ is to ‘dirty’ as ‘good’ is to ‘bad’ which generates its own metaphor (particular) ‘dirty foreigner’.

Translation, transformation, transcoding: the equivalence between any phenomenon in one form of expression and its translation in another form, such as ‘corresponding’

expressions in thought, language, affect, mental images, behaviour and art. It seems critically important when dealing with translation to remind ourselves that, as in any metaphor, it is both 'true' and 'false'. As Gregory Bateson warned us, a map is not a territory – yet, in a way, it is.

Exchange is the metaphor of value: a recognized equivalence in value, worth or cost between disparate things; a dual equation or investment of a value allowing 'replacement' of one thing by another. Without exchange, for example, there can be no social relations, business or politics.

Contradictions, opposites: when things are related because they are seen as opposites, as co-existing mutualities. Binary opposites exist in many forms including dichotomies, dualities, paradoxes and ironies.

Synecdoche is the perception of identity between a part and its whole: diagnostic thinking, in medicine, psychotherapy or public policy, for example, heavily depends on this form of metaphor, as does the cinema – a hand or a shadow may tell us all. Politics frequently hinges on which whole some 'problem' part belongs to.

Metonymy: rests on relations of contiguity: things that seem to go together because of their proximity – spatial, temporal or conceptual. Advertising exploits this relationship; memories and histories depend on it; humour works by breaking it (which makes it a naturally subversive art).

I am not greatly concerned whether there are seven, ten or however many modes of metaphor. It just seems that these seven have a collective plausibility as a metaphoric system (and as with any metaphor, differences are neglected) and that they provide a comprehensive structure for understanding human activity. They remind us, as well, as Montaigne wryly noted, that metaphors are not 'some very rare and fancy form of language – they apply to your chambermaid's chatter'. Likewise they apply to your chambermaid's thoughts and behaviour.

We need to think beyond the confines of language as words. And in this regard politics is a great teacher. We express our thoughts not only in sentences but in body language, in customary

behaviour, in relationships, in each and every political or social move pondered or pursued. We live our metaphors, and at times we astutely read the language of our collective lives. But most times we remain blind to what we are doing and what is being done to us. The worth of social science could well rest on how well it reveals the real flesh and blood of those dead metaphors, which still 'unnaturally' rule our lives.

The world needs a multitude of new metaphors leading us to a better future. But metaphor, like life, is full of risks. Juggling the old and the new is always open to error and disaster as much as it is to a real advance of human interests. Even the ideal challenge could well be beyond us: can we cope, on the one hand, with bestowing sufficient legitimacy on old metaphors to allow us to maintain our ongoing social and cultural system, and yet, on the other hand, be ever ready to welcome new metaphors which abruptly appear with great promise? Can we ever learn to live with and welcome uncertainty? Can we ever learn to appreciate a transience in our habits?

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Language and Nation

Ismail S. Talib

Keywords dialect, language, literature, nation, spatialization of temporality

Although the supplementary nature of this entry may be no more than a formal requirement, it leads me to think about something more substantial about the nature of the nation: what is supposed to be the main thing may become a supplement, and then the supplement itself may be erased, which of course is also the story of many so-called nations throughout human history. Indeed, with nations, it is often the supplement which tries to define itself as the main thing – a dialect of a language, for example, spoken by a minority of the population, defines itself as the nation's language, and then defines or redefines what the nation should be, and finally makes light of or even erases other dialects or languages, which were once spoken by larger sections of the population.

Looking at the trajectories of language and literature in relation to the nation, one can take either a narrow or broad view of what they mean. One narrow conception of language does not attempt to define it structurally or historically. It is more a rigid conception of what one thinks a language should be, crammed with our own prejudices of what it ought to be, like the association of a nation's language with one of its accents, such as Received Pronunciation in Britain, which even the BBC today is trying to break free from. In such matters, what ought to be – or, more restrictively, what a few people think ought to be – often becomes what is. In spite of the enthronement of a dialect as a language, ultimately there may only actually be dialects available for analysis. What is defined as a language does not really exist in one piece, but can only be understood as the superset that cannot be adequately defined by any of its members (and which itself cannot be adequately defined once and for all), in the same way that a sparrow cannot define what every bird should be, unless, of course – and this is an important qualification – a dialect is politically defined as a language, in the way, for example, a dialect is defined as a national language.

So we have a quite perverse situation here, where the nation defines, delimits or chooses what its language should be, by going for what is the most appropriate dialect of a language. Indeed, a

language, in the words of Weinreich (1945), is 'a dialect with an army and a navy'. What a nation's language should be, then, through the choice of a dialect, becomes what its language is.

It becomes more perverse if the nation asserts itself as, or tries to equate itself with, the state, because metaphorically we have the army and the navy of the state to back its choice of dialect and its redefinition as a language. Sometimes, even the language itself is renamed. For example, the Malay language has two mutually intelligible dialects chosen as the national languages of Indonesia and Malaysia, which have been renamed as Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Malaysia. In Malaysia, Malay is the language of the dominant indigenous population, or, more precisely, the dialect of Malay spoken in what is known as the Johor-Riau region is promoted as the standard and hence what Bahasa Malaysia should be. It is interesting that Johor-Riau is mentioned, and Singapore, which is right at the centre of the Johor-Riau region, and whose dialect of Malay is close to that of Johor and Riau, is never mentioned – again, this appears to be a political decision which later gained academic acceptance. In Indonesia, Malay was a minority language, spoken in Riau, Jakarta, and some coastal areas in Kalimantan, but like Bahasa Malaysia it was later used for the self-definition of the nation state of Indonesia as a whole. In the case of China, a northern language was chosen as the national language and came to be called the Chinese language, a term which is now accepted even by linguists (see DeFrancis, 1990).

Going to literature, if one looks at its narrow conception, one thinks of canonical literature: the kind of literature that is taught in 'lit.' departments. Some of us may want to dismiss this linkage with the nation, which has been somehow foregrounded in Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983). While Anderson's attempt to relate the novel with the nation may seem elusive, his ideas on print capitalism has an interesting practical link with the dissemination of nationalism, because what print does is the possibility of producing several copies of a text, and hence its wider dissemination.

A broader conception, of course, should also include oral literature. But oral literature may be problematic because time does not sit still, it is relentlessly progressing, and is not an example of the 'homogeneous empty time' that is so important for Anderson's theoretical linkage of the

canonical novel to the nation. A broader conception of literature should also include narratives of all kinds, including some in non-traditional media, such as cinema and television serials, as well as lyrical genres such as poetry and songs. The linkage to 'spontaneous empty time' may be even further away here, but I think it is Anderson's approach itself which should be questioned. His conception of 'spontaneous empty time' amounts to a spatialization of temporality, and suggests to us that the nation to Anderson is a spatial conception. But the nation is more than just space. Some texts are linked to the nation by way of temporarily realized melodies, like the songs that we associate with a particular nation. Think of the gypsy melodies that tell us something of the gypsy nation, even if this nation is a 'spectral' one (Cheah, 2003), and not confined to spatial locations or, indeed, to authentic gypsies. Some of these temporarily realized melodies cannot be conveniently separated from the nation itself in order to perceive them as spatial analogues of the nation, but remain an inseparable part of the life of the nation.

Talking about literature, one must not think of it as pristinely existing within the boundary of the nation, defining it, and giving life to it. Contemporary reality is more complex than this. I am thinking of course of globalization and two linguistic-literary factors that may have an effect on conceptions of the nation: Anglicization and Americanization (see Talib, 2002). Anglicization has to do with the increasing use of the English language, and its cultural manifestation, not only linguistically but also in global literatures written in

English. Americanization has to do with the increasing exposure to American cultural products, such as Hollywood movies and American rock music. Do these factors have an effect on the nation, or on nations that are not English or American? Or are they themselves nation-defining or nation-creating? The answers to this pair of questions are positive, although I cannot answer them adequately right now: it is a question of extent and whether they will be even more significant in the future.

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Ethnopoetics

Dell Hymes

Keywords Amerindian cultures, ethnography, oral narrative, poetics

Introductory editorial note by Ryan Bishop

Dell Hymes' supplement on ethnopoetics results from a moment in the early part of the 20th century in North America during which anthropology and linguistics overlapped with the humanities and psychology. These scholars, led by Franz Boas and later by his star pupil Edward Sapir, considered anthropological linguistics as related to Geisteswissenschaften, the sciences of the spirit as

constituted within German universities, as opposed to Naturwissenschaften, the natural sciences. Similarly these scholars found in the cultures and languages of the indigenous North American peoples (dubbed 'Amer-Indian') materials that challenged and overturned received knowledge about the nature of language found in traditional philology and linguistics while also providing insights into existential and mental life-worlds that differed significantly from that of the ethnographers, one uninfluenced by a variety of technologies, including that of writing and the types of narrative made possible through print culture. In the oral poetry of Native American cultures, scholars found alternative ways of being within the world

functioning on the continent that housed their universities. (Of course, the oral–literate divide has been used to both romanticize and demean oral cultures, while at the same time becoming the ground for thinking about language, origins, and primacy of representational modes.) Hymes' supplement reminds us of an earlier impulse to challenge the state of knowledge through an engagement of materials often excluded from or domesticated by disciplines and the university as an institution that is empathetic to the NEP agenda.

This is an example of what has come to be called ethnopoetics. 'Ethno-' from people not usually recognized as having poetic form; 'poetics' because it is indeed in lines and groups of lines. Linguists have done much to discover often unconscious patterns of expression. In recent years it has become clear that such patterns exist probably everywhere in oral narratives. Much remains to be done to identify them and their uses. Most linguists themselves, even specialists in particular languages, have not taken up such work.

Here is an example from the Chinookan people of the lower Columbia River of the states of Washington and Oregon. It was obtained by the pioneer ethnographer and linguist Franz Boas at the end of the 1890s, just before the lower Chinook languages ceased to be spoken. Descendants of those people continue to exist in both states.

The usual relations in Chinookan narratives are three and five. In this myth, the 'Sun's Myth', a chief with people in five towns (i.e. an important chief) goes out early to see the sun and cannot. He insists his wife make him ten sets of leggings and moccasins. He travels to where the sun rises (i.e. to the east), wearing out all his footwear, through places where there are no people.

He finds a house and a young girl, about to become eligible for marriage at menarche, in a house with all imaginable human wealth on its walls. She explains that when she marries the wealth will be given away.

He stays. The third act is a lyric moment in which times does not go forward but recurs.

The old woman who bears the sun goes out each morning and returns each night, bringing valuables. The text says, 'everyday like this'. If the story ended here, one would have a happy ending, a reward for intrepidity.

The chief becomes homesick. That in itself is not unexpected in the culture of a visitor far from home, and the old woman offers him gifts to take back to his home. He refuses every ordinary gift; he wants only the shining thing she carries each day. Since he is now a relative, she cannot forever refuse him. Finally she gives him

the shining thing to carry, and an axe as well, and warns him.

As he reaches each of the five towns of his people, what he carries sings. At each town he loses consciousness, then revives to see that he has destroyed the town and the people in it. He tries to rid himself of what he carries each time, and cannot.

His own town is the fifth. He tries to stand still but is pulled forward, and it too is destroyed.

Now come the last lines, in an act with three stanzas. In the first stanza the old woman addresses him in three verses. Such a remonstrance is common at the end of Chinookan myths and always right. The final two stanzas are not in terms of relations of three and five, but of two and four: a stanza with two verses for the old woman, a stanza with two verses for the man. Here is that act.

He looked back. (A)
 Now she is standing near him, that old woman.
 'You',
 she told him,
 'You.'
 'In vain I try to love you,
 in vain I try to love your relatives.
 'Why do you weep?
 'It is you who choose.
 'Now you carried that blanket of mine.'

Now she took it, (B)
 she lifted off what he had taken.
 Now she left him,
 she went home.

He stayed there; (C)
 he went a little distance.
 There he built a house,
 a small house.

In its consequence of the working out of hubris, the tragedy seems Greek. In this it is very rare among the narratives of the Native American Northwest Coast known to us. There are indeed narratives of a hostile father-in-law who is overcome. Cultee's narrative transforms such a framework as a way of making sense of experience. His and other peoples on the lower Columbia were devastated by disease, beginning late in the 18th century. The 'Sun's Myth' interprets the destruction of the people not as coming from outside, but as coming from one of their own.

In the same way the Israelites interpreted the Assyrians as agents of their own God, punishing them for their misdeeds. In each case, the ultimate power of the world, as found in the story, continues to exist. Here the chief's hubris is a desire beyond human ability to control. Perhaps desire for things brought by whites seemed like that in retrospect. But an insatiable chief was

already known in the myth of one who allowed only girl babies to live, until one wife disguised her infant boy, who returned as a man to overcome that chief.

In any case, the lines with which the myth ends leave behind three- and five-part relations. They take on the two- and four-part relations associated with women. Nothing announces the change; there is only the pairing of 'Now . . .

Now' and verbal repetition.

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Translation

Naoki Sakai

Abstract Translation is an act of articulation that takes place in the social topos of difference or incommensurability. The topos of difference, to which translation is a response, is anterior to the conceptual difference of species or particularities. Yet, translation is often represented as a process of establishing equivalence according to the model of communication. This misapprehension of translation derives from the confusion of the act of translation with its representation. By representing translation that is unrepresentable in itself through the schema of co-figuration, the representation of translation inscribes and re-inscribes the twin figures of languages between which a transfer of information is supposed to have taken place. This whole regime organized around the schema of co-figuration is a historical construct of modernity that has worked powerfully to project national/ethnic languages and the international world, only within which national languages are possible. Our task is to historicize this regime of translation.

Keywords communication model, regime of translation, representation of translation, schema of co-figuration, subject in transit, translation

Introduction

Today an increasing number of scholars are aware of both the conceptual complexity and the politico-ethical significance of translation. Simultaneously, they have come to realize that translations, not only in the fields of literature and religion, but also in the spheres of commercial advertisement, popular entertainment, public administration, international diplomacy, scientific research and publication, judiciary procedure, immigration, education and family livelihood must be problematized. The conceptual complexity of the term 'translation' and the difficulty in any attempt to define it make it necessary to historicize the particular ways in which translation has been understood and practiced in modern societies.

What may be summarily called translation has been practiced in many parts of the world for centuries and millennia. The rendering of the Buddhist texts in literary Chinese and the Latinization of the Bible are two instances during the first millennium, of the celebrated achievements in the long histories of translation, while there are innumerable cases of translation that are known to have played decisive roles in the developments of literary cultures, pedagogical institutions, ecclesiastic reformations and the global spread of the nation-state and capitalism, particularly since the Renaissance and the European conquest of the Americas.

What is most problematic about the conventional conception of translation is that, due to its inherent metaphysics of communication (Nancy, 1991), it presents translation as a process of homogenization and of establishing equivalence. But translation always inscribes itself in the social topos of incommensurability and difference, and what I specifically call *cultural difference*, to which translation is a response, is anterior to and fundamentally heterogeneous to the conceptual difference of species, the difference between particularities. Translation articulates one text to another, but it does not mean that translation merely establishes equivalence between two texts, two languages or two groups of people. On the contrary, it is in a specific *dispositif* or regime of translation that translation is represented according to the model of

communication. What I am going to attempt in this entry on translation is to liberate it from the metaphysics of communication.

My approach is basically historical. I will first discuss the conceptual intricacy of the term translation and the difficulty in any attempt to define it, with a view to historicizing the particular ways in which translation has been understood and practiced in modern societies. And, second, I will discuss the politico-ethical significance of translation in reference to the fact that it is always complicit with the building, transforming or disrupting of power relations. Translation involves moral imperatives on the part of both the addresser and the addressee, and can always be viewed to a larger or smaller degree as a political maneuver of social antagonism. Third, I will investigate how the representation of translation brings about socio-political effects and serves as a technology by which the individual imagines his or her relation to the national or ethnicized community. And, finally, I will touch upon the relationship between the issues of translation and modernity by showing how the particular mode of representing translation is conditioned by the essentially modern *schema of co-figuration*, by means of which we comprehend the unity of natural language as an ethno-linguistic unity. In other words, we will probe into how our commonsensical notion of translation is delimited by the schematism of the world (i.e. our operation of representing the world according to the *schema of co-figuration*) and inversely, how the modern image of the world as the inter-national world (i.e. the world consisting of the basic unit of nations) is prescribed by our representation of translation as a communicative and international transfer of the message between a pair of ethno-linguistic unities.

The Concept of Translation and its Complexity

The network of lexicographical connotations associated with the term translation leads to notions of transferring, conveying or moving from one place to another, or of linking one word, phrase, or text to another. These connotations are shared by the word for translation in many modern languages: *fanyi* in Chinese, *translation* in English, *traduction* in French, *honyaku* in Japanese, *Übersetzung* in German, and so forth. It may therefore appear justified to postulate the following definition: 'Translation is a transfer of the message from one language to another.' Even before one specifies what sort of transfer this may be, it is hard to refrain from asking about the message. Is not the message in this definition a product or consequence of the transfer called translation, rather than an entity that precedes the action of transfer, something that remains invariant in the process of translation? Is the message which is supposedly transferred in this process determinable in and of itself before it has been operated on? And what is the status of the language from which or into which the message is transferred? Is it justifiable to assume that the source language in which the original text makes sense is different and distinct from the target language into which the translator renders the text as faithfully as possible? Are these languages countable? In other words, is it possible to isolate and juxtapose them as individual units, like apples, for example, and unlike water? By what measures is it possible to distinguish one from the other and endow it with a unity or body? But for the sake of facilitating the representation of translation, however, it is not necessary to posit the organic unity of language rather than see it as a random assemblage of words, phrases and utterances, if one is to speak of translation in accordance with the definition.

Accordingly, the presumed invariance of the message transmitted through translation is confirmed only retroactively, after it has been translated. What kind of definition is it, then, that includes the term in need of explanation in the definition itself? Is it not a circular definition? Similarly, the unity both of the source and the target language is also a supposition in whose absence the definition would make little sense. What might translation be if we suppose that a language is not countable or that one language cannot be easily distinguished from another?

It is difficult to evade this problem when we attempt to comprehend the terms 'meaning' and 'language'. At the very least, we can say that, logically, translation is not derivative or secondary to meaning or language; it is just as fundamental or foundational in any attempt to

elucidate these concepts. Translation suggests contact with the incomprehensible, the unknowable, or the unfamiliar, that is, with the foreign, and there is no awareness of language or meaning until we come across the foreign. First and foremost, the problematic of translation is concerned with the allocation of the foreign.

If the foreign is unambiguously incomprehensible, unknowable, and unfamiliar, then translation simply cannot be done. If, conversely, the foreign is comprehensible, knowable and familiar, translation is unnecessary. Thus, the status of the foreign is ambiguous in translation. The foreign is incomprehensible and comprehensible, unknowable and knowable, unfamiliar and familiar at the same time. This foundational ambiguity of translation is derived from the positionality occupied by the translator. The translator is summoned only when two kinds of audiences are postulated with regard to the source text, one for whom the text is comprehensible at least to some degree, and the other for whom it is incomprehensible. The translator's work consists in dealing with difference between the two audiences. The translator encroaches on both and stands in the midst of this difference. In other words, for the first audience the source 'language' is comprehensible while for the second it is incomprehensible. It is important to note that the 'language' in this instance is figurative: it need not refer to the 'natural' language of an ethnic or national community, German or Tagalog, for example. It is equally possible to have two kinds of audiences when the source text is a technical document or an avant-garde work of art. In such cases 'language' may well refer to a vocabulary or set of expressions associated with a professional field or discipline, for example, law; it may imply a style of graphic inscription or an unusual perceptual setting in which an artwork is displayed. This loose use of the term 'language' invariably renders the task of determining the 'meaning' of the term 'translation' difficult. For, all the acts of projecting, exchanging, linking, matching and mapping could then be talked about as sorts of translation, even if not a single word is involved. Here the discernibility of the linguistic and the non-linguistic is at stake.

Roman Jakobson's (1971) famous taxonomy of translation attempts to restrict the instability inherent in the figurative use of the word 'language'. Jakobson divides translation into three classes: '(1) Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. (2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language. (3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems' (p. 261). According to the Jakobsonian taxonomy, one who translates 'legal language' into common parlance would be performing an intralingual translation, while one who offers a commentary on an obscure artwork would be engaged in an intersemiotic translation. In neither case can one be said to be a translator strictly speaking. Only someone who translates a text from one language to another would be doing translation proper.

Jakobson's taxonomy neither elucidates nor responds to our query about the supposition concerning the countability and organic unity of the source and target languages. It does not empirically validate the supposition; it merely repeats and reconfirms it. Nevertheless, it discloses that 'translation proper' depends on a supposed discernibility between the interlingual and the intralingual, between a translation from one language to another and a rewording within the same language. It thereby prescribes and demarcates the locus of difference between two presumably ethnic or national language communities, by virtue of the fact that Jakobson presupposes that translation proper can take place only between two unequivocally circumscribed languages. It therefore eradicates the various differences within such a linguistic community and locates the foreign exclusively outside the unity of a language.

No doubt this conception of translation is a schematization of the globally shared and abstractly idealized commonsensical vision of the *international* world, consisting of basic units – nations – segmented by national borders into territories. It is not simply Jakobson's idiosyncratic view. In this schematization, 'translation proper' not only claims to be a description or representation of what happens in the process of translation; this description also prescribes and directs how to represent and apprehend what one accomplishes 'perlocutionarily' when one translates. In this respect, 'translation proper' is a *discursive* construct: it is

part of what may be called the regime of translation, an institutionalized assemblage of protocols, rules of conduct, canons of accuracy, and ways of viewing. The *discursive* regime of translation is *poietic*, or productive, in that it foregrounds what speech acts theorists called the ‘perlocutionary’ effect (Austin, 1967). Just as a perlocutionary act of persuading might well happen in a speech act of arguing but persuasion does not always result from argument, ‘translation proper’ need not be postulated whenever one acts to translate. Yet, in the regime of translation, it is as if there were a causal relationship between the co-figurative schematization of translation and the process of translation. Collapsing the process of translation onto its co-figurative schematization, the representation of translation repeatedly discerns the domestic language co-figuratively – one unity is figured out, represented and comprehended as a spatial figure, in contrast to another – as if the two unities were already present in actuality.

As long as one remains captive to the conventional regime of translation, one can construe the ambiguity inherent in the translator’s positionality only as the dual position a translator occupies between a native language and a foreign tongue. Hence the presumption persists that one either speaks one’s mother tongue or a foreigner’s. The translator’s task would be to discern the differences between the two languages. And this difference is always determined as that between two linguistic communities. Despite countless potential differences within one linguistic community, the regime of translation obliges one to speak from within a binary opposition, either to the same or to the other. Thus, in the regime of translation the translator becomes invisible because the translator is the one who eludes an identification within the binary (Venuti, 1995: 1–46). This attitude in which one is constantly solicited to identify oneself within the binary may be called ‘monolingual address’, whereby the addresser adopts the position representative of a putatively homogeneous language community, and enunciates to addressees who are also representative of a homogeneous language community. The term ‘monolingual address’, however, does not imply a social situation in which both the addresser and the addressee in a conversation belong to the same language; they believe they belong to different languages yet can still address each other monolingually.

Translator: The *Subject in Transit*

Is it possible to understand the act of translation outside the monolingual address? To respond to this question, it may be helpful to consider the translator’s position of address. When engaged in the task of translation, can they perform a speech act such as making a promise? Is the translator responsible for what they say while translating? Due to the translator’s unavoidably ambiguous position, the answer too is ambiguous. Yes, they can make a promise, but only on behalf of someone else. They ‘themselves’ cannot make a promise. The translator is responsible for the translation but they cannot be held responsible for the pledges expressed in it, because they are not allowed to say what they mean; they are required to say what they say without meaning it. In essence, the translator is someone who cannot say ‘I’. Here the problem of the invariant message returns as the question of meaning, of what the translator ‘means’ to say.

In relation to the source text, the translator seems to occupy the position of the addressee. They listen to or read what the original addresser enunciates. At the same time, however, there is no supposition that the addresser is speaking or writing to them. Here again the translator’s positionality is inherently ambiguous: it is both addressee and not addressee. The translator cannot be the ‘you’ to whom the addresser refers. A similar disjunction can be observed in the enunciation of the target text, that is, in the translation. In relation to the audience of the target text, the translator seems to occupy the position of the addresser.

In other words, in translation, the subject of the enunciation and the subject of the enunciated – the speaking I and the I that is signified – are not expected to coincide. The translator’s desire is at least displaced, if not entirely dissipated, in the translated enunciation, if by *desire* we understand that what is signified by I in ‘my’ utterance ought to coincide with the supposedly concrete and unique – but imagined – existence of ‘me’ (the desire expressed

as 'I want to be myself'). This is why the translator cannot be designated straightforwardly either as *I* or *you*: they disrupt the attempt to appropriate the relation of the addresser and addressee as a *personal* relation between the first person and the second person. The translator cannot be the first or second person, or even the third 'person' undisruptively. Ineluctably, translation introduces an instability into the putatively *personal* relations among the agents of speech, writing, listening and reading. The translator is internally split and multiple, devoid of a stable position. At best, they are *subject in transit*.

In the first place, this is because the translator cannot be an 'individual' in the sense of *individuum*, the undividable unit. In the second, it is because the translator is a *singularity* that marks an elusive point of discontinuity in the social, even though translation is the practice of creating continuity from discontinuity. Translation is a *poietic* social practice that institutes a relation at the site of incommensurability. This is why the discontinuity inherent in translation would be completely repressed if we were to determine translation as the communication of information; the *ambiguity inherent in the translator's positionality* would have to be entirely overlooked as long as translation is grasped as the transfer of information.

In the case of translation, however, an ambiguity in the translator's positionality marks the instability of the *we* as subject rather than the *I*, since the translator cannot be a unified and coherent personality in translation. This suggests a different attitude of address, namely, 'heterolingual address' (Sakai, 1997: i–xii), which is, a situation in which one addresses oneself as a foreigner to another foreigner. Held captive in the regime of translation, however, the translator is supposed to assume the role of the transcendent arbitrator, not only between the addresser and the addressee but also between their linguistic communities. As monolingual address, translation, as a process of creating *continuity in discontinuity* (Tanabe, 1963), is often replaced by the representation of translation in which translation is schematized according to the co-figurative communication model.

Modernity and the Schema of Co-figuration: A Genealogy of the Modern

Let us consider how translation is displaced by its representation and how collective subjectivity, such as national and ethnic subjectivity, is constituted in the representation of translation. Through the translator's labor, the incommensurable differences that call for the translator's service in the first place are negotiated. In other words, the work of translation is a practice by which the initial discontinuity between the addresser and the addressee is made continuous. In this respect translation is like other social practices; translation makes something representable out of an unrepresentable difference. Only retrospectively, therefore, can we recognize the initial incommensurability as a gap, crevice or border between fully constituted entities, spheres or domains. Cultural difference which prompts translation is unrepresentable in this sense and can by no means be reduced to either specific difference or spatial distance. But when represented as a conceptual difference or gap, it is no longer an incommensurability. It is mapped onto a striated space, which may be segmented by national borders and other markers of collective (national, ethnic, racial or 'cultural') identification.

Incommensurable difference is more like a feeling (Deleuze, 1994) prior to the explanation of how incommensurability has occurred, and cannot be represented as a specific difference (in schemas of genera and species, for example) between two terms or entities. What makes it possible to represent the initial difference as an already determined one between one language unity and another is the work of translation itself. Hence the untranslatable, or what appears to escape translation, cannot exist prior to the enunciation of translation. It is translation that gives birth to the untranslatable. The untranslatable is as much a testimony to the sociality of the translator, whose elusive positionality reveals the presence of an aggregate community of foreigners between the addresser and the addressee, as the translatable itself. We fail to communicate because we are in common with one another. Community does not mean we share common ground. On the contrary, we are in community precisely because we are exposed to a forum where our differences and failure in communication can be manifest. Nevertheless, the translator's essential sociality with respect to the untranslatable is

disregarded in monolingual address, and with the repression of this insight, monolingual address equates translation with the representation of translation.

The particular representation of translation as communication between two particular languages is no doubt a historical construct. Given the politico-social significance of translation, it is no accident that, historically, the regime of translation became widely accepted in many regions of the world, after the feudal order and its passive vassal subject gave way to the disciplinary order of the active citizen subject in the modern nation-state, to an order consisting of disciplinary regimes which Michel Foucault describes brilliantly. The regime of translation serves to reify national sovereignty. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000: 95) have argued, it makes 'the *relation* of sovereignty into a *thing* (often by naturalizing it) and thus weeds out every residue of social antagonism. The nation is a kind of ideological shortcut that attempts to free the concepts of sovereignty and modernity from the antagonism and crisis that define them'.

Following the Kantian schematism (Kant, 1956), the *poietic* technology endowed in the regime of translation which renders it representable may be called 'the schema of co-figuration'. Since the practice of translation remains radically heterogeneous to the representation of translation, translation cannot always be represented as a communication between two clearly delineated ethno-linguistic unities. Rather, it was this particular representation of translation that gave rise to the possibility of figuring out the unity of ethnic or national language together with another language unity. Thanks to this co-figurative schematism, there emerges an ethno-linguistic unity as if it were a sensuous and unified thing hidden and dormant behind the surface of random sensuous variety. In other words, the schema of co-figuration is a technology by means of which an ethno-linguistic community is rendered representable, thereby constituting itself as a substratum upon which national sovereignty can be built. 'People' is thus nothing but an idealization of this substratum.

This self-constitution of the nation does not proceed unitarily, but on the contrary, its figure constitutes itself only by making visible the figure of an other with which it engages in a relationship of translation. Precisely because the two nations are represented as equivalent and alike, however, it is possible to determine them as *conceptually different*, and their difference is construed as a *specific difference (daiphora)* between separate identities. Nevertheless, cultural difference, which calls for the work of a translator, is not a conceptual difference but an incommensurability.

Once translation is determined as the relationship of the two terms as equivalent and alike, it gives rise to the possibility of extracting an infinite number of distinctions between the two. Just as in the co-figuration of 'the West and the Rest' by which the West represents itself, constituting itself by positing everything else as 'the Rest', conceptual difference allows one term to be evaluated as superior to the other. This co-figurative comparison allows for typical binary oppositions – such as the presence of scientific rationality versus its absence, the future-oriented spirit of progress versus the tradition-bound sense of social obligation, the internalization of religious faith and its accompanying secularism versus the inseparableness of the private and the public – to characterize the West and the Rest.

The 'modern' is marked by the introduction of the schema of co-figuration, without which it is difficult to imagine a nation or ethnicity as a homogeneous sphere. As Antoine Berman taught us about the intellectual history of translation and Romanticism in Germany, the economy of the foreign, that is, how the foreign must be allocated in the production of the domestic language, has played a decisive role in the *poietic* – and poetic – identification of national language (Berman, 1992). Most conspicuously in 18th-century movements such as Romanticism in western Europe and *Kokugaku* (National Studies) in Japan, intellectual and literary maneuvers to invent, mythically and poetically, a national language were closely associated with a spiritual construction of a new identity which later naturalized national sovereignty. This substratum for the legitimation of national and popular sovereignty was put forward as a 'natural' language specific to the 'people', supposedly spoken by them in their everyday lives. Literary historians generally call this historical development 'the emergence of the

vernacular'. With the irruption of the sphere of nearness – extensive obsessions with things of everydayness and experiential immediacy – in which the ordinary and the colloquial were celebrated (Sakai, 1992), the status of 'universal' languages such as Latin, literary Chinese and Sanskrit was drastically and decisively altered. In their place, languages emerged whose markers were ethnic and national – English, German, Japanese, Spanish and so forth – and the ancient canons were translated into these languages. For this reason, Martin Luther's German translation of the Bible and Motoori's Japanese phonetic translation of the *Kojiki* (records of ancient matters) can be said to mark crucial steps in modernity.

Modernity and the West

In talking about 'modern' as it is apprehended in many parts of the world today, first it is historically necessary to anchor it in the original uses of this notion in the history of Western Europe. This is neither because the most authentic forms of modernity can be found in Western Europe, nor because modernity emanated from the center somewhat associated with Western Europe to the periphery of the Rest. Rather this is because the notion of 'modern' has been accepted and used primarily as a translation from its European originals for more than a century in many places, including those outside the geographic terrain of Europe and North America. One can talk about 'modern' as if there were a globally common apprehension of it precisely because, all over the world, people assume it is impossible to apprehend it without referring it back to its European equivalents, from which their local translations are believed to have derived. In the globally-accepted conception of modernity the schema of co-figuration between the West and the Rest is already at work powerfully.

Despite linguistic and social diversities among the different sites of the world, therefore, the notion of 'modern' is supposedly retraceable to the singular history of Western Europe, thanks to the Eurocentric structure incorporated in the very notion itself. In this respect, the schema of co-figuration is the form which is most appropriate to the representation of the Eurocentric world, and it is also a form in which the legacy of European colonialisms is preserved. As far as the local terms used for modernity are concerned, however, the situation was drastically different in 'pre-modern' times preceding the translation of 'modern' into local equivalents.

The introduction of 'modern' qualitatively changed the manner in which people customarily organized their historical experience. With the arrival of 'modern', people in many places in the world began to map geopolitical directives, centered on colonial powers in Western Europe, onto their pasts and futures, and to order their destinies and desires in terms of cartographic relativity. 'Modern' now implied much more than a chronological closeness to the present moment in which periods are classified. Consequently they sought coherence in the transition from the experience of their past to the anxiety or hope for their future by projecting a trajectory from a locus outside the modern onto a locus within. The progression of time from the past to the future was thus associated with a movement, on the cartographically imagined surface of the globe, from a geographic location outside the 'modern' civilization to another within it. The dynamic ecstatic or ex-static process from the past to the future was deprived of its temporality, and represented spatially as a vector from a geopolitical location in the periphery to another in the center. Thereby the temporal movement could be appropriated by the schema of co-figuration, and consequently the two pairing figures of the West and the Rest were imagined as if each were somewhat homogeneous within, despite the fact that neither the West nor the Rest could be an entity or a unity of language anyway. As a matter of fact, this explains how the mythic construct called the West was constituted, and why the West had been perceived as structurally indissociable from the modern until recently.

Accordingly it is important to differentiate two dimensions in which the schema of co-figuration operates. In the case of the West and the Rest binary, it is always the one-and-many opposition, and the West remains the point of reference in all comparisons, whereas the Rest is variable. Therefore, the West is often imagined to be an ever growing originality such as the

continuing tradition of Christianity, the foundational structure of medieval legal and theocratic order, and the archaic seed of reason embedded in Greek geometry, while the Rest is simply an accidental assemblage of diverse life forms and does not constitute a single substance. This means that the centrality of the West consists in the polarity of the distribution of ethnic, civilizational and racial comparisons.

Conversely, in the case of the co-figurative identification of the ethno-linguistic unity, it is the postulate of specific difference between two languages in translation. To the extent that the ethno-linguistic unity could be thought of without reference to the polarity in the distribution of comparisons, the international world does not and should not have a dominant center and this idealized international world consisting of equal national sovereignties is expressed in the design of the United Nations.

But, of course, these two dimensions in the operation of the schema of co-figuration are intimately related to one another, and their correlation is one of the fundamental features of the modern international world.

Historically, how we represent translation does not only prescribe how we collectively imagine national communities and ethnic identities but also how we relate individually to national sovereignty. It is also complicit with the discourse of the West and the Rest through which the colonial power relationship is continually fantasized and reproduced.

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The Possibility of Translation

Saranindranath Tagore

Keywords Benjamin, Frege, Kant, Lyotard, Tagore, translation

I

I wish to retrieve the sense of Kant's (1997) use of the notion of possibility in order to construct *in form* a Kantian argument in the service of responding to the question of how translation is possible. Kant's transcendental program can be seen as a vast philosophical gesture of securing the foundations of three terrains of knowledge: mathematics, natural science and metaphysics. Kant's brilliant strategy, as is well known, resting on the logic of transcendental arguments, enfolded these disciplines within a phenomenology of respect, and paying heed to Hume's critique, attempted to secure a clearing in which to ground the theoretical triad. The three issues in turn were economized in the single general question of how synthetic a priori propositions are possible. Kant's sense of possibility tuned to a program of transcendental justification did not assume skepticism at the outset; he worked backwards in order to articulate the kind of philosophical space necessary to *justify* the system of knowledge, *in the face of the skeptical attack*. It is this sense of possibility that I invoke in my remarks.

I ask a question textured by the Kantian nuance: how is translation possible? Accordingly, I will take up two tasks. First, I will retrieve two positions (one modern and one postmodern) that attack the ontology of translation. Second, following a Kantian strategy, beginning from a phenomenology of respect, I will articulate the conditions that would *justify* the respect, which will also act as interventions in modern and postmodern discourses.

The skeptical attack on the possibility of translation may be formulated in this way: the implications of modernity and postmodernity limn a deep skepticism toward the possibility of translation. Let me take up the two positions in turn. For the sake of convenience, I consider Lyotard and Rorty, the latter though not a member of the postmodern collective nonetheless has Lyotardian sympathies. Lyotard attacks the commensurating drive of enlightenment (modern) narratives on the grounds that universalizing discourses silence phrases that cannot be uttered in the vocabulary of

the metalanguage. This Lyotardian (1988) position can be extracted from his seemingly descriptive report in *The Postmodern Condition* (1984) and also from the more normatively driven analysis of the differend. The eliding of metalanguage has resonance for the problem of translation when it is seen in tandem with postcolonial discussion of translational violence. As Spivak (2000: 399–400) has pointed out, metalinguistic transfer creates a leveling process where 'the literature by a woman in Palestine begins to resemble, in the level of its prose, something by a man in Taiwan'. Returning to the postmodernism of Lyotard, the privileging of the fragment with its Kuhnian resonance, though laudable in its implied critique of translational hegemony, unfortunately and perhaps ironically assumes a skeptical posture toward the possibility of translation. The Rortian (1989) position concerning translation, bearing resemblance to Lyotard's unhappiness with metaconstructs, is implied in his discussion of comparative philosophy. For Rorty, the act of comparing philosophical traditions across cultures privileges a conceptual framework and attempts to interpret philosophical traditions from the privileged perspective. Such a move, for Rorty, would violate the intrinsic shape of philosophical alterity. If acts of comparison are parasitic on acts of translation – in this case primarily philosophical frameworks and nominally language – one can see that for Rorty, like Lyotard, translation can overcome its own problem only through the gestures of violence, thus violating its task.

Postmodernity emerges as a witnessing and a critiquing moment in the movement of modernity. It wishes to salvage the plural from what it takes to be the reductive posture of modernity. The critique of modernity implies the powerful point that the reductive drive for commensuration cannot found the ontology of translation. Thus emerges the disturbing conclusion that neither the narrative of commensuration nor the distillation of fragments can provide the awning under which the truth of translation can rest. In other words, the modern and the postmodern conditions provide precisely the skepticism that can motivate a transcendental argument on behalf of the possibility of translation.

II

Rabindranath Tagore's novel *Noukadubi* was translated into English by J.G. Drummond and was

published as *The Wreck* by Macmillan in 1921. A year earlier Tagore wrote a letter to Drummond where he made the following observation:

I do not believe in a literal translation, especially when the languages of the original and that of the translation are essentially different. The words of the one language may have their synonyms in the other carrying the same meanings, but their associations are in most cases different. And the suggestions and flavour contained in these associations are more important in literature than mere meanings.

I offer two other inscriptions that articulate the difference between two levels of translatability. First, Walter Benjamin (1968: 78):

Fidelity in the translation of individual words can almost never fully reproduce the meaning they have in the original. For sense in its poetic significance is limited to meaning, but derives from the connotations conveyed by the word chosen to express it.

Second, Frege (1980: 61):

We can . . . recognize three levels of difference between words, expressions, or whole sentences. The differences may concern at most ideas, or the sense but not the reference, or finally, the reference as well. With respect to the first level, it is to be noted that, on account of the uncertain connection of ideas with words, a difference may hold for one person, which another does not find. The difference between a translation and the original text should properly not overstep the first level. To the possible differences here belong also the colouring and shading which poetic eloquence seeks to give to the sense. Such colouring and shading are not objective, and must be evoked by each hearer and reader according to the hints of the poet or the speaker.

I consider one example to substantiate the dual layer of translatability being evoked by Tagore, Benjamin and Frege. Tagore writes these lines: 'sethā singhadāre bāje din-abasāner raginī/jār murchonāi meshā e janmer jā kichu sundar.' Paraphrasing the idea, we can offer the following literal approximation: in the spiraling notes of the *raga* of day-end is mixed everything that is beautiful of this birth. The conception of a *raga* is culturally bound just as the meaning of, say, contrapuntal development can resonate only in the context of European art music. Given the chrono-sensitive nature of *ragas*, for the initiated the name of the oft-performed *Marwa* immediately arises when thinking of music for the moments when the day

is coming to an end. A whole universe of associations, musical and extra-musical, is contained in that name: *Marwa*.

The phrase 'din-abasāner raginī' rubs against the limits of translatability. Translational symmetry cannot be obtained at the surface level precisely because such symmetry cannot be found at the level of Tagore's 'associations', Benjamin's 'connotations' and Frege's 'colourings and shadings', or what can be called the cultural depths of language. Post-modern approaches to the question of translation valorize this limit, whereas modernity we can recognize, thanks to postmodern interventions, effaces the limit. The effacement of the limit, through the mediation of a metalanguage, in postcolonial terms, is constitutive of translational violence.

III

How, then, is translation possible?

Cultural meaning that at least some of the time is culturally bound constitutes the deeper layer of the translational doublet. The sense of *Marwa* is a localized meaning in that it resists universalization through an act of translation. From a Lyotardian–Rortian perspective, the intensity of the local is such that any act of translation would cause violence to the word, the sentence, the text. In Spivak's reckoning, as noted earlier, the uncritical universalization through the hegemonic deployment of a metalanguage implicit in many acts of translation, especially from postcolonial languages to metropolitan languages, produces a leveling effect. The postcolonial corrective to what I am dubbing the Lyotardian view concerning the impossibility of translation calls for (at least in Spivak) an intimate access to the cultural codes embedded in the original text. Thus we may add the postcolonial posture to the earlier voices calling for a double-decked ontology of the text. Why access culture if the surface is sufficient? Translation of textual surfaces through the sieve of a legitimating metalanguage (or narrative) leads precisely to the symptom of constituting false identities across textual regions.

The possibility of translation hinges on the condition that translation of culture is causally anterior to translation of language. Just as linguistic translation ranges over words, cultural translation summons translational objects where 'object' stands in for any variable that gathers its meaning from its embedded cultural use in the deeper sense of a Heideggerian *zuhanden*. Heidegger (1971) perceived with great force that an ontology founded on phenomenological description cannot see objects merely as things but must call into presence the expanding circle of cultural and existential significance. Thus the

peasant shoes painted by Van Gogh emerge as existential intensities and not merely as material things (*vorhanden*). Cultural translation is effected when these intensities develop in zones of cultural alterities. Returning to the earlier musical example, the translatability of *Marwa* hinges upon the cultivation of its existential intensity in the cultural base of the target language. The limits of translation cannot be obliterated but surely can be pushed backwards in the cross-cultural fertilization of translational objects.

Foucault once characterized modernity in terms of an *attitude*, a mode of a cultural self-representation originating in the enlightenment; similarly, Lyotard's postmodern incredulity can only be deciphered as an *attitude* defining a culture's self-representation (Rabinow, 1984). The normative and strategic directions of both these cultural attitudes make translation impossible. The possibility of translation receives care within a cultural attitude that resists alterity from being reified in a final closure. Such an attitude constructs a mode of cultural being that continuously seeks to narrow the gap between the two layers of the translational doublet. It must be noted that the seeking of unity in translational terms does not amount to the making of hybrid forms (fusion music is an example) but wants to preserve difference and *as difference* disturb the reified identities of modernity. However, again in translational terms, disturbance through the welcoming of difference, unlike postmodern rupture, in making for the possibility of translation serves the cause of unity without using the services of a metalinguistic hegemon. The gap between language and culture can perhaps never be closed in the folds of a utopia making translation completely transparent. The translational attitude, perched between the modern and the postmodern, can, nonetheless, answer the Kantian question, as my account has sketched, of how translation is possible. Kant's respect for the epistemic triad and his transcendental justification of that respect concern the edifice of *theoretical* reason. The critique of translation, considering its limit and scope, implicates the *normative* reaches of culture. Thus, understandably, the translational attitude forms the rudiments of a critique of culture and addresses what I (2002) have elsewhere called an ethics of translation. Indeed, the translational attitude can be developed as an ethical trope of globalization, but that is the matter for another moment of reflection.

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Translation: Politics and Ethics

Couze Venn

Keywords colonization, heterogeneity, indebtedness, monolingualism, untranslatability

Today the problem of translation has acquired a new urgency because of the homogenizing ambition of Anglo-American as universal language and because of the systematic attempt by neoliberal discourse to colonize every socio-economic, administrative and cultural practice through the re-transcription of these practices into the idiom of neoliberalism. This translation-as-colonization opens them to a restructuring – or ‘modernization’ and ‘liberalization’ in the rhetoric of neoliberal governance – dictated by a corporate, market logic. The effect is the institution of a monolingualism that abolishes the possibility of alternative worlds for it abolishes the distinctions and differences that mark these practices with regard to the values they inscribe and the alternative socialities they enact. A wider questioning about translation emerges here, in addition to the problems associated with translation-as-creolization across cultures occasioned by migration and diasporic displacements. It relates to the language and the discursive spaces in which can be articulated a challenge to such imperial moves.

It was in 1979 at a conference in Montreal, this place that repeats itself as French-but-not-quite, that Derrida developed a number of points about translation that have come to occupy a central place in the debates about signifying practice. Quebec was a fitting location for this questioning, since it has been for a considerable time the site of cultures in translation – French, British, Inuit, American – multiply inscribed in colonialism, and thus marked by the weight of history and the disjunct spatiotemporalities that attach to language when questions of identity, authority, authenticity and the proper surface in relation to power differentials. The already well recognized problems that attach to translation, particularly the necessity to translate if one is to speak to the other at all, thus the question of address, set against the fact of incipient untranslatability, and issues concerning (counter)appropriation, loss, survival and heterogeneity, acquire a sharpness when located in the context of unequal authority to speak and to name. Colonial subjugation relies on the violence of interdicts and the sovereignty of the law of the mightier to impose its language;

but the imposition of a common tongue which subjugation decrees is undermined by the fundamental inadequacy or inappropriateness of any register to fully render the phenomenal and experiential world; something of the world remains untranslatable and unrepresentable, harbouring alterity and testifying to what exceeds representation.

This is admirably expressed in Friel’s (1981) *Translations* dealing with the British effort to replace Gaelic place names in Ireland in the 19th century with the approximations required by the standardized English of colonial administration, an exercise of dispossession that deprives the people not only of a cultural space and its language but of the commonality of a shared memory inscribed and encrypted, that is, inscripted, in the language. As with other instances of linguistic dispossession in the period of occidental imperialism, the Gaelic proper names, it transpires, are laden with their own narratives of place and deeds, ‘mythologies of fantasy and hope and self-deception – a syntax opulent with tomorrows . . . [a] response to mud cabins and a diet of potatoes . . . to . . . inevitabilities’ (1981: 42). For the English, in the figure of the cartographer Lancey, it was a matter of remaking the land as colonial territory, for the Irish it was a question of surviving colonial re-territorialization and of finding a new idiom in which to preserve the ‘images of the past embodied in language’ (1981: 66). In the play, the failure by the colonial agents to properly translate any of the Gaelic names arises from an underlying disrespect for or ignorance of the scene in which proper names erupt as trace. It is also of course a matter about the addressee in translation, and thus about the recognition of the other in language: to whom is the message directed? What does one want the addressee to hear? How does one make visible or audible what is invisible or inaudible in the original? Whose language claims the right to name? These different stakes in translation oblige one to recognize the effects of power, more so today when ‘certain people must yield to the homogeneity of dominant languages. They must learn the language of the masters, of capital and machines; they must lose their idiom in order to survive or live better’ (Derrida, 1996: 30). In the example I have signalled, the differend separating the two sides exemplarily demonstrates the danger when translation takes place across power differentials, for the effort to translate proper names

‘inscribes the scene of translation within a scene of inheritance and a space which is precisely that of the genealogy of proper names, of the family, the law, indebtedness’ (Derrida, 1988: 104).

My intervention aims to tease out a number of issues starting with this question of the proper name. The definition that Derrida gives in a parenthesis in *Freud’s Legacy* will indicate the approach I will pursue; he says ‘any signified whose signifier cannot vary or be translated into another signifier without a loss of signification induces a proper name effect’ (Derrida, 1987: 312). Yet the proper name – Auschwitz, Rwanda, Biko – demands both that it be translated, that is, it demands recognition and a response, and yet that it remains untranslatable, that is, that its singularity as event or as the who be respected. The proper name conceals the trace of the untranslatable even as it calls out for a translation that allows it to become visible and thus acknowledged. Indebtedness requires this visibility of the trace. For instance Auschwitz, while it resonates with Hiroshima at the metaphorical level, cannot substitute for it: both proper names demand that their particularity be respected, precisely because the point of view of indebtedness and responsibility underline the particularity of the event even as it judges it according to universal ethical rules. The requirement of both translatability and untranslatability that the proper name makes highlights the dilemma at the heart of translation; this is complicated by the fact that every proper name is multiply inscribed in a variety of narratives and a spatiality that circumscribe its meaning. For example, for cultural theory and philosophy, Auschwitz has become spliced into discourses about modernity and the postmodern so that, as signifier, it now occupies a place determined by the mass of connotations that have accumulated in its wake. In the thought of Lyotard, it stands for the catastrophic sign of the failure of the Enlightenment’s ethical project, and it announces the birth of the postmodern (although the latter is itself modernity’s child), while for the Jews it signals the Shoah and the threshold of a different destiny still being played out. Translation thus requires a hermeneutics, of the unsaid as much as of the already-said, informed by a genealogy of the concept.

The dilemma brings to light also the undecidable character in translation, for every translation sets out with the ideal of perfect translatability, thus with the assumption of a universal language into which every particularity can be transposed. Yet it flounders because the difference between the particular and the universal repeats the differences between cultures, traditions, biographies, dialects, registers and codes that resist transposi-

tion from one language or register to another, from one culture or tradition to another. It is well to bear in mind too that the seeming purity of national languages itself conceals the polyglot, heterogeneous and diasporic character of all languages. Equally, national languages, in their emergence alongside the birth of the nation-state, attempt to erase or marginalize differences that arise from class, gender, ethnic, and regional conflicts and inequalities. Translation disturbs, or ought to disturb, the underlying reality that these differences signal, for they occupy the place of the unconscious of every language.

To the multiplicity of languages and registers one must add the fact that in any case the signified exceeds the signifier, since every encoding loses something of the referent even as it adds a whole culture to the signified. For instance, when it is a matter of expressing the experiential, one needs to recognize that a fundamental dimension of identity like the sense of place and belonging involves an intricate mix of sounds, smells, landscapes, social space and feelings that defies adequate expression in any one register, including the linguistic form. It is worth pointing out in this respect the relative neglect of the sonic/acoustic, touch, and other sensory registers that graphocentrism has induced when it comes to the problematic of the adequate expression of one’s experience of being-in-the-world, with implications for the kinds of signifying practices that would communicate that experience. The predominance of teletchnologies today presents its own problems. Cross-cultural translation comes up against this range of obstacles when it is a matter of fidelity to the locatedness of cultures and their ‘*lieux de memoire*’ (Nora, 1984), pointing once more to what is untranslatable and to an immanent undecidability in translation. By the same token, and also for the reasons I have noted above, the problem of translation opens every language to a series of disruption regarding its claim to speak for a consensual community: at the level of national languages, at the level of a universal language, and in terms of the authorizing processes that sanction the proper and the adequate. A politics of translation thus appears, to add to the ethical question about indebtedness and responsibility.

My final remark follows from the last point; it pertains to the models of translation that would respect the ethical implication in the desire to speak to the other that translation makes. Ricoeur (1996: 12), examining the problem from the point of view of the ‘ongoing debate between the right to universality and the demand of historical difference’, suggests three models: that of linguistic hospitality that plays host to the other’s culture, that of the exchange of memories in which the

translator takes responsibility 'in imagination and in sympathy, for the story of the other' (1996: 7), and the model of (a non-forgetful) forgiveness. The first involves the ability or willingness to dwell in two languages in order to effect a transference across the ethical and spiritual categories of the other/the addressee; the second calls for ways of narrating and remembering that reconfigure the past of narrator and addressee with the aim of giving new life to the 'unfulfilled future' buried in the past of every culture that an ethical telling recognizes and revives; a labour of remembering (to invoke Toni Morrison's term) is involved here akin to a psychoanalytic working through. The third model responds to suffering, one's own and the other's, but by proceeding from the suffering of others, so that one imagines 'the suffering of others before re-examining one's own' (1996: 9); this means that 'the work of forgiveness must be grafted on to the work of memory in the language of narration' (1996: 11). Underlying Ricoeur's discussion is the necessity to overcome the repetition of violence that has afflicted the history of encounters within Europe; clearly the same concern applies to encounters and exchanges between Euro-America and the rest of the world, and between new ethnicized publics reconstituted from the legacy of previous colonialisms and subjugations. This repetition is stuck, on the one hand, in the disavowed knowledge of the suffering inflicted, and, on the other hand, because the rhetoric of the nation-state and of ethnic essentialism and egocentric philosophies of the subject

induce the forgetting of the fundamental heterogeneity of cultures and the heteronomous character of identities. It is clear that the ethical force in the translation ethos that a commitment to the reduction of suffering in the world motivates must challenge the totalizations and exclusions which monolingualism and monoculturalism produce, whether in the shape of neo-liberal colonization of the lifeworld or in the mimicry that the culture of new Empire breeds.

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Translation in China

Fan Jinghua

Keywords *Jieyongci* 借用词 loanword, *fanyi* 翻译 translation, *qujing* 取经 quest for the scriptures, *Xixue* 西学 Western learning

The translation of texts to Chinese has helped to configure Chinese cultural identities throughout history, and will continue to reconfigure the future of Chinese popular and intellectual culture, perhaps to an extent that has found no equal in the West. Contemporary researchers have customarily divided translation practices into four or five peak periods, each of which has emphasized different genres of writing. These peaks are Buddhist scriptural translations

from around the second century to the 11th century, Jesuitical-Protestant translations from the late 16th century to the early 18th century, 'Western learning' translations from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century, and fiction translations at the turn of the 20th century, in addition to the current translation of Western social sciences starting in the 1980s.

The cultural effects of translations during these periods function differently, especially in the politico-ethical significance for the translator, the text and the context (referring respectively to the mediator, the message and reception/effects). Research needs to be done on the extent to which the historicities of the socio-cultural context determine which translations are enacted, and how

they operate, and the degree to which the tangible and symbolic presence of the translator and the author function in the reception of the translation. This presence, which may be considered to be symbolic when the translator can preface or footnote, and tangible when the translator can orally interpret the original texts, is of great significance in ‘empowering’ or elucidating the text in the target language.

The early translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese was mostly done by local religious practitioners, whose presence should be seen as a form of the message embodiment, as both author and on-site interpreters of the texts. In the sense that they made every effort to utilize expressions from Taoism to interpolate Buddhist scriptures and integrate the religion into Chinese culture, they were double betrayers due to their in-between cultural position. This double betrayal is argued to have established Chinese Buddhism (in contrast to Buddhism in China), from which Zen was developed. The more ‘faithful’ Sanskrit-loaded translation by Xuan Zang (602–664 AD) came later at a time when the cultural ‘capacity of tolerance’ and confidence would subject any foreign cultural influx to domestication and naturalization, or at least allow the translated texts to be rendered into what Benjamin termed as *die reine Sprache*.

The ambivalent function of the translators is privileged in the figure of Xuan Zang, whose monastic name Tripitaka might be literally translated as ‘Buddhist scripture oeuvre’. While the configuring function of Buddhism in Chinese cultural identities cannot be overestimated, Buddhism has not reached a hegemonic status in Chinese thought and intellectual history, no matter how well it has been acculturated and incorporated. Since Xuan Zang’s journey to ‘the West’, which was popularized and secularized later in the novel *A Pilgrimage to the West (The Monkey King)* (Wu, 1965, 1977–1983), the ‘quest for the scriptures’ has come to mean ‘learning the way of accomplishment’, which may imply a voluntary effacement of subjecthood. This implication is found in various expressions in later periods, especially when China experienced politico-cultural crises, most notably in the late Qing dynasty and post-Mao period when conservative reformism and radical Westernization kinked in a dead knot.

In contrast to that of Buddhist texts, the translation of Christian texts did not share the same fate. The presence of the missionary-translators, who were both interpreters and practitioners in the truest sense, did not achieve the status of the Buddhist practitioners, partly because of the cultural diffidence in the Ming-Qing Dynasty that crippled a fuller introjection of Christianity into

Chinese culture as a complementary way of life. Matteo Ricci, despite his personal charisma and the successfully appeasing manner of his practice, was essentially acclaimed as a translator of natural science texts (that seemed to be more urgently needed at that time in China) and as a translator of Chinese classics into Latin in the West.

Later in the 18th century, the declining national power reached an extent that intellectuals began to describe Chinese culture in terms of its inferiority. Some of these thinkers turned to the West, and later to Japan after the Meiji Restoration (1868–1912), for possible ways to restore the nation to its previous status. Again, translation became analogous to Xuan Zang’s ‘quest for the scriptures’, but this time the texts were mostly works of the social and natural sciences. This period of translation from the beginning had a very practical application, generally devoid of religious implications, whether of Buddhism or Christianity. The translators aimed primarily at the social elite, although the Enlightenment spirit was part of their motivation. The explication of terms was thus of great significance, since the translators’ absence from these texts (compared with religious works) demanded their intelligibility. This wave of translations might be said to have started the ‘modernization process’ of Chinese thought. But the fact that Yan Fu’s famous neologism for Huxley’s ‘theory of evolution’ eventually gave way to Japanese loanwords might be an indication that this Enlightenment period was essentially an incomplete project. Yan Fu’s three standards of translation (fidelity, sanity and elegance), which were in the spirit of scientific precision, were mostly applied to the translation of literary works of the early 20th century. The ‘modernization process’, above all, actualized a wholly new language, the vernacular Mandarin Chinese, whose valence was more apt for the scientific logic in the ‘West Learning’. In this sense, a new writing system had actually transcended the entailing debate over the role of ‘the scriptures’ or the foreign ways of accomplishment.

The dispute over the standards of translation can be seen as yet another evidence of the translatability of not only the language but also the culture that was integral to the scientific spirit and the social system that stood behind it. However, after the collapse of Imperial China, the need to resort to literary works to establish a modern Chinese language hijacked the impetus for the re-excavation of classic Chinese. The easily available Japanese kanji and other semantic loanwords, therefore, made classic Chinese literally obsolete. The subversive function of translation wrapped in the Enlightenment Project was carried forward after the Cultural Revolution period in Communist China. Since the

1980s the intellectual elites have been synchronously translating different schools of Western social thought, for a time rendering the Chinese thinkers 'muddled' or wavering in influence. With the increasing virtual (co-)presence or simulacrum of (co-)presence of the author and translator 'actualized' (for example by the prefacing author for Chinese versions and the translators' apprenticeship under Western eyes), translation in contemporary China is becoming an instrument for subverting the institutional and cultural power bases, and for struggling for discursive power. The current scene is also complicated by the mixture of the 'enlightenment project' with the 'subversion project', which is part of the hard-to-die 'revolution complex'. This situation is rendered even more complex in light of the faltering divisions between indigenous Chinese and exogenous Western thought, whether in terms of language or philosophy.

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Logic(s)

Bryan S. Turner

Abstract Logic is concerned with the design or structure of arguments. It describes the forms of valid argument and is concerned with the public presentation and reception of arguments. Hence it has a close connection with politics and the public sphere, and with rhetoric as the science of persuasion. Philosophers have analysed the objective conditions of validation, that is, the justifiability of assertions about the world. This quest for objective and scientific validity in argumentation about the nature of reality dominated much of the development of logic in the 20th century. Logical arguments are held to be successful as a result of the 'force of reason' rather than because one's opponents have been bribed or coerced. Logic involves the study of the abstract, deductive moves in argumentation rather than an empirical study of how actual arguments are conducted. However, there is also a tension between rhetoric and philosophy; Plato drew a clear distinction between knowledge and persuasion. Logic is intended to give security to the former. The historical drift of logic is towards abstraction, especially the use of mathematical forms of representation. The study of logic is an important component of any project on encyclopaedic knowledge, that is, with knowledge that circulates in the public sphere, but the globalization of culture has raised an important problem about the universalistic claims of (western) traditions of logic, namely, are there different forms of logical reasoning?

Keywords language, logical atomism, logical positivism, mathematics, rhetoric

On the Singularity of Logical Argument

The recognition of the public or indeed political character of the validation of argument immediately raises a question about the universality of valid forms of logic. In Max Weber's sociological studies of the conditions of modernity, a variety of social arrangements (rational law, a money economy, the autonomous city, an ascetic ethic and so forth) were held to differentiate occidental from oriental cultures. Although Weber did not undertake a study of logic, one can easily imagine a sociological account of the history of logic that showed how the science of the forms of valid argument contributed to the historical rationalization of western civilization. This reference to Weber's notion of rationality raises the problem of whether one requires a history of logic or logics. In classical Greece, early philosophical discussions of logic recognized logics as a plurality. There were different ways of reasoning, particularly between formal and substantive analysis. The western development of reasoning has been to reduce its inherent richness, that is, to reduce it to a singularity as in our use of the term 'logic'. This shift in meaning is one further reason for connecting this discussion with the historical sociology of Weber, because we can treat the history of logics as an example of the routinization of knowledge.

Historical accounts of western civilization typically start with an inquiry into its Greek origins. Logic, for Aristotle, was an aspect of this inquiry into *logos* (word, account or reason) whereby thought could arrive at the truth of being. *Logos* (plural *logoi*) or word, speech and reason had multiple meanings in Aristotle's philosophy; it signified rule or law, account or

explanation, reasoning and abstract theory, or measure as in musical scales. The cosmos could be known with some degree of certainty since there was an essential connection between mind and reality. This correspondence was first thought of in terms of making the individual mind into a mirror of the world-mind, whose thought processes amounted to, or emanated as, the structure of the cosmos. The *logos* was substantive, that is the logic of external reality, to which we could have access via a certain kind of introspection. Aristotle's logic shifted the ground by focusing on the formal categories and procedures of thought necessary for arriving at truth. His successors divided between those for whom Aristotle's philosophy was a distinctive part of philosophy, and those for whom it was merely an instrument (*organon*) of philosophy as a whole. The latter notion of logic as the handmaiden of philosophy prevailed in the Middle Ages. Francis Bacon (1561–1626) in his *New Organon* of 1620 (the expanded Latin version of *The Advancement of Learning*) followed this tradition, developing especially inductive reasoning, which had been present but underdeveloped in Aristotle's logic.

Logic as a substantive understanding of reality was revived in the Enlightenment, and received a powerful and influential statement in the philosophy of Hegel. In contemporary thought, the substantive dimension of logic has often been associated with historical-logical schemes of world history, often associated with Marxism, for example. In the modern period, however, logic as formal or instrumental reason has been the principal line of development, in which logic has been slowly submerged into or transformed by mathematics.

Ancient Greece

Martin Heidegger claimed that philosophy itself is an essentially Greek activity, the meaning of which cannot be detached from the language of ancient Greece. In *What is Philosophy?* Heidegger says that 'philosophy is Greek in its nature; Greek, in this instance, means that in origin the nature of philosophy is of such a kind that it first appropriated the Greek world, and only it, in order to unfold' (1989: 31). Heidegger's view was that pre-Socratic philosophy revealed the nature of Being, while modern language only represents and classifies it. Historical accounts of logic also typically start with Greek philosophy. The historical roots of logic are to be found in the formulation of the structures of argument by Aristotle and the Stoics. Aristotelian logic sought to replace the meaning of sentences as the guarantee of the validity of arguments with their underlying structures. The argument that 'All men are bipeds; Socrates is a biped; therefore Socrates is a man' has the logical form 'All As are members of category B; B belongs to C; therefore A belongs to all Cs.' Aristotelian logicians attempted to substitute the terms of an argument ('Socrates is a man') with letters or symbols in order to understand the validity of arguments independently from the terms that appear in the argument. Hence it is referred to as 'term logic'. The study of these syllogisms constituted the core of *Prior Analytics*. The logic of the Stoics is abstracted from sentences rather than terms, and it is consequently called a sentential logic.

Aristotle (384–322 BC) was a member of Plato's Academy for 20 years and later founded his own school at the Lyceum where his dialogues became famous as models of philosophical inquiry. Aristotle's corpus (1462 pages of Greek text) constitutes the remaining fragments of these Lyceum debates. Interest in Aristotle was renewed in the first century BC by Andronicus of Rhodes and subsequently many commentaries were written on Aristotle, the modern edition of which runs to 15,000 pages. These commentaries are the product of the Peripatetic school and the Neoplatonists between AD 200 and 600. The survival of Aristotelian logic and philosophy is attributed to Islamic philosophers who began translating Aristotle in the 9th century.

In the Islamic world, logic was also regarded as an *organon* or instrument to acquire knowledge. Islamic philosophers were particularly interested in the relationships between language and logic, given the dominance of the Arabic language in Islamic theological orthodoxy. They generally accepted the view that the syllogism was the foundation of logical validity. Western interpretations of Islamic philosophy and science tend, therefore, to regard Islamic thought as merely a conduit between ancient Greece and the Renaissance – a view expressed, for

example, in O’Leary’s *How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs* (1949). Islamic philosophers such as Al-Biruni, Farabi and Al-Khwarizmi made important contributions to mathematics and algebra, but the consensus among western historians such as the authors of *The Legacy of Islam* has been that ‘The Arabs are before all else the pupils of the Greeks’ (de Vaux, 1931: 376).

The Development of Western Logic

From the 12th century onwards, Aristotelian logic was an essential component of university training, because it was an important tool in the public disputations through which knowledge was transmitted. We cannot understand medieval logic separately from grammar and rhetoric. While Plato distinguished between rhetoric as an art of persuasion and philosophy as a quest for knowledge, the arts of public persuasion and the logical force of an argument are not easily separated. Medieval instruction depended crucially on the use of logic for rhetorical ends. Medieval instruction devised intellectual puzzles or *sophismata* that were designed to explore the weakness and limitations of formal logic. The language of instruction was Latin, which in medieval philosophy was treated as a purely technical language. It was through the grammatical properties of Latin that logicians explored *syncategoremata*, namely the effect on sense and reference resulting from the placement of such terms as ‘all’, ‘some’ or ‘of’.

Renaissance logic departed from the medieval tradition in developing a greater appreciation of the role of language in argument, namely a greater appreciation of rhetoric. Humanistic logic was less formal, being concerned to explore the role of logic in literature, history and biblical studies, but the study of logic remained central to the curriculum.

Modern logic has become closely associated with mathematics and as a result has become divorced from rhetoric and language philosophy. Modern logic has its origins in 17th- and 18th-century empirical science. Philosophers like Bacon and Descartes wanted to reform medieval logic by examining the connections between empirical research and logical arguments. From Locke onwards, philosophers attempted to explore the relationship between human cognitive faculties and empirical reality. Algebra and logical calculi were developed as means of examining logical structures. Newtonian mechanics had created a picture of the world as determined by a limited number of exact laws, such as the law of gravity. Newtonian physics gave a great impetus to the development of mathematics and logic as methods for describing the natural world, the aim being to formulate simple but precise logical laws similar to Newtonian mathematics.

Logic in the 19th and 20th centuries has drawn ever closer to mathematics and further away from rhetoric and ordinary language. This transition involved the demonstration that the justification of mathematical truths is accomplished without reference to perceptual information or intuition. In short, mathematical truths are logical, and logic does not require any knowledge of the world. Mathematical truths are deduced from logical first principles with the aid of logical inference. George Boole (1815–64) developed a formal language to express logical relations through a set of basic rules. His system was closely modelled on numerical algebra, and the development of his approach placed logical theory at the centre of computer design. Gottlob Frege (1848–1925) followed the Boolean tradition in separating logic from an empiricist tradition, and attempted to demonstrate that all mathematical operations are inferences from logic. Michel Dummett (1981) has argued that Frege is important because he transformed logic into a branch of mathematics, by making its procedures reliable and reproducible. He made it possible to approach logic without recourse to any prior philosophical substructure. These developments gave rise, for example, to ‘logical atomism’ in which philosophers like Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) attempted to explore the properties of a perfectly logical language made up of fundamental sentences (logical atoms) and their combinations. Logical positivism, which flourished in Vienna and Berlin, attempted to purge philosophical analysis of metaphysics by the application of the verifiability principle. Observation or experiment cannot verify theological and metaphysical claims, for example that God created the world, and hence all such claims are neither true nor false but simply meaningless. Metaphysical

propositions, like ethical or aesthetic statements, are primarily emotional rather than statements of fact.

Hegelianism

Logic from Aristotle to the 17th century was concerned with the public nature of argument, and hence it had close connections with rhetoric, politics and the public sphere. Logic from the 19th century was separated from the arts of public conduct and conjoined with science and mathematics. The aim was to purify logic of its dependence on social content, that is, of ordinary language. Logicians sought to develop artificial languages such as symbolic logic, truth-tables, set theory or propositional calculus.

One major alternative to this development was Hegelianism. G.W.F. Hegel (1770–1831) developed German idealism through the *Science of Logic* (*Wissenschaft der Logick*), which was published between 1812 and 1816 in his Nuremberg period and is also known as 'the Greater Logic'. In Hegel's system the unfolding of self-consciousness is the principle of historical development, and the historical development of reality is the unfolding of dialectic, the basic elements of which are contradiction, negation and overcoming. History is the overcoming (*Aufhebung*) of the present. Through this dialectical process, self-consciousness is realized through history and its culmination. Hegel's dialectic was critical in the formulation of Marx's dialectical materialism, in which social history is punctured by the revolutionary transformation of modes of production that are characterized by their internal contradictions. The revolutionary overthrow of capitalism was, for Marx, the realization of freedom through the contradictions of the economic and social processes of the capitalism mode of production. Following Hegel, the Asiatic mode of production described the static and non-contradictory character of Oriental despotism, whose overcoming required an external force, namely the ironic impact of western capitalism. Although Hegelian philosophy became unpopular as a consequence of the crisis of western Marxism, interest in Hegel has been revived through the phenomenological interpretation of Alexandre Kojève (1969) and the critical philosophy of Charles Taylor (1975). Hegelianism as a form of German idealism constitutes a major alternative to analytical philosophy as an approach to logic, and Hegelianism provides logic with a critical linkage to politics.

Logics outside the West

We have seen that Islamic philosophy is interpreted as merely a development of Aristotle. In a similar fashion, historians have claimed that logic in Japanese philosophy emerged only in the 20th century and was directed towards a dialectical logic in a Hegelian sense rather than to a symbolic system. The Japanese term for logic in this Hegelian sense is *ronri*, which refers to the principles of argument, and *ronrigaku* is a more common term for formal logic. Nishida Kitaro (1870–1945) and Tanabe Hajime (1885–1962) developed a dialectical logic that incorporated assumptions from traditional Japanese culture, but expressed them in a western paradigm of philosophical analysis. However, contemporary commentaries on the interaction between Japanese and European thought have demonstrated important connections between the Kyoto School and the south-western universities of Germany. The Japanese scholars who worked in Germany included Seiichi Hatano (1877–1950), Tanabe Hajime, Tetsuro Watsuji (1889–1960) and Shuzo Kuki (1888–1941). Although the late development of logic in Japan is indicative of Japanese dependence on the West, Heidegger disguised his appropriation of Buddhist ideas to express notions relating to death, nothingness and being in the development of *Being and Time* (1962). Heidegger, who wanted to claim that the German language was the true heir of Greek civilization, had to suppress any apparent reliance on or continuity with Japanese Buddhism (May, 1996; Parkes, 1987).

Similar issues have surrounded western interpretations of Chinese philosophy. It is claimed that they had a semantic theory but no logic. Western historians have confused logic with the theory of language, and inappropriately referred to the Chinese 'name school' as a school of

logicians. A concept picks out some aspect of reality and develops general names to designate classes of things. From these general terms, people develop agreements about ‘This is an X’ and ‘This is not an X’. From these oppositions, language develops modes of distinction and opposition. The word *bian* refers to ‘distinction/opposition’ and came eventually to refer to philosophical dispute.

A major school of Chinese philosophy (‘Mohism’) is associated with the philosopher Mo Tzu (479–438 BC) who challenged Confucianism. The later Mohist Canons from as late as the 3rd century BC developed analytical thought. The Canons were structured around four fields: discourse (or knowledge of the relationship between words and things); ethics (or knowledge of correct guides to action); science (or the knowledge of objects); and argumentation (or knowledge of the organization of names).

Confucianism recognized the political conflicts that might arise from disagreements about the conventions that determine how language should be properly used. Confucian philosophers like Xunzi and Han Feizi came to the conclusion that the state should suppress disagreements over language. Confusion over language resulted in political instability and immoral actions, and hence the ruler should control the use of language. The Emperor Qin, who was influenced by Han Feizi, carried out a radical policy to suppress disagreements, and as a result analytical philosophy was replaced by religion and scholasticism.

The Problem with Logic

From this brief sketch of the history of logic, we can isolate a series of questions that require further reflection. First, can logical arguments be wholly separated from meaning? Can form be wholly separated from contents? The empirical thrust of anthropological fieldwork and sociological inquiry has been to emphasize the context-dependent nature of thought, and in general to promote cultural relativism. Contemporary anthropology has rejected the notion that the thought of ‘primitive’ people, especially so-called magical beliefs, is irrational or that the ‘primitive mind’ was incapable of logical reasoning. The fieldwork of anthropologists recognized a practical distinction between magical, religious and technical beliefs and practices. The idea of a neutral or scientific language of pure symbolic formalism runs against the empirical findings of ethnography. From an anthropological perspective, the triumph of symbolic logic can only be achieved in the form of tautology. This tension between the natural languages of the social world and the artificial language of symbolic logic is well illustrated by the differences in the work of the early and late Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951). In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) he adhered to logical atomism, and argued that philosophy can resolve the problems of our everyday understanding by breaking meaning down into logical atoms. Logicians in this mode tend to regard the beliefs and actions of the everyday world as confused and mistaken. In his later work, Wittgenstein abandoned logical atomism and developed a theory of meaning in the *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) that is remarkably close to the sociology of language in which the meaning of sentences is dependent on social practices. Meanings cannot be detached from how language is used in particular situations. Wittgenstein’s rejection of the idea of a ‘private language’ is important for the sociological understanding of the practical functions of language in everyday life. Wittgenstein noted that formal logic (employing the calculus of truth-functions to propositions) had been primarily concerned with the analysis of indicative rather than imperative sentences. While the former (‘This grass lawn belongs to the university’) may be true or false, imperatives (‘Get off the grass!’) are appropriate or inappropriate, effective or ineffective, rather than true or false. To understand the functions of language, one needs to attend to the structure of social groups rather than the logical properties of sentences.

For example, there is a logical argument that if one is prepared to accept a contradiction, one might accept a nonsensical conclusion. If you accept ‘p and not p’, then you might as well accept ‘the cow jumped over the moon’. In logic, one should not be willing to believe that ‘it is snowing and it is not snowing’. However, we might as anthropologists discover an Eskimo community in which there are many terms for ‘snow’ that distinguish subtle variations in the

quality of snow (in terms of its hardness, coldness and composition). Perhaps an Eskimo could without contradiction believe that 'it is snowing (of type x)' and 'it is not snowing (of type y)'. The logical character of 'p and not p' will depend on its ethnographic context and its meaningful contents. This issue was brought out famously in Wittgenstein's observations in the *Philosophical Investigations* on the different types of handles that one might find in a locomotive cabin, all of which looked like handles but had very different functions and uses.

Second, from a sociological perspective we might ask whether other human societies are logical. Many of the historical accounts of logic treat logical thought as a peculiarity of the West. In this respect, histories of logic often show some parallels with the Orientalism of Weberian sociology in promoting the uniqueness of Greek origins, the general dominance of the legacy of Aristotle, the failure of Oriental societies to develop a science of logic, and the suppression of analytical thought in the development of 'Oriental Despotism'. We might also approach this historical problem from the perspective of debates in anthropology about the relationship between magic, science and religion in other cultures. Are other systems or mentalities genuinely irrational or simply non-rational? The research of Bronislaw Malinowski in *Magic, Science and Religion* (1948) showed that the Trobriand Islanders made a clear distinction between the practical knowledge required to build canoes and the magical practices that were employed in situations of risk and uncertainty. Magical beliefs were not philosophical mistakes; they were practical responses to uncertainty.

In contemporary anthropology and sociology, there has been a general reluctance to accept the ethnocentric bias of earlier explanations from 19th-century ethnography. It is often held that, when understood in their context, apparently absurd or inconsistent views are intelligible. The famous illustration is from Edward Evans-Pritchard, who argued that the proposition 'cockatoos are twins' makes sense when we interpret it as an effort to legitimate the traditional practice of killing twins. Evans-Pritchard (1965: 111) came to argue that concentrating on the origins or nature of (magical) beliefs was somewhat pointless. The issue was to understand beliefs in relation to other institutions and beliefs. Some anthropologists, however, have argued that this form of contextualism is too charitable, because it means that nobody can ever be irrational. Ernest Gellner (1970) argued that functionalism ('all beliefs make sense in their context') prevents anthropology from developing a critical reflection on contradictions in society. One might conclude from this debate that (a) all societies must be able to share common logical assumptions, for example that contradictions undermine the validity of arguments, but (b) different societies have different formulations of logic that are related to the grammatical structures of their language. This debate may therefore require some solution to the issues raised by Noam Chomsky with respect to the existence of a universal grammar. However, Chomsky's language theory rests on the notion of a genetically determined language facility that is shared by all humans, but sociologists and anthropologists want to argue that language is a shared institution that works because there are commonly held norms that arise from socialization.

Finally, can logic be divorced from rhetoric? Because logic has become a feature of mathematics and computer science, its public role in dispute and persuasion has been abandoned, or at least obscured. Rhetoric, in the classical Aristotelian sense, is rarely taught in universities, and where it survives rhetoric is typically an aspect of the study of literature rather than politics. The connection between logic, rhetoric and the public sphere has been broken. The arts of persuasion in a postmodern, information society are associated with research on focus groups and the impact of the mass media on political opinion. The discipline of rhetoric in Athenian democracy has been replaced in modern society with the theory of public relations.

Conclusion: Enter Derrida

The analysis of logic and our historical understanding of it depend, therefore, on our understanding of the nature of language and its relationship to public persuasion. These issues have been central to the philosophy of Jacques Derrida, whose philosophical work is an attack on 'logocentrism'. The Greek notion of *logos* was both an account of the principles of validation and an analysis of the structure of reality by grasping its origin. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*

distinguished between the rational *logos* of the soul and the irrational desires of nature. Derrida has criticized the western philosophical tradition for making *logos* or speech the origin of truth, thereby privileging the phonetic over the graphic side of communication. Speech is the rational expression of a subject who is self-sufficiently rational and conscious, and hence logocentrism assumes that speech is a perfectly adequate vehicle for the expression of pre-existing truths whereas writing is merely an addition or supplement to speech. For example, the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (and subsequent structuralist philosophy) assumed a perfect relationship or correspondence between a sound (signifier) and an idea (signified). Derrida's philosophy came to be known as 'post-structuralism' and his method of deconstruction was employed to show that meaning is never transparent or 'self-present', but is always delayed or deferred. Meaning always requires further supplementation through an endless chain of deferred signifiers. Derrida's deconstructive strategies are designed to expose these supplements. Meaning can never be complete because it is, as it were, waiting for the next supplement.

Derrida (1978) has also developed the idea of 'phonocentrism' to describe an aspect of ethnocentrism in which western phonetic alphabets are given cultural and political privileges over against other systems, which has the consequence of making western *logos* triumphant over other systems of meaning. The growth of western science can be interpreted as a movement to suppress the reflexivity and creativity of language in order to understand nature without the confusion of the playfulness of language. Hence Francis Bacon, in developing an inductive empirical science, argued that scientific progress required 'plain and simple words' if the idols of the mind were to be banished. This quest for a simple transparent language has dominated much of western philosophy, culminating in the 20th century in the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle. Philosophers like A.J. Ayer (1936) held that the problems of philosophy were basically problems of language, and logic, as developed by Frege, was the method by which these problems could be solved. Truth has its origin in simple statements (or Bacon's plain and simple words) that can be traced back to empirical facts. Derrida's deconstruction of western *logos* attempts to show that logic cannot perform this task, because meaning, rather like letters in a postal system, is deferred in a chain of delivery.

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The Logic of Possible Worlds

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Keywords global culture, logic, world

For the pre-Socratic philosophers of ancient Greece knowledge was understood as the product of a primordial ‘harmony’ between an emergent inquiring mind and the wider cosmos in which it was embedded. Thus for the pre-Socratics, ‘knowing’ was always a matter of engagement with a deeper ontological process – the *logos* – and was, in large part, a *cosmological* form of engagement. If the early Greek philosophers had any idea of logic at all, it was very far removed from the highly mathematical notions of ‘correct reasoning’ and ‘truth-preserving calculation’ that have been dominant in modern western philosophy since the 19th century. In fact, Greek philosophy probably did not have an explicit and separate idea of ‘logic’ or ‘the logical’ in the modern senses of these terms, and if we can unearth a vague sense of either in ancient Greek philosophy we can see that logic was closer to something that we would now call ‘intuition’ and associated with what we would now term ‘ethics’. This was not only true of ancient Greek thought but also of Confucianism, where logic was understood as a form of thinking that allowed human intelligence to map the ‘intelligence of heaven’ and achieve spiritual enlightenment. Interestingly, this was also true for Roman Stoics, for whom logic was the means for attaining a state of *tranquillitas* (Hadot, 1995).

It is only with the emergence of mathematical science and its philosopher apologists in modern rationalism and empiricism that we begin to see the emergence of a purely technical, formal and calculative logic. Since the 19th century, and in Anglo-American analytic philosophy in particular, this technical logic has developed in two ways: into a *formal logic* that is perhaps closer to mathematics and computing than philosophy, and a *philosophical logic* that claims that the study of logic can reveal necessary truths about the nature of mind, meaning and the world. These two logics were not, and are not, entirely separate disciplines however; and innovations in formal logic have given rise to a repository of new logical techniques and artificial languages that, in turn, have allowed for metaphysically revisionist claims of various kinds. And in addition to the predicate calculus of the 19th century, analytic philosophers have gone

on to invent a wide array of new non-standard logics: *tensed logic*; *epistemic logic*; *doxastic logic*; *deontic logic* and – perhaps the most important of all – *modal logic*. These new formal logics have made possible innovations in philosophical logic and, *ipso facto*, have allowed new kinds of philosophical problem to be posed and old philosophical problems to be posed in new ways.

Modal logic is the logic of possibility, contingency and necessity. Interestingly for students of globality, modal logicians have created a technical trope to frame and test their logical intuitions: the idea of a *possible world*. In modal logic, the world as it currently exists is known as the *actual world*, and possible worlds are seen as modalities, or states, of the actual world. For some modal logicians, most notably David Lewis, possible worlds are seen as *real* in that they are understood to represent latent ontological possibilities existing in actuality (Lewis, 1986). In modal terms, there is a possible world where I can speak in Sanskrit, but not one where I am in two places at the same time. In this view, all possible worlds exist ‘logically side by side’, some worlds being logically accessible to each other, some not. Thus modal logic allows us to conceive of ‘the world’ as the totality of possible worlds existing in logical space.

This idea has its roots in the Enlightenment philosophy of Leibniz, but has been recently extensively developed by Saul Kripke and Hilary Putnam. In the discourse of possible worlds, an idea/statement is necessarily true – cannot not be true – if it is true in all possible worlds. Likewise, an idea/statement is possibly/contingently true if it is true in *at least one* possible world. For example, according to Kripke, there is a possible world in which Aristotle was not the teacher of Alexander – this being merely a contingent truth – but there is no possible world in which Aristotle is not the person that he is: that is, where Aristotle is not Aristotle (Kripke, 1984).

Thus modal reasoning has been used to argue for a kind of biological essentialism. According to Kripke, in every possible world in which a particular person exists, that person is essentially related to the sperm and ovum from which they were conceived. Thus, in Kripke’s view, there is no possible world in which any person has a different genetic makeup from the one they now have. If they did, they would not be the person that they are. Putnam has used similar modal arguments to put forward a kind of scientific

essentialism where the essences of substances are given by their chemical composition. Thus, for Putnam, the fact that water = H₂O is true in all possible worlds in which water exists, and hence is a necessary truth about water (and so modal reasoning, in this case, demonstrates the ‘truth’ of scientific realism).

Modal logic has thus resurrected the mediaeval notion that there are *de re* necessities (necessary properties of things). This represents something of a revival of metaphysics, especially Aristotelianism, in contemporary analytic philosophy, and runs counter to the Enlightenment doctrine – typified by Hume’s philosophy – that necessity is ‘all in the mind’. However, the idea of possible worlds may have other, less metaphysical, uses. For if we accept that the idea of a world is never simply a logical notion but always a cultural and a historical one, then one way of conceiving the conceptual terrain of global culture is to see it as grounded in a set of interlinking possible worlds – some of which are ‘accessible’ from worlds geographically and/or culturally adjacent to them, some of which are not.

If the epistemology of global culture is conceived as requiring a cultural-ontological mapping of the interrelations between possible worlds, then the problems involved in understanding the architectonics of global knowledge can be stated somewhat differently: is there a possible

cultural world ‘without logic’? When conceived anthropologically the answer is probably ‘yes’. But can there be a reflexive theoretical understanding of world-knowledge without an organizing logic? If we equate an understanding of world-knowledge with its conceptual mapping, then we must concede that some organizing logic is necessary. Thus logic, as a normative standard for thinking about thinking, may retain its status as a cognitive necessity in global contexts – even though we may be forced to accept that the *topos* of conceptual encounter, wrought by the global flow and counter-flow of ideas between accessible cultural worlds, will, in time, give rise to new logics.

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The Religious Roots of Mathematics

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Keywords Buddhist logic, Jaina logic, logic and culture, mathematics, quantum logic

Present-day science relies upon mathematics. And mathematics has always been closely connected with religious beliefs in the West. Thus, Plato, in his *Republic*, advocates the teaching of mathematics for its beneficial effects on the soul, and expressly not for its practical applications. (For Plato’s thought that ‘geometry will draw the soul towards truth’, see *Republic* VII, 527, in Plato, 1996.) Likewise, Socrates’ demonstration of the slave boy’s intrinsic knowledge of geometry was explicitly intended by Socrates to prove the existence of the soul, and how its recollections could be elicited by a philosopher acting as a midwife (Plato, *Meno* 179–80, in Plato, 1996).

Proclus, the alleged source of the single vague remark that gave rise to the strong rumours about the existence of ‘Euclid’, explicitly asserts in his commentary on the *Elements* that the real function of mathematics is to turn the attention of the student inward, towards his soul, and thus make him realize universal oneness – hence most of the propositions in the *Elements* are about equality of apparently dissimilar things. (Proclus’ explanation of the etymology of the word ‘mathematics’ as the science of learning, or the science of the soul, is at the end of his Prologue, part 1, in Proclus, 1970.)

These beliefs about mathematics were so strong a force in Islamic rational theology that even staunch opponents like al Ghazali allowed that even God was bound by the laws of logic. This concession was seized upon not only by al Ghazali’s opponent Ibn Rushd (Averröes) but also by the school-men who inherited his legacy, and

whose trivial curriculum did not include practical mathematics (until Clavius introduced it in the Jesuit mathematical syllabus *c.* 1570). Accordingly, Christian rational theologians regarded mathematics not as a means of practical calculation but as teaching a ‘universal’ means of argument and proof aimed at those who did not accept an appeal to their scriptures as a means of proof. They also accepted al Ghazali’s contention that the empirical world had to be contingent to allow for the creation of the world by God – although they denied his belief in continuous creation, held also by the Dunsmen, whom they labelled dunces, and subscribed instead to the belief in one-time creation.

It is against this theological background that western thought reached the peculiar conclusion that only metaphysical procedures (like logical deduction) can incorporate necessary truth (truth valid in all possible worlds, truth that binds God), though any empirically based truth must remain forever contingent (true in only some possible worlds, truth not binding on God).

In present-day (formal) mathematics, the locus of this belief in necessary truth has been shifted from theorems to mathematical proof, regarded as completely divorced from the empirical. That is, according to formal mathematics, even though neither the axioms nor the theorems of a formal theory incorporate any necessary truths, the *connection* between axioms and theorems does: that is, for a formal theory, there may be worlds in which its axioms are false, and worlds in which its theorems are false, but any world in which the axioms are true is a world in which the theorems are true.

This is also the belief underlying Popper’s criterion of refutability (falsifiability), which supposed that any number of experiments could not verify a theory (since this process was inductive, and probabilities are not ampliative), while a single experiment could refute a theory. The point here is not merely that the process of refutation is also inductive (as I have pointed out earlier), but that refutation is believed to refute the physical hypotheses underlying the physical theory, rather than the mathematics that connects the physical hypothesis to the empirical conclusion. If mathematical proof does not represent certain or necessary truth, and if it were to be accepted that mathematical proof is also fallible (even when correct), there is no basis for this belief, for our actual world may happen to be the world in which the physical hypotheses of the theory are true, but its conclusions are false.

The completely cultural nature of the belief that metaphysics is somehow superior to physics,

that deduction incorporates certain or necessary truth, becomes crystal clear the moment one turns towards Buddhism or Jainism. Both use logics that are different from the logic culturally assumed in western thought. Therefore the inferences drawn using these logics will be different from the inferences drawn using two-valued logic, e.g. many proofs by contradiction would fail in Buddhist or Jaina logic. (The Buddha’s use of the logic of four alternatives is in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The very readable English translation by Maurice Walshe is not so clear on this point, and neither is the older English translation by T.W. Rhys Davids.) An interesting (but not necessarily correct) interpretation of the Jain logic of *Syādavada* is provided by J.B.S. Haldane’s ‘The Syadavada System of Predication’ (1957; for more detail see Raju, 2003).

But what decides the nature of logic to use? If decisions about logic are purely cultural, why should one use one logic rather than another? In any case, it is hard to understand how cultural decisions can be regarded as infallible! Both Buddhism and Jainism, like *all* other Indian schools of thought, incidentally, accept the empirically manifest (*pratyaksa*) as the first means of proof, while also accepting it as fallible. Therefore, if, on the other hand, decisions regarding logic are empirical (and based on beliefs about the nature of time), they are bound to be inductive, and fallible. In either case, deduction turns out to be more fallible than induction.

The incorrect belief that deductive inference, divorced from the empirical, represents certain truth, provides an important example of how deep-seated cultural assumptions are woven into the *content* of present-day mathematics, scientific theories, and also the philosophy of mathematics and science. Indian mathematics, by contrast, permitted the use of empirical procedures, and aimed towards practical calculation rather than claims of a universal and necessary truth; however, it is, on that ground, deemed not to be mathematics at all. (In fact, curiously, it is deemed to be neither mathematics nor physics!)

These cultural assumptions also underlie present-day technology. For example, the above assumptions about the nature of logic are also built into the present-day theory of computation, and are incorporated in common computer chips. As shown by quantum computers, using the structured-time interpretation of quantum mechanics, an alternative technology of computation based on alternative logics, like Buddhist logic, is feasible. (For the structured-time interpretation of quantum mechanics, see Raju, 1993; for further amplification and formal proofs see Raju, 1994: ch. 6b.)

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Logic of Knowledge

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Keywords enunciation, knowledge, logic, mind, proposition, senses

Logic One

At least provisionally, where logic is concerned, it will pay to be precise. In the philosophical sense logic concerns the rules according to which we use our understanding in thought and knowledge, in so far as we can think of these rules independently of their application to objects of knowledge and experience. Logic concerns the *formal* conditions for the use of understanding without concern for the *matter* of knowledge or for practical ends. It concerns not what can be known but how knowledge in the abstract is possible. The science of logic therefore deals with necessary rules of thought rather than contingent ones. Necessary rules are those without which knowledge would not be possible. Contingent rules would apply in the practice of particular kinds of knowledge (e.g. mathematics, ethics or social sciences). So traditionally logic concerns the necessary rules for all thinking in general.

Logic emerges as a specific domain in western philosophy with Aristotle, whose concern was to identify connections and differences between all the domains of knowledge, establishing an analogical basis for the otherwise distinct fields of *episteme* (science), *praxis* (action) and *poiesis* (production). Aristotle inherited during his time as a member of Plato's academy the sense of a quest for the unification of all branches of knowledge and thus for what we now refer to as *Metaphysics*, the name (meaning 'after the physics') that later editions give to Aristotle's book on general philosophical questions. The *Metaphysics* examines the possibilities of thought thinking itself in abstraction and it offers a technical consideration of beings qua being, thus anticipating modern philosophy's rediscovery of fundamental ontology, particularly in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*, which takes Aristotle as its starting point. Furthermore, Aristotle's contributions to the systematic development of a science of logic, in the *Prior* and the *Posterior Analytics* and the *Topics*, help to bring this project about by establishing the logical structure of knowledge and its conditions of possibility. The *Prior Analytics*, for instance, details the conditions according to which one can reason from

general premises to conclusions (the syllogism as the form for a deduction) or from particular cases to general knowledge (reasoning from particulars, or induction).

In a modern development, René Descartes establishes a strict distinction between logical operations of the mind and what he understands as the *mechanics* of sense perception. The distinction is based on the difference between *res cogitans* (intelligible things, or ideas) and *res extensa* (bodies and sensations). Mechanics can explain the movements and functions of bodies, including those of animals and machines and all the operations that occur in humans that do not require reason. For animals, machines and humans the world is a sensible screen of fleeting phenomena that drift across the frame of the gaze, a potential infinity of shapes. For humans alone, though, this potential infinity especially characterizes the life of the mind. Knowledge is constituted by an abstract geometrical power that is infinitely capable of replacing sensible impressions with abstract figures. This is the power of the *Cogito*, the 'I think', which cannot be known by analogy because it already just *is* the power of analogy: it is the principle of substitution per se and functions through its little letters, *p*, *q*, *a*, *b*, and is reminiscent of the classical chiasmus, the subject 'X'.

Descartes's establishment of what is in effect a semio-logical universe for rational subjects implies a profound qualitative distinction between the logical mind and the passionate senses. Pierre Gassendi in his 'Objections' to the *Meditations* takes Descartes's method of doubting the senses literally; he complains that while the innate force of understanding does have an essential place in knowledge, there is no need to be distrustful of the senses. On the contrary, he argues, sense-experience must be taken as the criterion of truth on which all judgements in knowledge should be based. Gassendi reserves for logic these functions: forming clear ideas; clarifying propositions; making inferences; and organizing thoughts. The combined values of coherence and clarity form the art of clear thinking and can thus be applied to any branch of knowledge. The nascent empiricism in Gassendi's logic, especially in his response to what he reads as an unreasonable distrust of the senses, may be compared with counter-rationalist trends that emerge remarkably often in philosophy throughout world history (e.g. in Chinese as well as in Indian philosophy).

A radical alternative to classical logic would not be discovered in a particularly non-western logic, if logic is understood as having to do with the formal rules of thought. Various *uses* of logical reasoning are suggestive of deep cultural,

sociological and institutional differences, but insofar as logic remains wedded to the form of the proposition (the phrase, the sentence, the statement, the relationship between major and minor premises, the conclusion), and so long as the proposition remains reducible to a symbolic logic of operators (e.g. if *p* then *q*), then its relation to knowledge – where applicable – remains restricted to the work of predication and the truth of correspondence. Modern symbolic logic indeed represents a considerable development of this sphere with an undeniably global reach.

Logic Two

An alternative logic does emerge, however, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the wake of several diverse cultural strands, including: the French avant-garde; Martin Heidegger's revision of phenomenology; psychoanalytic experiment; and the structuralism inspired by the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure, for instance, shows how language can be analysed according to two different poles, or axes, which relate to the difference between what he calls *parole* (the utterance or proposition) and *langue* (the language system). On the syntagmatic axis are found the visible or audible elements of the utterance itself. On the paradigmatic axis the utterance remains tied to and governed by the system out of which it is generated.

To the distinction between *langue* and *parole* there corresponds a further distinction between the subject of the *énonciation* (the exercise of language) and the subject of the *énoncé* (the statement made). Traditional logic would be restricted to operations at the level of the statement, to concerns with sense and reference, truth and falsity, and to what attributes or qualities are predicated of what subject. For instance the statement 'this table is green' perhaps predicates some actually existing piece of furniture with a green colour and can thus be tested against the actually existing table for truth or falsity. The subject of the statement is thus the subject of both the 'knowing' and the 'knowledge'. The table is green and I know that this is true.

A shift of emphasis onto the mode of *enunciation*, away from merely what is being said, would instead look at how, by saying it, the speaker is constituted institutionally in some way or another according to value and status. Focus shifts to the *performance* or the *practice* of speaking in *this* way or *that* – the role it plays in constituting, perpetuating or even subverting a particular world of discourse. The speaker is no longer a subject with autonomous feelings and thoughts but, rather, is

constituted *as* this or that according to a repeatable modality of discourse.

In psychoanalytic theory the distinction can be mapped onto that between consciousness and the unconscious. Jacques Lacan argues that since the subject comes into being through language he does so through the *exercise* of signifying articulation. As soon as he comes into being he finds himself not as he *is* (what Lacan would call the truth of his being) but as he *imagines* himself to be – that is, as a representation (at the level of the statement). In order to discover the subject of the unconscious the analyst must focus on the level of enunciation (performance, expression) in order to recognize the *truth* of the subject in the articulation of language, its enunciation. So the relation between statement and enunciation (the said and the saying) actualizes the divided structure of the psychoanalytic subject and helps to clarify the difference between the imaginary (fixed and complete image of the person) and the symbolic (the constitutive function of language). The distinction between the symbolic and the imaginary thus maps onto that between *langue* and *parole*, on the vertical and horizontal axes respectively. Lacan also argues that metaphor and metonymy, also located on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes, correspond to Freud's accounts of the condensations and displacements of dreams. A displacement censors the latent content of a dream by substituting relatively harmless images or objects for those more likely to cause anxiety. Condensation merges images and places them together, confusing them.

Michel Foucault develops the notion of *enunciative modalities* in order to avoid evoking the synthetic unity of the rational subject of knowledge. In the influential *Archaeology of Knowledge*, he attempts to analyse a kind of historical or institutional a priori that would manifest the *dispersion* of subjectivity, which he distinguishes from both the notion of a subject as a rational authority, the knower, and to the notion of the subject as an empirical function of knowledge (Foucault, 1972: 54). *Discourse*, in that book, refers not to the phenomena of expression but to the 'field of regularity' that accounts for limited subject-positions and the relations between them (e.g. the relative positions of doctor and patient in medical discourse). This enunciative logic, no less than propositional logic, refers to formal conditions of possibility for knowledge but does so in a radically different way.

This is activated further by Deleuze and Guattari, who revise the distinction between the proposition and the enunciation to considerable effect via their mobilization of the notion of *assemblage* [*agencement*]. The distinction, dispersed throughout *Mille Plateaux* as an organizational

principle, between the so-called *agencements machiniques de désir* ['machinic assemblages of desire'] and *agencements collectives d'énonciation* ['collective assemblages of enunciation'] corresponds rather precisely, if perversely, to the distinction between *parole* and *langue*, though they obviously prefer Hjelmslev (and his notion of *process*) to Saussure (and the less fluid notion of *utterance*). The revision manifests a relationship of logic to knowledge that no longer operates between the rational subject and his concepts (on one side) and the world of objects (on the other). The assemblages of desire follow the horizontal axis of the syntagm (an assemblage of two or more verbal or non-verbal elements, connected metonymically). The assemblages of enunciation constitute elements on a vertical axis, connected metaphorically (some would say symbolically) by whatever synchronic system prevails at any time. Knowing (no longer *a knower*) is thus connected to the 'outside', to its objects, both syntagmatically and paradigmatically – is constituted as a part in the chain or *multiplicity* – as part to part (synecdoche or metonym) within the permanent hallucination of a whole.

The extension of this previously linguistic schema so that it includes *everything* – bodies, objects, individuals, collectives – has wide-ranging applications. It is important to see that it functions no less *as logic* than propositional or predicative logic does. The tension between modes of organization that favour the syntagm (identified by the *rhizome* in *Mille Plateaux*) and those that favour the paradigm (pattern, model, instance, for example, but identified as *tree* in *Mille Plateaux*) is restless but inevitable. Deleuze and Guattari's 'City/State' meditates on two different modes of centralized power, that of the town and that of the state. The town 'exists only as a function of circulation and of circuits . . . towns are points-circuits, which enter into counterpoint along horizontal lines', while the state operates 'by stratification: in other words, it forms a vertical, hierarchized aggregate that spans the horizontal lines in a dimension of depth' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1992: 199). The structure exactly replicates the interaction of the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes in structural linguistics, but unfolded in world historical contexts. If the town (rhizome, synecdoche, immanence) gets the upper hand in the end (a result that would seem to be the one many would want in their democratic and cosmopolitan opposition to empire), then Deleuze and Guattari have bad news: 'if it is the modern state that gives capitalism its models of realization, what is thus realized is an independent, worldwide axiomatic that is like a single city, megalopolis or "megamachine" of which the States are parts or

neighbourhoods' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1992: 199). According to Deleuze and Guattari, then, the logic of global knowledge is constituted in this way. Global knowledge would be a *function* of the capitalist (economic and military) *redistribution* of states, which have become neighbourhoods of the global city.

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Assemblage

George E. Marcus and Erkan Saka

Abstract This article shows how, in recent works of cultural analysis, the concept of 'assemblage' has been derived from key sources of theory and put to work to provide a structure-like surrogate to express certain prominent values of a modernist sensibility in the discourse of description and analysis. Assemblage is a sort of anti-structural concept that permits the researcher to speak of emergence, heterogeneity, the decentered and the ephemeral in nonetheless ordered social life. There are other related concepts, like collage, which have been used to give these values substance in research, but currently assemblage is enjoying a popularity perhaps because of the continuing fascination of the work of Deleuze and Guattari.

Keywords collage, Deleuze and Guattari, emergence, ethnography, heterogeneity, neologism

Certain influential tendencies of theory over the past two decades have encouraged a focus of attention in research about social process and cultural meaning on the ephemeral, the emergent, the evanescent, the decentered and the heterogeneous, all the while not giving up on a long-established commitment to account for the structured and systematic in social life. These essential characteristics of modernist perceptions of contemporary life in urban/industrial civilization, developed mostly in literature, art and architecture, first in the 19th century, and then much elaborated by early 20th-century avant-gardes in these fields, have finally entered into the more staid traditions of social theory that have regulated the disciplinary research programs and empirical investigations of the social sciences. This entry of modernist sensibility into empirical research traditions did not occur so much through epochal problems that researchers were having with macrotheories or grand narratives (e.g. Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Freud, Parsons). To be sure, these were indeed thoroughly challenged by the spread of and fashion for post-structuralist thinkers, for example, but the reception of such critiques by researchers was often on a level that did not transform the basic frameworks and habits of research. What really mattered has been how researchers in different methodological and disciplinary traditions (and here we will have anthropological ethnography primarily in mind) have operationalized their understandings of the bodies of theory that carried a modernist aesthetic, how they practice so-called theory of the 'middle range', in which they create concepts for their purposes by deriving them from the alternative authority of macro counter-discourses that invest in the emergent and the heterogeneous.

This process of derivation and invention of conceptual apparatuses for particular contemporary research programs of a modernist sensibility, which are still shaped by macrotheoretical traditions, but have abandoned the theories (or conceptual apparatuses) of the middle range that have served them, is a fascinating, relatively unstudied phenomenon. While not one of the prime or key terms of recent and past discourses of theory in the social sciences, like rights, agency, culture, practice, etc., assemblage in its uses here and there is actually keenly symptomatic of one of the major, if not the major, thrust of critical social and cultural theory toward the emphasis on the modernist focusing of attention on the always-emergent conditions

of the present. Pragmatically, it has become a concept that seemingly offers hope of a working access to the difficult and elusive objects that the modernist influenced sensibility to research in the contemporary, in ruptured relation to major traditions of social theory, has imagined. Assemblage is not the only such term in use. Collage, for example, is a closely related one. Sometimes writers create neologisms for the same work of revising theory for the purposes at hand. But within this predicament of the use of theory in research to materialize a modernist object of study, assemblage is a kind of distinctive choice of concept.

Assemblage is thus a resource with which to address in analysis and writing the modernist problem of the heterogeneous within the ephemeral, while preserving some concept of the structural so embedded in the enterprise of social science research. Indeed, the term itself in its material referent invests easily in the image of structure, but is nonetheless elusive. The time-space in which assemblage is imagined is inherently unstable and infused with movement and change. Assemblage thus seems structural, an object with the materiality and stability of the classic metaphors of structure, but the intent in its aesthetic uses is precisely to undermine such ideas of structure. It generates enduring puzzles about 'process' and 'relationship' rather than leading to systematic understandings of these tropes of classic social theory and the common discourse that it has shaped. It offers an odd, irregular, time-limited object for contemplation. Whoever employs it does so with a certain tension, balancing, and tentativeness where the contradictions between the ephemeral and the structural, and between the structural and the unstably heterogeneous create almost a nervous condition for analytic reason. Indeed, one might argue that once relaxed in terms of the heightened tension it promotes, assemblage becomes something more sober like actor-network theory. The latter is a conceptual apparatus somewhat more domesticated to classic theory, and thus easier to map, describe and hold stable. For the sake of mapping a time-space and stabilizing its dynamics for modeling, so to speak, it relaxes precisely those dimensions of modernist perceived realities that the use of the concept of assemblage retains.

There is an ambiguity in the referential frames in the uses of assemblage. It can refer to a subjective state of cognition and experience of society and culture in movement from a recent past toward a near future (the temporal span of emergence); or it can refer to objective relations, a material, structure-like formation, a describable product of emergent social conditions, a configuration of relationships among diverse sites and things. In contemporary anthropological or cultural studies writing, its reference can shift from the cognition or textual plan of the analyst and writer, to the attributed cognition/experience of the subject, to a perspective on the heterogeneity of a distinctive heterogeneity of a form or object in a phase of development or 'becoming'. And of course, if not explicitly delineated, it can refer to all of these at once.

In the sorting out of these overlaps in actual cases of the use of assemblage in creating the conceptual scaffolding of research material and experience, the specific cases of deployment of the term can be traced genealogically to either a generic and rather ideological appropriation of the term as a desired association with or inspirational connection to the art, architecture and literary spheres of its creation (see for example Seitz, 1961; Elderfield, 1992; Waldman, 1992), or else to a much more rigorous and exegetical derivation from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze primarily, see for example Deleuze and Parnet, 1987, Deleuze and Guattari, 2003, and esp. DeLanda, 2002). It is through the high theory appropriations of assemblage from modernist aesthetics by Deleuze and Guattari that virtually all substantive middle-range theory conceptual work that has employed assemblage in specific recent projects of research has in turn come. However, as expressed in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari see themselves as opening a radical or deviant current, primarily through Spinoza and Nietzsche, in relation to this modernist tradition.

The looser, more inspirational evocations of the ethos of the practice of assemblage from the aesthetic sphere have not been unimportant, but simply less substantive and less relevant if one wants to weigh the more intricate ways that the term has conceptually influenced the practice of research and analysis in fields like anthropology and cultural studies. Indeed, as an

ideological exemplar of modernist experimentation in conceiving the project of social and cultural research as well as its textual projects and writing strategies, in marking departures from standard genres (for anthropology, see Clifford and Marcus, 1986), the evocation of assemblage has been very important. In such writing and analytic strategies, there is often a presumption that the heterogeneous form of the text mimics or is homologous to the forms that the modernist subjects and objects of study take in the world. Assemblage is an experimental genre form that is thus organic to the contours of the object of study. This kind of experimental practice of assemblage, and the utopic hopes that it signified, was very characteristic of academic interdisciplinary writing during the 1980s and early 1990s, but is much less so now. At the time, I (Marcus) wrote of this trend of writing across a number of fields (as I saw it, a kind of text production pioneered in comparative literature departments and cultural studies programs and then absorbed into traditions of ethnographic writing) as the production of messy texts (Marcus, 1993). The work of scholarship as assemblage would have done as well, if not even better, in communicating the sensibility and hopes then in play.

Much more consequential for current research projects, however, are the derivations of uses of the concept of assemblage for the needs of middle-range theorizing within such projects by way of the specific influence of the works of Deleuze and Guattari. Manuel De Landa (2002) provides the most thorough interpretation of the technical, abstract and formal use of assemblage in the Deleuzian schema (we owe much of the following explanation to James Faubion). Assemblage is the source of emergent properties of what Deleuze and Guattari call machinic processes. Assemblage is a topological concept that designates the actualizations of the virtual causes or causal processes that are immanent in an open system of intensities that is under the influence of a force that is external (or heterogeneous) in relation to it. Assemblages are thus the causally productive (machinic) result of the intersection of two open systems, and their properties are emergent in the sense in which that concept is deployed in logic, that is, not part of, and so not foreseeable in light of, either one or the other system considered in isolation, but instead only discernible as a result of the intersection of both such systems. Specifically, Deleuze and Guattari's 'desiring machines' are assemblages, and it is in the nature of such machines to break down, evoking a principle of entropy. Assemblages are thus finite, but they have no specific or distinctive life-span; they do not have a specific temporality. Furthermore, assemblages have no essence (nor does anything else in Deleuze's universe). The assemblage is productive of difference (non-repetition). It is the ground and primary expression of all qualitative difference.

None of the derivations of assemblage from Deleuze and Guattari of which we are aware is based on such a technical and formal analysis of how this concept functions in their writing. Few in the social sciences who have found the modernist sensibilities embedded in the concepts that Deleuze and Guattari deploy for their purposes to be attractive have appreciated, understood or incorporated those purposes in their own. Rather, it has been the power and often beguiling attraction of Deleuze and Guattari's language that has encouraged the piecemeal appropriation of certain concepts for the remaking of middle-range theorizing that informs contemporary research projects. Certainly it has been Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of states of temporal instability as emergence, combined with the heterogeneous as a productive property of the interaction of open systems, which are key ideas packed into their notion of the assemblage, that has made the latter an attractive concept with which to work in expressing these values and states within the basic conceptual apparatuses across an array of contemporary research projects with a modernist sensibility, marked by concerns with delineating the becoming of new social and cultural formations. The idea of assemblage has been variably used in such projects to express something of the modernist condition of particular subjects and objects of study along the dimensions of the temporal, the material, the relational and the perceptual.

In sum, Deleuze and Guattari, in their use of assemblage as well as of the other concepts of their theoretical apparatus, mediate the two classic varieties of modernist thought: the playful and critically aesthetic (of the 'art and architecture' tradition of modernism) and the

formal and technical (of math, set theory, topology). The one indulges and even celebrates the intractably unpredictable and contingent in rapidly changing contemporary life; the other hopes for an understanding of the structural principles of order (and disorder) within the play of events and processes. These strands are evocatively condensed in the idea of assemblage and are indeed what gives the term power in its multiple borrowings in the work of bringing self-critiqued classic social theory to projects of contemporary research on culture. Assemblage, inspired by its specific use in Deleuze and Guattari, is thus a resource to preserve a mix of the aesthetic and the structural in the current sustained revival of modernist thought as an alternative, supplement or antidote to the dominance of classic traditions of European social theory.

As an index of the use of assemblage, the following are very brief renditions of works that we have encountered in just over the past two years (2003–4) that employ the notion of assemblage as part of their conceptual apparatus (and traceable to their engagement with Deleuze and Guattari as source).

1. *Anthropos Today* by Paul Rabinow (2003). In an ambitious effort to rethink the basic terms of ethnographic research based on his recent researches in science studies, Rabinow borrows assemblage from Deleuze and Guattari to constitute his object of study between more conceptually stable states of ‘problematization’ and ‘apparatus’ (Foucaultian concepts). As he says:

My recent anthropological inquiries have taken as their primary object ‘assemblages.’ Assemblages are secondary matrices from within which apparatuses emerge and become stabilized or transformed. Assemblages stand in a dependent but contingent relationship to the grander problematizations. . . . They are a distinctive type of experimental matrix of heterogeneous elements, techniques, and concepts. . . . They are comparatively efferrescent, disappearing in years, decades, rather than centuries. Consequently, the temporality of assemblages is qualitatively different from that of either problematizations or apparatuses. (2003: 56)

Not an independent concept in his scheme, assemblage is nonetheless a crucial one for Rabinow in establishing the temporality of emergence in his research and in giving a structural quality to a contingent object of heterogeneous relations.

2. *Global Assemblages*, edited by Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier (2004). Based on a conference in Prague, the articles in this book try to provide a comprehensive anthropological framework for the study of globalization, a very translocal phenomenon, from the habit of local, intensive studies, so characteristic of ethnographic research. As Ong and Collier say in their introductory chapter:

. . . the chapters that follow focus on how global forms interact with other elements, occupying a common field in contingent, uneasy, unstable interrelationships. The product of these interactions might be called the actual global, or the global in the space of assemblage. In relationship to ‘the global,’ the global is not a ‘locality’ to which broader forces are counterposed. Nor is it the structural effect of such forces. An assemblage is the product of multiple determinations that are not reducible to a single logic. The temporality of an assemblage is emergent. It does not always involve new forms, but forms that are shifting, in formation, or at stake. As a composite concept, the term ‘global assemblage’ suggests inherent tensions: global implies broadly encompassing, seamless, and mobile; assemblage implies heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial, and situated. (2004: 12)

For the work of this volume, then, the use of assemblage does the work of giving the editors a manifesto-like vocabulary in terms of which they hope the reader can assimilate the diverse contributions of the collection (none of which themselves actually operationalize assemblage as a sustained analytic tool). The use of assemblage to grasp globalization provides the editors with a frame of specific complexity around the vision of unstable, heterogeneous structure.

3. *Ordinary Impacts: The Affective Life of US Public Culture*, by Kathleen Stewart (2004,

unpublished manuscript). This is an effort to write systematically about the emotional qualities of everyday life for ordinary people in the contemporary United States. In a sense, Stewart's career-long ethnographic work has been a effort to develop frames and vocabularies for communicating a sense of this place-based experience through her fieldwork participations. In a background and referenced way, Stewart has been very influenced by her reading of Deleuze and Guattari in writing this manuscript. Her occasional reference to assemblage arises in this context:

This is a story of an everyday life buoyed and pierced by surging affects. Its obsession is with countless points of intensity that twist and turn with the forces at work in ordinary lives: volatile imaginaries, dense materializations, and the direct excitation of the senses. . . . It takes place in a United States caught in a long, still-unfolding present that began some time ago. A time when a wide mix of disparate forms and realms of life – technologies, sensibilities, flows of power and money, daydreams, institutions, dramas, bodily states, modes of attention, and ways of experiencing time and space – began to articulate (and disarticulate) into (and out of) a loose but sensate assemblage. . . . The assemblage of forces at work in the ongoing present was highly abstract and wholly concrete; it was literally constituted in the density and texture of things in their particularity: the affects, the technologies, the bodies, the events.

Stewart is after a particular kind of aesthetics in her manuscript. Assemblage is performed rather than analytically evoked, and it is primarily the perceptual qualities that surround the concept (in the Deleuze and Guattari corpus) in which Stewart is most interested.

4. '(Un)masking the Agent: Distributed Cognition in Stanislaw Lem's "The Mask"', by N. Katherine Hayles (2006). Hayles is perhaps the premier writer out of literary studies who has been examining the implications of new technologies of life forms for the human (or the post-human) as this core trope has been developed by the humanities. In her work, she is constantly rearticulating dimensions of modernist sensibilities in considering advances in cognitive, information and biological sciences, and the emergent futures they portend. In this article, Deleuze and Guattari are a strong influence on her. The idea of assemblage informs her expressions of emergent machinic life forms.

As she says:

. . . we experience the dissolution of subjectivity urged by Deleuze and Guattari and mutate into machines running cellular automat programs. . . . Assemblages are the active enlistment of external objects into the human cognitive system. Although we can still exercise conscious agency, it works in conjunction with preprogrammed routines within and without that also control the outcome, sometimes, decisively. . . . Cognition in the wild is not confined to mind alone but extends outward in flexible arrangements that bear more than passing resemblance to Deleuze and Guattari's assemblages.

Assemblage serves Hayles as a token of theoretical authority in the sphere of the humanities that links the vision of modernism to the new forms, driven by technology, to which it might refer in the emergent present. The materiality that the idea of assemblage evokes is important for Hayles' reference to the term, as is the notion of systematic, functional relationships between former incommensurables (humans and machines). The idea that our minds are part of distributed cognitive realities of not fully known dimensions is one with which classic modernism would be basically comfortable (to the extent that it envisions the dissolution of subjectivity), but perhaps not fully into the techno-machinic (post-human) situations in which human cognition is being shaped. Assemblage is both a comfortable and disturbing construct here. It mediates the transition of the categories of old modernist thinking into scenarios of machinic potentials in technological advance.

Not exactly chimerical, the various uses of assemblage do the work of establishing a grounded imaginary for analysis that is true to the components of a modernist aesthetic that has so stimulated ethnography and related genres in recent decades. Yet as such, the employment

of assemblage is peculiarly subject to what Jon Elster called ‘by-product states’ – states of mind or existence ‘that can never be brought about intelligently and intentionally because the attempt to do so precludes the very state that one is attempting to bring about’. Sustained analytic or theoretical use of this construct falls to a nervous condition, as we termed it earlier, of trying to stabilize an object or subject state that is inherently elusive (as in the famous ‘all that is solid melts . . .’ comment of Marx on the condition of modernity).

So assemblage is a strategically deployed but passing term that evokes conditions under modernist theoretical influences with structural allusions. If pushed too far, if insisted upon too literally – if it becomes anything more than an allusion – assemblage rapidly becomes a dead metaphor in one’s work. At best, then, extracted from the Deleuzian theory machine and made to do conceptual work in specific projects of cultural analysis and research, assemblage functions best as an evocation of emergence and heterogeneity amid the data of inquiry, in relation to other concepts and constructs without rigidifying into the thingness of final or stable states that besets the working terms of classic social theory. Finally, in current predicaments of theory, assemblage as a conceptual resource has to do with the imaginaries for the shifting relations and emergent conditions of spatially distributed objects of study in the contemporary period of so-called globalization, which has heightened older modernist aesthetics of perception and given them fresh empirical challenges.

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A Note on Assemblage

Couze Venn

Keywords autopoiesis, becoming, emergence, multiple determination, structure

The concept of assemblage has emerged as one of a series of new concepts, alongside those of complexity, chaos, indeterminacy, fractals, string, turbulence, flow, multiplicity, emergence and so on, that now form the theoretical vocabulary for addressing the problem of determination, of process, and of stability and instability regarding social phenomena. As with the previous set of concepts in the social sciences, notably the notion of structure, they derive from developments in the natural sciences and mathematics. Their introduction signals an important shift at the level of theorization and methodology, opening analysis to the recognition of the complexity of cultural and social as well as ‘natural’ phenomena, for instance concerning sociality, the living organism, mind and elementary particles.

Structure in the natural and social sciences grounds causal determination within a logic of stability and linear causality. It is a central epistemological element in the work of the grand theorists of social science such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber and Parsons. The notion of discrete and nomological determination, which positivism and various forms of structuralism support, has clear pay-offs from the point of view of homogenizing and predicting social phenomena, and thus for the possibility of intervention and rational governance. However, the limitations of approaches based on this notion of determination have been demonstrated in their failure to account adequately for change, resistance, agency and the event: that is, the irruption of the unexpected or unpredictable. The limitations relate also to their inadequacy from the point of view of co-relating phenomena across different fields, for example between the psychic and the social, the affective and the cognitive, and between matter and form. The problem for theory is that of thinking structure as well as multiplicity and indeterminacy within the same theoretical framework.

The concept of assemblage has appeared in the wake of these critiques and questions. In the recent literature it is mostly associated with the work of Deleuze and Guattari (particularly *A Thousand Plateaus*, 1987) and clearly explained in DeLanda (2002). One can also retrace its

emergence by reference to developments in the physics of small particles, in topology, in molecular biology and generally in the interface between the theorization of emergence and becoming (say in ontogeny and phylogeny), adaptation or autopoiesis and cybernetic systems (that is, open systems with feedback), and post-structuralist mathematics (e.g. chaos, complexity, string). They all emphasize adaptivity rather than fixity or essence, the formal properties of the system rather than the specific instance or individuation, the spatio-temporal dimension rather than quantities, co-articulation and compossibility rather than linear and discrete determination, multilinear time and the temporality of processes such that emergence and irreversibility are brought to the fore, for instance in embryonic development (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984; Bateson, 1980). Deleuze and Guattari translate these themes into a vocabulary that re-codes emergence and becoming, namely, (de/re)-territorialization (in relation to topology), the machinic (in relation to autopoiesis), multiplicity, ‘agencement machinique’ (in relation to differentiation, compossibility).

In the light of the foregoing, assemblage can be seen as a relay concept, linking the problematic of structure with that of change and far-from-equilibrium systems. It focuses on process and on the dynamic character of the inter-relationships between the heterogeneous elements of the phenomenon. It recognizes both structurizing and indeterminate effects: that is, both flow and turbulence, produced in the interaction of open systems. It points to complex becoming and multiple determinations. It is sensitive to time and temporality in the emergence and mutation of the phenomenon; it thus directs attention to the *longue durée*. Whilst Deleuze and Guattari suggest desiring machines as exemplar, one could instead refer to weather formation and the genome, or, for that matter, to the formation of identity.

Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish between the level of abstract general theory – say, the mathematics of string, topology – and the level of concrete material and social life, and the singular or individual entity. For human beings the meaning of social action and of existence adds a dimension to analysis that cannot be reduced to or derived from the general theory. In any case, intermediate concepts are needed for the analysis of concrete social and natural processes and mechanisms. Thus theory itself can be considered as an

assemblage that operates as specific conceptual combinatories in addressing specific problems. The coherence of the particular combinatory would be grounded in the respect for the general principles outlined above. Assemblage is one of the terms that today signals the emergence of a new episteme that would be transmodern.

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Agencement/Assemblage

John Phillips

Keywords arrangement, assemblage, common notion, Deleuze and Guattari, event, translation

One of the key problems of global knowledge concerns the circulation, adoption and adaptation of concepts in translation. The English word *assemblage* is gaining currency in the humanities and social sciences as a concept of knowledge, but its uses remain disparate and sometimes imprecise. Two factors contribute to the situation. First, the concept is normally understood to be derived from the French word *agencement*, as used in the works of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (who, furthermore, do not use the French word *assemblage* in this way). Tracing the concept in its philosophical sense back to their texts, one discovers that it cannot easily be understood except in connection with the development of a complex of such concepts. *Agencement* implies specific connections with the other concepts. It is, in fact, the *arrangement* of these *connections* that gives the concepts their sense. For Deleuze and Guattari, a philosophical concept never operates in isolation but comes to its sense in connection with other senses in specific yet creative and often unpredictable ways. This *in connection with* already provides something of the sense of *agencement*, if one accepts that a concept arises in philosophy as the connection between a state of affairs and the statements we can make about it. *Agencement* designates the priority of neither the state of affairs nor the statement but of their connection, which implies the production of a sense that exceeds them and of which, transformed, they now form parts.

Secondly, the translation of *agencement* by *assemblage* can give rise to connotations based on analogical impressions, which liberate elements of a vocabulary from the arguments that once helped form it. One of the earliest attempts to translate Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term *agencement* appears in the first published translation, by Paul Foss and Paul Patton in 1981, of the article 'Rhizome'. The English term they use, *assemblage*, is retained in Brian Massumi's later English version, when 'Rhizome' appears as the Introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*. Since then many (though by no means all) translators and commentators have agreed, in a loose consensus, to keep to this early translation of *agencement* by *assemblage*, while acknowledging that the translation is not really a good approximation. *Agencement* is a common French word with the senses of either 'arrangement', 'fitting' or 'fixing' and is used in French in as many contexts as those words are used in English: one would speak of the arrangement of parts of a body or machine; one might talk of fixing (fitting or affixing) two or more parts together; and one might use the term for both the act of fixing and the arrangement itself, as in the fixtures and fittings of a building or shop, or the parts of a machine.

In contrast, the word *assemblage* in English means more or less the same as its actual French counterpart, *assemblage*, a word that Deleuze and Guattari use less often and certainly never in a philosophical sense. It has a more restrictive range of uses in English. The French will talk about an assemblage of different grape varieties or ingredients in a recipe and its senses cover blending, collating, gathering and joining. Although it designates a collection of things in English too (as one

of the noun forms of assemblage), it is conventionally restricted to more technical terminology: as the collection of remains found on an archeological site (in a French pronunciation: *a-sā-blāzh*); and in art theory (in both French and English) it is a term associated with collage and other avant-garde or pop art styles, designating works assembled out of diverse objects (like Jean Arp's *Trousse d'un Da*, an assemblage of driftwood nailed onto wood with some remains of old painting).

As an imaginative resource for framing objects and operations of the social sciences, *assemblage* remains suggestive. Its use as a translation of *agencement*, though not entirely without justification, is nonetheless in danger of missing what is really forceful with regard to knowledge in Deleuze and Guattari's usage. The most direct connection that *agencement* has for Deleuze would be to his work from the late 1960s on the philosophy of Spinoza and the *common notion*. It also has a very precise correspondence to the notions of *event*, *becoming* and *sense*, which Deleuze discusses at length in other works of the same period. A *common notion* represents the situation when two or more bodies have something in common. All bodies have in common the states of extension, motion and rest; but when two or more bodies come into contact or otherwise enter into a relationship they form a composition. A *common notion* is the representation of this composition as an independent unity. The unity, for instance, of a poison and the body poisoned can be regarded as a state of becoming and an event which is reducible to neither the body nor the poison. The body and the poison, rather, participate in the event (which is what they have in common). Deleuze brings together readings of several sources, including Lewis Carroll's *Alice*, the philosophy of the Stoics and the writings of surrealist Joë Bousquet, to explore the character of unities like this in terms of their *eventness*, their *sense* (*sens* in the senses of both direction and meaning) and their *becoming*. While Alice is growing larger she is in a state of becoming both larger than she was and yet not as large as she will be. The state of becoming regarded as a compositional unity thus affixes the two senses of being-larger-than and being-smaller-than. This being between, and the paradoxical senses it produces, can be brought into contact with the Stoics who regarded, for instance, the state produced when a knife cuts through flesh as a separate, abstract state, which Deleuze develops in terms of the *event*. The *wound* as an event which brings the knife and the flesh together can be reduced to neither knife nor flesh. A third sense is produced that corresponds precisely to Spinoza's common notion, and which gives rise to the second-order conceptual level of

'adequate ideas'. Knowledge of the world would thus be formed of second-order ideas: concepts that are adequate – a good fit – to the unities composed by bodies in connection.

The implications for knowledge (although these states have powerful implications for ontological questions too) are profound. The traditional arrangement implies a subject of knowledge separated out from his objects, which he transforms by making them his project. But this is a kind of *agencement* too – an event, a becoming, a compositional unity – with sense and a common notion, to which adequate ideas might be affixed. The sense of such a knowing cannot any longer be attributed to the knower, who participates in a further stage of becoming not reducible to his knowledge. Deleuze and Guattari, first in their 1975 book on Franz Kafka, and then in *A Thousand Plateaus*, mobilize this sense of *agencement* and the term itself begins to shift, to break up and to participate in further connections. The 'collective *agencement* of enunciation' designates the language system to which all speakers of a language belong; the 'social *agencement* of desire' designates the individual's relation to his objects; and the 'machinic *agencement*' exceeds both the planes of enunciation and desire, recombining them in further enunciative events.

The translation of *agencement* by *assemblage* might have been justified as a further event of *agencement* (*assemblage*) were it not for the tendency of discourses of knowledge to operate as statements *about* states of affairs. The statement, as Deleuze and Guattari tirelessly insist, tends to undo assemblages, to take things apart, to divide things from each other, to divide, fundamentally, the subject of the statement (the sense and reference of a statement) from its enunciation (the conditions on which one can make a statement at all). If the sense of the term *assemblage* gathers to itself the unity and homogeneity of a theoretical concept at the level of the statement (which is what *agencement* allows) then it is also possible to problematize the term, to hook it back up with the fittings, fixtures and diverse arrangements that help constitute it and help to keep it current.

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Complexity

John Urry

Abstract The term 'complexity' has recently sprung into the physical and social sciences, humanities and semi-popular writings. 'Complexity' practices are constituted as something of a self-organizing global network that is spreading 'complexity' notions around the globe. There is a new 'structure of feeling' that complexity approaches both signify and enhance. Such an emergent structure of feeling involves a greater sense of contingent openness to people, corporations and societies, of the unpredictability of outcomes in time-space, of a charity towards objects and nature, of the diverse and non-linear changes in relationships, households and persons, and of the sheer increase in the hyper-complexity of products, technologies and socialities.

Keywords emergence, global, hybrid, network, non-linear, self-organization, space-time, structure

Introduction

The term 'complexity' has recently sprung into the physical and social sciences, humanities and semi-popular writings. Describing what it is and how it is organized is difficult since it is 'present' within very many scientific, social scientific and semi-popular discourses and practices. Inter alia these include alternative healing, architecture, consultancy, consumer design, economics, defence studies, fiction, garden design, geography, history, literary theory, management education, New Age, organizational studies, philosophy, post-structuralism, sociology, stock car racing, town planning, as well as most of the 'physical sciences' over the past two or so decades (Thrift, 1999).

In some ways it has become a global phenomenon and this makes it hard to disentangle its various components. 'Complexity' practices are constituted as something of a self-organizing global network that is spreading 'complexity' notions around the globe. Complexity researchers deploy the techniques of PR and branding, international meetings with 'star' speakers, guru worship, the use of global media and publishing, and networking, especially centred on nodes such as Santa Fe in New Mexico or the various research institutes named after the late Nobel prizewinner Ilya Prigogine (Waldrop, 1994).

There is a new 'structure of feeling' that complexity approaches both signify and enhance. Such an emergent structure of feeling involves a greater sense of contingent openness to people, corporations and societies, of the unpredictability of outcomes in time-space, of a charity towards objects and nature, of the diverse and non-linear changes in relationships, households and persons, and of the sheer increase in the hyper-complexity of products, technologies and socialities (Capra, 1996, 2001).

Thus economic and technological studies show there has been a huge increase in the number of components within products (Urry, 2003). The Eli Whitney musket of around 1800 had 51 components while the space shuttle of the late 20th century contained 10 million. Further, there are increases in the cybernetic contribution performed by architectures that integrate components through feedback loops. In 1970 the most valuable products in world trade were simple products produced by simple processes; a quarter-of-a-century later, nearly two-thirds

of the products in world trade involve complex processes *and* complex products, with vast numbers of components, cybernetic architectures and socio-technical systems. This is linked with self-organizing and computerized networks that are continuously self-reproducing themselves across the globe, developing skills and structures necessary to innovate technologies to overcome obstacles or create new pathways.

A complexity structure of feeling brings out the paradoxes implicated in many contemporary processes. Thus the preservation of 'nature' seems to destroy many of the very things that nature lovers claim to value (Davis, 2000). There is no such thing as 'nature's balance', no real or primordial nature that would be in equilibrium if only humans had not intruded. The effects of humans are subtly and irreversibly woven into the very evolution of landscape. And any ecological system is immensely complex so that there are never straightforward policies that simply restore nature's balance, such as fish populations in the seas or rivers. Indeed many ecological systems themselves depend not upon stable relationships but upon massive intrusions of flows of species from other parts of the globe and of fire, lightning, hurricanes, high winds, ice storms, flash floods, frosts, earthquakes and so on. The 'normal' state of nature is not one of balance and repose. Such developments can only be seen over very lengthy periods of time, much longer than the lives of particular researchers or of research programmes. Moreover, populations of most species demonstrate extreme unevenness, with populations often rising rapidly when introduced into an area and then almost as rapidly collapsing. Extreme events demonstrate complexity where small changes in driving variables or inputs – magnified by feedback – can produce disproportionate outcomes.

There is no silent, docile 'nature', especially when confronted by new forms of 'culture'. The contemporary complex world seems to involve highly adaptable viruses, such as Aids and ebola, new superbugs, newly lethal pathogens such as prions, and the reappearance of TB, cholera and the bubonic plague. Such a medicalized apocalypse appears to stem from new patterns of global travel and trade, the heightened ineffectiveness of antibiotics that encounter increased 'resistance', and the development of new powerful risk cultures beyond and within 'medicine' (Van Loon, 2002).

These and other developments seem to herald a relatively new set of hybrid systems – neither natural nor social; neither ordered nor anarchic – that display high levels of complexity. A complexity structure of feeling is underpinned by an apparent lack of proportionality between 'causes' and 'effects'. That we think of these hybrid systems as complex has stemmed from an array of developments within 20th-century science.

Time and Space

Science, in the 20th century, dismantled elements of Newtonian science and this prepared the way for the complexity turn (Capra, 1996). Pre-20th century science operated with a view of time as Newtonian: invariant, infinitely divisible into space-like units, measurable in length, expressible as a number and reversible. It is time seen essentially as a kind of Cartesian space comprising invariant measurable lengths to be moved along, forwards *and* backwards. Objects are viewed as contained within such boundaries of absolute time and space.

The sciences dismantled such a notion (Coveney and Highfield, 1990). Einstein showed that there is no fixed or absolute time independent of the system to which it refers. Time is a local, internal feature of any system of observation and measurement. It varies as to where and how it is measured. It can be stretched and shrunk. Further, Einstein demonstrated that time and space are not separate from each other but are fused into a four-dimensional time-space curved under the influence of mass. Time and space are 'internal' to the processes by which the physical and social worlds themselves operate, helping to constitute their powers.

Space and time are now seen as dynamic qualities: when a body moves, or a force acts, it affects the curvature of space and time, and in turn the structure of space-time affects the way in which bodies move and forces act. The beginning of the universe occurred without a pre-existing cause, and its very happening created in that moment both space and time. There is no 'time' before the big bang, and if the universe ends in another singular event time (and

space) will cease. Space and time have been spontaneously created, part of the systemic nature of the universe. They are switched on.

Quantum theory generally describes a virtual state in which electrons try out instantaneously all possible futures before settling into particular patterns. Quantum behaviour is instantaneous, simultaneous and unpredictable. The interactions between the parts are far more fundamental than the parts themselves. Bohm refers to this as the occurrence of a dance without dancers

Thermodynamics shows that there is an irreversible flow of time (Prigogine, 1997). Rather than there being time-symmetry and indeed a reversibility of time as postulated in classical physics, a clear distinction is drawn between what has passed and what lies in the future. An arrow of time results in loss of organization and an increase in randomness or disorder over time within open systems. This accumulation of disorder or positive entropy results from the Second Law of Thermodynamics. However, there is not a simple growth of disorder. Prigogine shows how new order arises but is far from equilibrium. There are what he terms dissipative structures, islands of new order within a sea of disorder, maintaining or even increasing their order at the expense of greater overall entropy. Prigogine describes how such localized order 'floats in disorder'.

The irreversibility of time can be seen in the expansion of the universe following the singular event of the 'big bang' 15 billion or so years ago. The scientific discovery of the big bang cannot be reconciled with laws of the physical world that presumes time is reversible, deterministic and involving 'classes of phenomena'. The big bang is a one-off phenomenon like nothing else ever to occur within the known universe. Laws of nature are thus historical and not universal (and hence much more like the laws of society).

The arrow or flow of time results in futures that are unstable, relatively unpredictable and characterized by various possibilities. Time is both multiple and unpredictable. Prigogine (1997) talks of the 'end of certainty' as the complexity sciences overcome what he calls the alienating images of a deterministic world and an arbitrary world of pure chance. Complexity repudiates the dichotomies of determinism and chance, as well as nature and society, being and becoming, stasis and change. Systems are thus seen as being 'on the edge of chaos'. Order and chaos are in a kind of balance where the components are neither fully locked into place but yet do not fully dissolve into anarchy. Chaos is not complete anarchic randomness but there is a kind of 'orderly disorder' present within all such systems.

Time flows with minor changes in the past being able to produce potentially massive effects in the present or future. Such small events are not 'forgotten'. Chaos theory in particular rejects the commonsensical notion that only large changes in causes produce large changes in effects. Following a perfectly deterministic set of rules, unpredictable yet patterned results can be generated, with small causes on occasions producing large effects and vice versa. The classic example is the butterfly effect accidentally discovered by Lorenz in 1961. It was shown that minuscule changes at one location can produce, if modelled by three coupled non-linear equations, very large weather effects very distant from the original site.

Emergence

Central to dynamic systems analysis is the idea of emergence. It is not that the sum is greater than the size of its parts but that there are system effects that are different from its parts. Complexity examines how components of a system through their interaction 'spontaneously' develop collective properties or patterns, even simple properties such as colour, that do not seem implicit within, or at least not implicit in the same way, within individual components. The flavour of sugar is not present in the carbon, hydrogen and oxygen atoms that comprise it. These are non-linear consequences that are not present within, or reducible to, the very many individual components that comprise such activities.

Such large-scale patterns or characteristics emerge from, but are not reducible to, the micro-dynamics of the phenomenon in question. Thus gases are not uniform entities but comprise a seething confusion of atoms obeying the laws of quantum mechanics. The laws

governing gases derive not from the behaviour of each individual atom but from their statistical patterning. Also if a system passes a particular threshold with minor changes in the controlling variables, switches occur such that a liquid turns into a gas or relatively warm weather suddenly turns into an ice age. This can give rise to unexpected structures and events whose properties can be quite different from those of the underlying elementary laws.

In particular, the emergence of patterning within a given system results from 'attractors'. If a dynamic system does not move over time through all possible parts of a phase space but instead occupies a restricted part of it, then this is said to result from attractors. The simplest attractor is a point, as with the unforced swinging of a pendulum. Everything reaches the single equilibrium point. A somewhat more complex example is a domestic central heating/air conditioning system where the attractor consists, not of a single point, but of a specified range of temperatures. The relationship is not linear but involves a negative feedback mechanism that minimizes deviance. This is a self-regulating and bounded system. In certain systems there are 'strange attractors', unstable spaces to which the trajectory of dynamical systems is attracted through billions of iterations and positive feedback occurring over long periods of time. Such a space may be either indeterminate within the boundaries or there may be various sets of boundaries, as with the butterfly shaped Lorenz attractor. Such attractors are immensely sensitive in the effects that they generate to slight variations in their initial conditions. Much science has been concerned to characterize the topology of such strange attractors.

Systems and Feedback

Early cybernetic research under the auspices of the Macy conferences in the post Second World War period emphasized the importance of negative feedback loops that restored the homeostatic functioning of whatever system was under examination (Hayles, 1999). Such systems of circular causality involved the processing of information that resulted in re-establishing equilibrium and stability through negative feedback (a view that much influenced Talcott Parsons).

However, in later systems formulations, of complexity or the non-linear, positive feedback loops are examined. These are viewed as exacerbating initial stresses in the system, so rendering it unable to absorb shocks and re-establishing the original equilibrium. Very strong interactions occur between the parts of a system and there is an absence of a central hierarchical structure able to 'govern' outcomes. Positive feedback occurs when a change tendency is reinforced rather than dampened down as occurs with the negative feedback.

Such positive feedback is involved in analyses of the increasing returns that generate the path dependency found in the history of various economic-technological systems (such as the VHS video system replacing the technologically superior Betamax). Such irreversible path dependence occurs when contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains over time that have deterministic properties through what Brian Arthur (1994) examines as 'lock-ins'.

More generally, complexity science investigates systems that can adapt and evolve as they self-organize through time. Such complex social interactions have been likened to walking through a maze, the walls of which rearrange as one walks. New steps have then to be taken in order to adjust to the walls of the maze that are adapting to one's movement through the maze. Complexity thus investigates emergent, dynamic and self-organizing systems that co-evolve and adapt in ways that heavily influence the probabilities of later events.

Autopoiesis, as explained by Maturana and Varela, involves a process of self-making between the processes of production of those components that make up a system (Maturana, 1981). These continuously regenerate the processes of production through various feedback mechanisms so to maintain the organization *per se*, although the structure may change. Autopoiesis is to be seen in non-linear laser theory where the co-ordination of the required emissions is carried out by the laser light itself through processes of self-organization. Autopoiesis is also shown in the nature of urban growth where small local preferences mildly expressed in the concerns of individuals, such as wanting to live with those who are ethnically similar, can lead

to massively segregated neighbourhoods characteristic of large American cities (Krugman, 1996).

Complex Systems

Capra (1996) argues that nature turns out to be more like human nature – unpredictable, sensitive to the surrounding world, influenced by small fluctuations. This suggests enormous interdependencies, parallels, overlaps and convergences between analyses of physical *and* social worlds. Indeed the very division between the ‘physical’ and the ‘social’ is itself a socio-historical product and one that is in part dissolving under the sway of the complexity turn.

The complexity sciences seem to provide the means to overcome such divisions between nature *and* society and between the natural/physical sciences *and* the social sciences. That systems seem to behave similarly whether they are economic populations, fruit flies, international terrorists, river basins or weather systems has colluded to spread complexity analyses around the world in a period that seems both post-human and post-nature (Hayles, 1999). Each hybrid system seems to exhibit similar non-linear, networked properties often moving unpredictably and irreversibly away from points of equilibrium, as Capra (2001) argues. And complexity is itself a global system, adapting and co-evolving to other powerful global hybrids that are also roaming the world and changing the very environment within which it operates (see Urry, 2003, on global complexity).

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Autopoiesis

Jakob Arnoldi

Keywords autopoiesis, complexity theory, cybernetics, Luhmann

Autopoiesis means self-production or self-creation and is a recent word created by means of the two ancient Greek words *auto* and *poiesis* (birth, creation or production). The term was coined by Chilean biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela who worked together in Santiago, Chile, in the 1970s. The theory of autopoiesis is a theory of biological life and cognition that has sparked debates in research fields as diverse as artificial intelligence and sociology.

Maturana, who was the older of the two, had obtained his PhD from Harvard in 1958. Back in Chile in 1970, collaborating with his former student Varela who – following the footsteps of his mentor – also had done his PhD at Harvard, Maturana came to develop a theory that combines two central aspects of early cybernetics, namely cognition and biological life. Hence Maturana talks of biological cognition.

The concept of autopoiesis was developed to give an answer to the question ‘what is life?’ Maturana was dissatisfied with existing answers to the question – such as vitalist theories, systems theory, or functionalist or teleological theories – that would define life through notions of a hidden ‘spark’ (vitalism), feedback loops and equilibrium (systems theory), and core functions or features (biological theories of reproduction and evolution). Instead, Maturana and Varela defined life as ‘networks of processes of production of components that are continuously and recursively generated and realized as a concrete entity (unity) in the physical space, by the interactions of the same components that are produced as such a network’ (Maturana, 1975: 313). This is a description of a specific form of organization which constitutes the system as a unity and – Maturana and Varela claimed – it is this principle of organization (and not genetic reproduction) which is the key to the definition and understanding of life (Varela et al., 1975: 187).

Maturana and Varela typically use a single cell organism (e.g. an amoeba) as an example of an autopoietic entity. A cell is a network of molecular components in ongoing interaction – normally referred to as metabolism. But metabolism does

not alone explain life. Metabolism is a dynamic process that produces the components that constitute a network which produces the very same components. That process also produces a specific type of network that constitutes the system’s *spatial boundaries*, for instance the membrane of a cell. A cell – and any other autopoietic system – is therefore a system that creates itself or ‘pulls itself up by its own bootstraps’ (Maturana and Varela, 1998: 46–7). This does not mean that a living system first metabolizes and then forms boundaries. The two things happen simultaneously. Metabolism and boundary formation are two sides of the same coin; an organizational process that constitutes a living system as a unity (see Figure 1).

Maturana and Varela make a (rather unusual) distinction between organization and structure. Autopoiesis is – as written many times already – a certain form of (self-)organization, that is, a recursive process where the system produces its own elements and integrates them in its own network. *Structure*, on the other hand, denotes the specific network at a specific time. Therefore a system may have a general form of organization but the structure will change when specific elements are replaced. To use Maturana and Varela’s own example, a toilet is organized in a specific way but single elements can be replaced by similar elements (e.g. a plastic seat can be replaced by a wooden one) which changes the structure but not the organization.

For Maturana and Varela, autopoietic systems are structure-determined systems: anything that happens in or to a system is determined by the system’s structure at that specific point in time. This has far-reaching implications for questions of cognition and knowledge. If a living system is autopoietic all its operations – including any form of interaction with or response to its environment, i.e. cognition in a broad sense – take place according to the structures it itself has built



Figure 1. The combination of metabolism and boundary formation (reproduced from Maturana and Varela, 1998: 46).

autopoietically. Things that happen in the environment can trigger structural changes in the system, but such structural changes, and any other response to outside information, are determined by the system's own structure. Maturana had already formulated these ideas in the 1960s when working with members of the Macy group. In a now famous experiment they measured the responses in a frog's visual cortex to various (visual) stimuli. They found that frogs, so to speak, are pre-programmed to react to fast moving small objects while big, still or slow moving objects are almost ignored. Frogs are thus equipped to see flies, but much less well equipped to see trees. This leads to questions of constructivism and Maturana and Varela's claim that everything that is said (or known) is said (or known) by an observer. Any system – humans beings included – can only see or know according to its own structure. For Maturana and Varela, this discovery has become a basis for a sort of radical constructivism which poses serious questions to notions of objectivity and positivism (see also Foerster, 1984; Hayles, 1999: 131–54). It should also be mentioned that they hold all living systems to be responsive to external stimuli through structure-dependent processes, which means that all living systems, even those without a nervous system, are cognitive systems (Maturana and Varela, 1980: 13).

Maturana and Varela's work has not attained a paradigmatic status in biology, which has maintained its focus on reproduction (DNA), but it has inspired and influenced cybernetics and related fields of study (e.g. informatics, artificial intelligence) just as it has sparked debates about constructivism and objectivism. Maturana and Varela's theory has also been scrutinized by scholars who seek to establish philosophical and theoretical affinities to other thinkers and theories from other disciplines. They often point out that Maturana and Varela's theory has many similarities with Heideggerian phenomenology (e.g. Mingers, 1995) and compare autopoiesis to Heidegger's *Dasein*. This influence, however, remains implicit in Maturana and Varela's early thinking. That said, particularly Varela's later thinking was influenced by Heidegger, albeit mainly indirectly through Merleau-Ponty.

In the social sciences, the notion of autopoiesis and several of Maturana and Varela's other concepts such as *structural coupling* have been adopted by Niklas Luhmann and used for an

elaborate theory of social and cognitive systems which combines Maturana and Varela's notion of cognition with Husserlian phenomenology. Luhmann defines social systems as communicative systems. Based on a notion of double contingency, he develops a theory of communication that understands communication not as a transmission of meaning or information from one subject to another but as an autopoietic system that emerges out of the double contingent encounter of subjects. Because of the intrinsic impossibility of knowing if one's interpretation of the other's impartation matches the other's intentions (who has similar difficulties interpreting one's own impartations) communication tends to evolve on its own – as an autopoietic system – removed from the conscious processes of the subjects 'communicating'. Based on this premise, Luhmann analyses historically different ways in which – and the means by which – social systems evolve, stabilize and reproduce themselves.

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Time

Barbara Adam

Abstract The article argues that the relationship to time is at the root of what makes us human and that culture arises with and from efforts to *transcend* death, change and the rhythmicity of the physical environment. Time can be *tracked* through systems of time measurement and later *transformed* from a process of nature into clock time, a time to human design that is abstracted from context and content. In this form time can be *traded* with all other times. With contemporary science and new information and communications technologies, which operate in a new all-encompassing temporal spectrum that extends from nanoseconds to millennia, clock time is no longer appropriate to the associated present-oriented transactions and futures are *traversed* in the dual sense of the word. By historically locating temporal relations, the article provides both a new understanding of socio-cultural relations and a perspective on social change.

Keywords time transcendence, time tracking, time transformation, time trading, time traversal

Time is about god and the universe, life and death, knowledge practices and the human condition. The relationship to time is at the very root of what makes us human. All that we recognize as culture arises with and from efforts to *transcend* the key delimitations of human existence: death, change and the rhythmicity of the physical environment. Once finitude is tempered by cultural means (positing an afterlife, heroism, myths, for example) new ways to engage with change, ephemerality and rhythmicity (such as the arts, agriculture and architecture) can flourish. Time can be *tracked* through systems of time measurement and later *transformed* from a process of nature into a time of human design with new characteristics that vastly extend the power of control at the individual and collective, national and international level. This human machine-time of the West is not only *traded* globally but used for colonizing purposes, defining in and out groups, distinguishing between the developed, developing and 'non-developed' world, designating some activities as productive while rendering others invisible. This by now naturalized machine-time, however, sits uneasily with the lived times of everyday life, the reproductive, sustaining and caring work that is primarily the domain of women across the world, and the processes of nature that are transformed by the temporal imposition and colonization. Moreover, ossified in machine form, clock-time is no longer adaptable to the temporal relations that emerge with contemporary science and communication technologies, and operate in the all-encompassing temporal spectrum, which ranges from nanoseconds to millennia, from the speed of light to eternity. As knowledge practices, clock-time relations need to be appreciated as a source of both the major successes and excesses, the power and the failure of the contemporary, globalized, interdependency. This is nowhere more visible than in approaches to the future, futures that are *traversed* in the dual sense of travelled and colonized on the one hand and negated, spoilt and polluted for successor generations on the other. Neither the dominant Western institutions nor the West's conceptual tools are any longer appropriate to the conditions of their making. The focus on time and temporal relations can provide us with a different historical perspective, and has the potential to identify openings for change (Adam, 2004).

Transcending the Earthly Condition

Culture is inescapably tied to the human relationship to time: to death and the boundedness of human existence, to change, transience, ephemerality and contingency, and to the rhythmicity of the physical and living environment. As the archaeologist Christopher Gosden (1994: 9) assures us, in the past 3.5 million years of known human existence, cultural rhythms have been distinct from natural rhythms. Death has not merely been endured but pondered and related to, finitude ritualized and transcended. Confronted with impermanence, humans have created permanence by a variety of means: through burial and ritual, things and representations, myth and hero-worship, belief systems and institutions. With burial of their dead our earliest ancestors transcended their allotted time on earth. Burial ensured the safe journey to the world of ancestors and created social continuity across generations. Hero worship, in contrast, made life worth living. It extended a person's existence beyond their grave, their deeds to be sung and told for many generations, their lives elevated as shining examples to their successors. With the production of artefacts knowledge was not just objectified and externalized but it survived into the following generations, thus loosening the dependence on co-presence for knowledge to circulate. Many of these cultural constructions and creations endured for tens of thousands of years to be marvelled at by us today: burial chambers and stone circles, tools and pottery, cave paintings and written texts, jewellery and mathematical spheres carved from stone. Belief systems, finally, provided comforting responses to ontological fears and insecurities while political institutions ensured the continuity of the collective beyond the bounded existence of its individual members. It is important to note, however, that while the relation to finitude is a cultural universal, the forms it takes are culturally and historically unique.

Equally, there are many ways to respond to the transience, ephemerality and contingency of human existence, numerous means to impose a socio-cultural will on change processes of the cosmos, nature and the body. One of these responses is to make time stand still. Here too, we need to recognize that both the meaning and the forms this takes differ significantly with the particular practices employed, and the historical periods within which they are enacted. As the historian of religion Mircea Eliade (1989/1949) explains, myth and ritual, for example, are primary means to arrest time. In their performance the original deed or decree is enacted in the present and the meaning recreated and preserved in its original form. Through its performance the enfolded past is activated and revealed, *ab origine*, that is, true to the beginning. Another way of making time stand still relates to the externalization of knowledge through representation, which holds in unchanging form what is moving, changing and interconnected. Thus, for example, art externalizes and fixes beliefs, experiences, expectations, fears and hopes in a form that can be shared (as well as variably interpreted) by many people across generations. Once objectified and therefore stabilized, the artistic creation not only becomes a source for reflection and understanding, but also a way of passing on culture without the need for either the co-presence or even the existence of those who did the communicating. It is a way of accumulating wisdom outside the temporal, finite body and beyond the knowledge of individual persons. Written language shares with art the principal temporal relations of fixing and stabilizing what is transient and ephemeral through the externalization, disembodiment and decontextualization of knowledge.

Not only myth, ritual and art, but also some of the earliest forms of monumental architecture can be viewed as expressions of the human endeavour to create stability and permanence on the one hand and as a quest for the meaning of existence, origin and destiny on the other. Like its temporal counterparts, monumental architecture defines the world from the human centre, provides a place for human beings in the scheme of nature, and offers security and continuity for communal life. We can conjecture that megaliths, for example, enabled Neolithic peoples to maintain contact with that which transcended their own being, that the circular form of these buildings directed attention to a metaphysical source of being. According to the architect Keith Critchlow (1979: 151), the circular structure of megalithic temples is of symbolic significance as the circle is widely recognized as the most sacred representation.

The full circle expresses undifferentiated space and a totality of time. Accordingly, the completed circle has to be seen as a *chosen* tactic to unify the one with the whole and to gather up, in the now, the whole of time.

The time of the circle, therefore, signifies not the eternal round of seasonal activity, as some social scientists maintain who differentiate between traditional cyclical and modern historical societies. Rather, it constitutes an *active creation* of eternity in the present. In this enfolding of the origin, we may surmise, lies the power of the temporally extended collective and the source of all future possibilities. Archaic practices that made time stand still thus need to be recognized as creative acts of time transcendence, as collective means to overcome the threat of non-existence, finitude and transience. Equally, other cultural practices, ranging from ancient myths and rituals to modern religions and institutions, are means to transcend the times of earthly existence. Ancient myths from across the known world tell about humanity's efforts to impose meaning on the transience and finitude of existence, commenting on the role of humans in the wider scheme of things, explaining origin and destiny. As such they provide a window on the world beyond embodied existence, the netherworld from which individuals were thought to emerge and to which they would return after death. They open up a world of gods where fate and fortune are decided. They posit a golden time before the time of earthly toil, a paradise lost due to misfortune or misconduct. Thus, in their quest to transcend finitude, humans have created a world of immortality and permanence, which locates them in a wider scheme of nature, the cosmos and the spirit world of gods.

Tracking Time and the Quest for Know-how

Alongside efforts to transcend earthly time there developed a multitude of means to track time, to get to know it in its cyclical repetitions on the one hand and its directional processes on the other. This tracking of time involved the vast time scales of gods and the cosmos, the life-span of beings and things, seasonal patterns, even subdivisions of the day and very short time spans such as the beat of a human heart. To give an example, the traditional calendar system of India had subdivisions in the 24-hour system, equivalent to clock-time units of 48 and 24 minutes, 48 and 24 seconds, right down to fractions of seconds. On the other end of the temporal scale, it operated with huge amounts of astronomical time that related to the life of Brahma: one hour in the life of Brahma equals 8.76 million human years (Lippincott et al., 1999: 42–8). In such time-tracking systems the year is just one small unit in the wider scheme of divine intent, cosmic rhythms and cultural efforts to name, count and number temporal and rhythmic processes.

To know and name that which transcends human being was to get closer to the divine, to achieve a measure of predictability in the face of the unknown, and to gain a sense of power over that which functions outside human control. Often, the tracking of time has been rooted in the capacity to identify patterns associated with difference: light and dark, day and night, summer and winter, hot and cold, dry and wet, periods of drought and flooding, fertility and dormancy, or cycles of growth and decay, life and death, presence and absence. The ability to count, name, number and quantify change processes and repetitions facilitates predictability of the seemingly unpredictable. It allows for anticipation and planning. Thus, time reckoning, the getting to know temporal processes and rhythmic patterns, is also knowledge for practical use. It is know-how knowledge for the structuring, ordering, synchronizing and regulating of social life. Moreover, it is knowledge that engenders a sense of ownership and control. As such, time tracking produces not only knowledge that locates humans in the wider scheme of things but also results in useful know-how, that is, in-order-to knowledge for the maintenance and enhancement of power, be this a sovereign's, the church's or an employer's power.

Not surprisingly, therefore, calendars, as the most complex of time-tracking systems, were first developed at the behest of sovereigns and religious leaders. As the historian David Landes explains with reference to ancient China, knowledge of temporal patterns and the establishment of calendar systems was the exclusive prerogative of the sovereign.

Knowledge of the right time and season was power, for it was this knowledge that governed both the acts of everyday life and decisions of state. Each emperor inaugurated his reign with the promulgation of his calendar, often different from the one that had preceded it. His court astronomers were the only persons who were permitted in principle to use time keeping and astronomical instruments or to engage in astronomical study. His time was China's time. (Landes, 1983: 33)

Calendar systems date back to ancient times and have taken many different forms. Some of the earliest known systems prioritized lunar patterns over solar ones, while others, like the Mayan calendar (and that of its Mesoamerican predecessors), integrated not just the incompatible movements of moon, sun and Venus but combined these with ritual cycles – each important in their own right and in their relation to all the other cycles (Adam, 2004: 108–10; Aveni, 1980; Thompson, 1974). This hugely complex system allowed the keepers of time to determine festival periods, auspicious and unlucky days as well as right and wrong times for specified activities. It enabled them to forecast eclipses, conceived as periods of great danger, and it legitimated them as keepers of a collective memory. In this calendar system, which operated routinely with dates and numbers extending to five digits and more, deities and heavenly bodies, religion and history, daily practice and mythical past were brought into a coherent whole. Here, the sacred was implicated in the profane and vice versa. The explicated always included that which was not the explicit focus of attention. Physical phenomena were suffused with the spirit world of deities and demons. Ritual practice was implicated in bureaucratic regulation. Administrative practices were in tune with ritual prerequisites. In their mutual implication, all the components of this multiplex time-reckoning system constituted the historically and contextually unique cultural system.

Multiplex time-tracking systems, such as the ones mentioned above, are not easily encompassed by contemporary social science approaches to social time and calendar systems, such as Eviator Zerubavel's *Hidden Rhythms* and *The Seven-day Cycle*. Much of this contemporary work is rooted in Émile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. In that treatise Durkheim (1971/1912: 23) suggested that: 'A calendar expresses the rhythm of the collective activities, while at the same time its function is to assure regularity.' Clearly, from the examples above we can see that social coordination, synchronization and temporal regulation need to be located in a temporal framework that transcends the specific society, in something bigger than the society that is employing temporal know-how to organize its life in time and space. Neither the similarities nor the differences in calendar systems, past and present, across the world, we can safely insist, are reducible to representations of difference in social organization and social function. The sociologist Norbert Elias took an approach that deviated from the functionalist perspectives on time reckoning systems when he focused on the capacity to integrate incompatible elements.

The calendar's unrepeatable succession of numbered years symbolically represents the unrepeatable succession of social and natural events. It thus serves as a means of orientation in the great continuum of change which is at once the natural and the social world. (Elias, 1992: 6)

Elias's work directs us to the importance of the synthesizing process, which he suggests is a precondition to any kind of time reckoning.

In summary to this brief sketch of time tracking we can say that affordances, power and performance rather than function; complexity and multiplicity rather than antinomy; implication and integration rather than cultural evolution, sequence and hierarchy would be some of the more appropriate key concepts to understand the tracking of time and its associated know-how that affords owners of this knowledge power and a certain measure of control over the uncontrollable temporality of existence. In addition, we need to recognize that any given social organization is always embedded in a wider universe of meaning that fundamentally transcends the system of its creation. And, finally, it is important to note that a key achievement of time-tracking systems was the coming to terms with variability and the capacity to integrate incompatible elements of cosmos,

nature, culture and spirit world. This integrating function has been largely dropped in the clock-based time-reckoning system. With clock-time the tie with temporality, contextuality and variation has been severed and contingent rhythmicity replaced with a decontextualized, invariable machine-time. It is this shaping of time to human design that we turn to next.

Transforming Time

Clock-time, which was developed in Europe during the 14th century, no longer tracks and synthesizes time of the natural and social environment but produces instead a time that is independent from those processes: clock-time is applicable anywhere, any time. Context no longer plays a role. Variable hours, which changed with the seasons – in the northern hemisphere, short hours in winter and long ones in the summer; vice versa in the southern hemisphere – are replaced by invariable hours. The clock tells the same hour irrespective whether it is night or day, summer or winter, in the southern or northern hemisphere. Invariability, rather than the integration of fundamental variance is the goal: variance means the clock is going wrong. Standardization, quantification and universalization are its singular achievements. Clock-time is ready for service anywhere on earth and beyond, ready to measure time and structure the day, whatever the field of application. The ease with which clock-time can be applied anywhere has huge advantages compared to time-reckoning systems that were weather-sensitive, such as the water clock that froze up in cold weather, time-tracking technologies that were dependent on daylight such as sun dials, or time-measuring devices that required (constant and/or consistent) maintenance and attendance, such as hour-glasses and candles. With the clock, time keeping ceased to be a chore or problem and became instead a modern, taken-for-granted convenience.

The fact that this machine-time no longer resembles any of the temporalities of existence, that is, change process, cycles of repetition with variance and rhythmicity, initially posed only minor problems. When the invariable time of the clock is superimposed on living systems, it tends to be the living systems that are required to adapt to the machine-time rather than the other way around. In other words, systems marked by variability and imprecision are asked to orient to decontextualized, invariable precision. Thus, for example, people no longer work during the hours of daylight but their working day (with slight historical and contextual variations) extends over a predetermined, mostly fixed, number of hours. Schools start at the same time throughout the year. Cows are milked to a clock-based schedule. To increase their productivity, chickens have their daylight artificially extended to fit the standard day. To enable all-night harvesting, combine harvesters are equipped with floodlights and their drivers paid 'overtime' for the time that exceeds their standard working day. The cumulative effects of these impositions, however, have begun to register on the health of people and the sustainability of their environments.

There is considerable agreement among time scholars about the institutional root of this particular rationalization of time. Among others, the historian Jacques Le Goff (1980), the philosopher Lewis Mumford (1955/1934), the geographer Nigel Thrift (1988) and sociologists Max Weber (1989/1904–5) and Eviatar Zerubavel (1981, 1985) have detailed the slow development of the clock from its early application in the Christian monasteries, where the time discipline was employed to better serve God, to today where it has become an unquestioned, naturalized system of social organization that has been exported across the world as the standard against which all other systems are measured and found wanting. The creation of rationalized time, some of these scholars argue, goes some way to explain the shift in global power from East to West and South to North.

Trading Time

It is particularly in its association with money that clock-time has become the precondition for industrialization and capitalist development, which today constitutes both promise and curse for non-industrialized cultures as well as societies structured and organized on the basis

of different temporal principles. In industrialized societies, time and money are mentioned in the same breath: time is money. Yet this has not always been the case; the relation has not always been, and is not everywhere understood, like this.

Time used to (and in many societies still does) belong to the gods and God/Allah. As such it could not be traded because trade in goods that do not belong to you is theft – ‘usury’ in the words of the Bible. In his seminal *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Max Weber details the shift in understanding of time from God’s gift to commodity, a change in perception and practice that was anything but direct or intended: far from it. Initially directed to the service of God, the rationalization of time in the monasteries was adapted for the ascetic use of Protestants; it was to ensure the salvation of their souls. By the time the religious fervour had begun to fade, making room for pure capitalist accumulation to flourish, the idea that time was money had been set and adopted as norm, the associated practices entrenched, and other temporal orientations and structures de-legitimized. The new knowledge practice had been naturalized, other knowledge practices forgotten, displaced and negated.

When time is money you pay and get paid interest for loans. Efficiency and profitability are linked to achieving maximum output in the minimum time expended. And, as Karl Marx theorized in *Capital* (1976/1867), the fastest throughput and shortest possible capital outlay are part and parcel of that commodification of time. Hence, when time is money faster is better. Speed is valorized as an unquestioned and unquestionable goal. Naturalized as common sense, it overshadows other considerations. It does this not just in the globalized world of work but in all other spheres of social interaction that have been penetrated by this ethos.

With information and communications technologies (ICT) time compression has reached its zenith: succession and duration have been replaced by seeming instantaneity and simultaneity. Duration has been compressed to zero, elevating human capacity to that of extraterrestrial beings, that is, to be everywhere at once and nowhere in particular. With that move the present is extended spatially to encircle the earth. For those with access to ICT, and those implicated in its effects, the present has been globalized and, as Virilio (1995) points out, intensity has taken over from ‘extensity’, bringing with it the possibility of concerted action in ‘real time’. From an economic perspective, therefore, communication at the speed of light is the pinnacle of efficiency.

The economic time values, associated with the trade in time and inescapably tied to the creation of clock-time, have been exported across the world and imposed as globally standardized norm irrespective of their suitability to specific contexts, local conditions and traditions. Cultural resistance to this norm is equated with backwardness. Associated inequities are silenced, their effects rendered invisible. While clock-time dominates the world of work and the global economy, the great majority of the world’s people function in the shadows of the time economy of money. Children and the elderly, the unemployed, carers the world over and subsistence farmers of the majority world inhabit the shadowlands of un- and undervalued time. Women dwell there in unequal numbers. Their time does not register on the radar of commodified time. Their work is not accorded value in the capitalist scheme of things. Rather, it is rendered invisible. As ‘unproductive’ work it is relegated to the shadow of capitalist production, beyond reach and concern (Adam, 2002, 2004: 123–48).

The quest to control time is central to understanding some of these historical changes and developments in temporal relations. As I have suggested above, efforts in the transcendence, tracking and trading of time have smoothed some of the edges of the terror of non-existence. These strategies have provided a semblance of individual and collective control: continuity in the face of finitude, permanence in the face of transience and ephemerality, certainty and security in the face of indeterminacy. The utilization of clock-time for economic purposes, however, provided the ultimate tool for social control. The clock-time-based shift from quality to quantity and from temporality to space (that is, time as measurable length) in particular, has enhanced control not just over processes of production and the organization of work but also over social life more generally. This control is intimately tied to the standardization and rationalization of time into a linear process along whose axis causal events can be plotted on

the one hand and to the transformation of time from God's gift to economic, tradable resource on the other.

However, as every aspect of temporal existence has come to be redefined from the industrial time perspective and restructured accordingly, so the increasingly dramatic effects of that 'mastery' have evaded control. Thus, for example, with the development of networked electronic information technologies that operate at near the speed of light the pre-conditions for temporal control have been eliminated. Cause, sequence, linearity and predictability have been swept away in the quest for the ultimate compression of time: the combination of instantaneity and simultaneity or, to put it differently, information transfer that is instantaneously dispersed across space has been achieved at the *expense* of hundreds of years of advancements in efforts to control the uncontrollable and predict the unpredictable. In the potential instantaneity and simultaneity of information transfer, therefore, new frontiers of control needed to be opened up for exploitation. One of these new frontiers is the future.

Traversing Futures

Of course this new frontier is not really new. The future has been exploited since the Middle Ages when merchants, and especially global traders, needed to calculate their profits and losses for extended periods. With trade ships at sea for months and even years at a time, merchants begun to trade not just goods but the promise of goods; and from that period onwards the trade in futures became part and parcel of the western, capitalist economic system. The trade in futures buys and sells futures for the benefit of the present, for profit in the here and now.

A similar position is taken in another key feature of the economic system, the discounting of the future. Since all profit is established on the basis of its relevance to the present, future events decrease in value proportional to the temporal distances involved. They are discounted to establish their value in, for and to the present. While the system of discounting can be justified for the trade of goods, it becomes highly problematic for the trade in 'bads', to use Ulrich Beck's (1999) term, when it is applied, for example, to environmental problems such as pollution. In this case the standardized economic practice of discounting the future means that a problem that can be calculated to constitute £1 million of trouble in 100 years time can be rendered harmless by this process: discounted, it is no problem worth talking about for us now, in the present.

It is worth noting that future generations, and all other recipients of the eventual effects of that exploitation, do not feature in economic relations to the future such as the trade in and discounting of futures. Just as the work of the majority of the world's people is air-brushed out of the globalized capitalist system of exchange, so the impact on future generations and fellow species is rendered invisible and irrelevant by the temporal strategies that form an integral part of the modern capitalist way of doing business and playing the global market. From the above we can glean that in industrial societies today the present is transcended and the future as last frontier colonized with enduring things, belief systems and institutions, with cultural and technological products, with insurance and economic practices. As such, the future is pursued, prospected, produced, polluted. It is thus traversed in the dual sense of being 'travelled' and negated.

If we now return to the temporal relations we had discussed in the earlier parts of the article, a number of issues come to the fore. Thus, for example, we note that the boundedness of human existence is today transcended as never before. Chemical pollution has reached not just every species in every place on earth but cumulates in fatty tissue and increases with every generation. The impact of nuclear power extends for millennia hence, while genetic engineering taps into the beginning of time to produce effects for an open-ended future, the temporal equivalent of forever. Furthermore, unlike the time transcendence of ancient forebears, the industrial extension into the future is characterized by parasitical borrowing from the future, by prospecting and plundering it for use and benefit in the present without regard to time-space distantiated effects, that is, globalized impacts now and in the future. By depending on science as primary knowledge base and economics as ultimate legitimator of action,

finally, our predecessors' enormous gains in time transcendence and time tracking know-how have been sacrificed for a radical present orientation and the associated abdication of all responsibility for latent, time-space distantiated impacts that will arise as symptoms somewhere and/or some time in the future. Much in our knowledge base and dominant socio-economic practices needs to be changed, therefore, before some of that ground can be regained and new openings can be identified for temporal relations that are both appropriate to the contemporary condition and mindful of others' futures.

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Social Time

Sebastian Olma

Keywords Albert Einstein, Henri Bergson, intensive capitalism, Peter Lynds, time

The publication of Einstein's *On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies* in 1905 revolutionized our understanding of time. What was to become the most famous paper of 20th-century physics created turmoil in 'God's sensorium', which, according to Newton, constituted the proper place of time. Time no longer served as an absolute repository of mechanical movements but became the numerical multiplicity of space-time relations, determined by rulers and clocks. Now Peter Lynds, a 27-year-old broadcasting school tutor from Wellington, New Zealand, has published a paper in *Foundations of Physics Letters* that has stirred up the international physics community once again. Lynds attacks physics for maintaining at its very foundations what in his assessment is a nonsensical notion of time: time as a succession of precise static instants. So far, the reception of Lynds' paper has been as frantic as it has been controversial (the media frenzy has somehow avoided Britain but entering 'Peter Lynds' into an Internet search engine not only generates a host of international press reports on the phenomenon Lynds but also a variety of heated debates within physics discussion forums). The spectrum of reactions ranges from comparisons to Einstein through to musings as to Lynds potential non-existence. Among those sympathetic to Lynds' analysis is John Wheeler of Princeton, collaborator of both Albert Einstein and Richard Feynman.

Lynds attacks physics for maintaining at its very foundations what in his assessment is a nonsensical notion of time: time as a succession of precise static instants. If there were such things, Lynds argues, it would logically follow that the world remained frozen at a precise instant, 'as though stuck on pause or freeze frame on a motion screen' (Lynds, 2003a: 1). This could not be changed by postulating a continuous sequence of further instants, since it is the logical nature of precise instants not to have duration. Thus, in its own understanding of time, physics prohibits continuity and motion to take place.

The solution Lynds offers lies in the fairly outrageous claim that time does not exist at all – or at least not in a way that can be grasped by

conventional physics. Time has no existence as physical quantity. This elusion of time, however, is far from being a distinctly modern phenomenon. In fact, Lynds is able to hark back to Zeno of Elea's motion and infinity paradoxes to demonstrate the historical proportions of the conceptual illusion that he believes to have unveiled. What Zeno's paradoxes seemed to reveal was the impossibility of motion. A tortoise challenges Achilles to a race, gets a 10-metre head start, and claims Achilles can never pass her. When Achilles has run 10 metres the tortoise has moved a further metre. When Achilles has covered that metre, the tortoise has moved 10 centimetres and so on *ad infinitum*. In the dichotomy paradox, Zeno maintains that one can never reach a goal, as in order to get there, one must first travel half of the distance. After having covered that distance, one must still traverse half the remaining distance, and half again, and so on. The final paradox that Lynds refers to concerns a flying arrow that will never reach its target because of it being stationary at each instant of time.

Lynds now argues that Zeno's problems are paradoxes *only as long as* it is assumed that the respective position of a travelling object, Achilles or the arrow, can be precisely determined:

[T]he solution to *all* of the mentioned paradoxes . . . is that there isn't an instant in time underlying the body's motion (if there were, it couldn't be in motion), and as its position is constantly changing no matter how small the time interval, and as such, is at no time determined, it simply doesn't have a determined position. (2003b: 8, original emphasis)

By arguing thus, Lynds clearly and rather surprisingly echoes Henri Bergson's century-old critique of time's quantification. For Bergson, Zeno's paradoxes were due to the illegitimate equation of movement with the space upon which it supposedly takes place (Bergson, 1998 [1907]: 308 *passim*). The latter is extensive and quantifiable whereas the former is intensive and qualitative. What is being attacked by the unlikely couple Bergson–Lynds is precisely the confusion of intensity (movement, quality) with extensity (space, quantity) to which even relativity theory falls prey. Notwithstanding Bergson's shortcomings in dealing with general relativity, he correctly reproached Einstein for reinforcing this confusion (Bergson, 1999 [1922]). Although relativity theory did away with the idea of absolute time

(time independent of things), it introduced the idea of a multiplicity of mathematically discrete space–time blocs/events, thus upholding an essentially spatialized notion of time (Deleuze, 1988). According to Bergson, physics thus missed the opportunity to depart from a pulverized *concept* of time toward an understanding of what he called real duration, that is time as lived becoming, as virtual creative flow that is beyond measure.

With Lynds, Bergson's critique re-emerges in the midst of 21st-century science. What are the implications – we have to ask – of Lynds' involuntary memory of Bergsonism in our own 'present'? If there is anything to be learned from this strange encounter, it would seem to begin with the fact that rather than being shunned as an apostate gone over to the side of the crazy philosophers, Lynds has met with an overwhelming response from the physics community (Adam, 2003). In the beginning of the 20th century, it was rather easy for Einstein to denounce Bergson's proposition of real, qualitative time or real duration as 'philosopher's time' allegedly resting on a dubious blend of physical and psychological time (Bergson, 1999 [1922]: 159). It took almost a century but the heterogeneous reaction to Lynds' intervention seems to suggest that physics' attitude is changing.

If time is not a succession of instants, no more is the time of physics determined by a succession of masterminds. It would be more sensible to hypothesize that a particular society's historical conception of time emerges out of that very society's material practice. Einstein, far from being the detached, other-worldly genius of popular myth, was of course not only firmly embedded in the cultural and technological *Zeitgeist* of mature industrial capitalism but was also among the foremost experts on time-keeping and synchronization technology due to his work in Bern's patent office (Galison, 2003). Consequently, Einstein's time emerged at the heart of a historical movement characterized by an ever tightening disciplinary grip on time (Foucault, 1977). To put it somewhat schematically, Einsteinian time was the time of the confinements, confinements that needed co-ordination. Factories, hospitals, colonies, prisons, etc. formed veritable space–time blocks whose relative position to one another was of vital importance for the workings of the system as a whole. In retrospect, the disciplinary society at its apex seems rather likely to have propelled the emergence of a notion of time as 'being kept' in an assemblage of space–time containers.

From such an historical perspective, then, the re-emergence of Bergson's critique of quantification and extensity is today far from surprising. It coincides with the completion of the *longue durée*

of capitalist extension. Globalization has ended some decades ago, followed by an accelerated intensification of capitalism that Negri, Lazzarato, Virno and others have begun to describe. The end of globalization also signals the end of space as pure quantity and its re-emergence as problem, as something that is now invested with time/quality but not as a succession of concrete, confined blocs but as virtual flow. As modernity's confinements are collapsing, time/quality does not lend itself so easily anymore to spatializing imagination. The phenomenon Lynds is thus isomorphic with post-disciplinary ontology as it finally hits the last bastion of modern epistemology, that is science. In this sense one could understand quantum mechanics as the link between Einstein and Lynds: the 'smearing out' of (subatomic) space–time containers as the physical analogy of time/quality (Foucault's *pouvoir-puissance*) beginning to leak out of the porous walls of modern confinements. Perhaps such an immediate understanding of ontological isomorphism is pushing it a bit far. In any case, what these analogies try to suggest is that Lynds' problematization of time appears in fact to be rather timely. It coincides with capital's increasing virtuosity in managing the problem of the immeasurability of social creativity (Lazzarato, 2002). The biopolitical machinery of unmediated appropriation is already successfully operating on the virtual flows of social creativity – one might think of the project-form that organizes most of today's immaterial labour, the flows of virtual value on the global finance markets, or simply the productivity of Internet consumers. Even such a cursory glance over some contemporary *dispositifs* of production highlights capital's practical adoption of the Bergsonian conception of time that forms the metaphysical background of Lynds' critique. As modernity's four-dimensional space–time blocks mutate into the non-spatial intensity of today's capitalist production, the socius is liberated from Euclidian prisons in order to be hijacked into vitalist custody.

Lynds seems to articulate this shift for the world of science. His attempt to drive space out of physical time is not dissimilar to the management consultant who tries to drive hierarchy out of the organization. Both are trying to get 'closer' to the flow of qualitative duration. And this is perhaps where the significance of the phenomenon Lynds lies: if Einstein's actual 'time revolution' crystallized a notion of time that had long been inherent to the material practice of disciplinary capitalism, maybe Lynds' Bergsonian attempt to unmake this notion indicates that science has once again begun to catch up with material social practice.

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Event

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Keywords Deleuze, event, Stengers, Whitehead

An event is not just something that happens. As a philosophical concept, it exists in relation to a specific set of problems, including the problem of how to conceive of modes of individuation that pertain not to being, or to essences and representation, but to becoming and effectivity. Event-thinking can be understood to be part of an anti-reductionist project that seeks to describe the relations between actual things, bodies and happenings, and the independent reality of these events in themselves. It is thus an especially relevant concept with regards to the problematization of knowledge, and in particular to the philosophy of science. The concept of the event brings with it implications for (among other things): the relation between language and the world; conceptions of substance and materiality; ethics.

The event preoccupied the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze for much of his career, during which time he 'renew[ed] and recreat[ed] a metaphysical tradition that extends from the Stoics through Leibniz to Bergson and Whitehead' (Patton, 1996: 12). From the Stoics, Deleuze distinguishes between two kinds of entities. On the one hand there are bodies which exist in space and in time (in the present) with their corresponding 'states of affairs', while on the other there are incorporeal beings or transformations. Incorporeal

beings, Deleuze (2004: 7) writes, 'are not things or facts, but events. We cannot say that they exist, but rather that they subsist or inhere'. They subsist or inhere, for example, in the expressed of the proposition, which Deleuze (2004: 22) calls sense, that is, 'an incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity, at the surface of things, a pure event'.

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze adds a fourth dimension to the three generally agreed upon relations of the proposition. These three are: denotation, which is the relation of the proposition to an external state of affairs; manifestation, which is the relation of the proposition to the person who speaks and expresses themselves; and signification, which is the relation of the word to universal or general concepts (Deleuze, 2004: 16–18). Unlike the circle which characterises the proposition – '[f]rom denotation to manifestation, then to signification, but also from signification to manifestation and to denotation' (2004: 20) – Deleuze argues that sense should be understood as the boundary between propositions and things, that it is 'the coexistence of two sides without thickness' (2004: 25). Sense subsists in the proposition but it does not merge with it, nor with the state of affairs or the quality which the proposition denotes: 'It is this *aliquid* at once extra-Being and inherence, that is, this minimum of being which befits inferences' (2004: 25). Significantly, Deleuze's use of the Stoic conception of the event enables the relation between language and the world to be reconfigured: denotation and manifestation do not found language, but are rather made possible with it, and what renders language

possible is the event. Indeed, in *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze argues that language, when it operates actively and creatively (as it does in some literature), not only expresses but also extends the transformative power of an event.

For Deleuze, the relation of events to states of affairs is not that of the possible to the real, but of the virtual to the actual. The world is actual-virtual, and as such maintains the power of virtuality; the capacity of a thing to become differently. This point is particularly well expressed by the infinitive verb, which has two dimensions: on the one hand it is virtual and incorporeal, it is a potentiality or becoming, while on the other hand it indicates a substantive relation to a state of affairs which, as noted above, takes place in a physical time characterized by succession. This is why the infinitive is so important to Deleuze's conception of the event. It indicates that an event is not bound to a particular space and time, but may be experienced whenever and wherever it is actualized anew. It is because an event can be actualized in multiple ways that it retains an openness to re-inventions (or re-actualizations). The concept of the event, informed by the concept of the virtual, not only contributes to an explanation of the relations between things therefore, but also accounts for the inexhaustible reserve or excess that produces novelty.

Deleuze's (1995: 160) problematization of things is especially clearly laid out in *The Fold* (2001) in which he turns to (or perhaps more accurately, inhabits) the work of Leibniz and Whitehead. Both Leibniz and Whitehead rejected substance as the basic metaphysical category and chose instead to privilege continuity. Theirs is not the continuity of rectilinear tracks or of lines that could dissolve into independent points however, but of an infinite series of individuated monads (Leibniz) or of actual entities or occasions, coalitions of prehensions (Whitehead). Although there are significant conceptual differences between monadic and prehensive units, they nevertheless share one striking feature. In each, all the elements in the same world are in contact with or connected to each other; there are no gaps, and there is no outside. This challenge to absolute theories of time, space and matter, and the role of the event in posing that challenge, finds special relevance with regards to the philosophy of science and in particular to recent developments in contemporary social science studies of science in which there has been renewed interest in the work of Alfred North Whitehead (Barry, 2005; Haraway, 1997: 146–7; Latour, 2004; Stengers, 2002). It is worth pausing here briefly therefore to consider Whitehead's take on the event and how both Deleuze and Whitehead's work has influenced at least one

contemporary philosopher of science, Isabelle Stengers, before returning to the main thesis of (and problems with) *The Fold*.

For Whitehead (1920), the recourse to time and space as a means of unifying nature – for example the claim that the redness of the fire and the agitation of the molecules occur at the same time and in the same space – cannot suffice as an explanation, for it demands that time and space be apprehended independently of the events that occur *in* time, or of the objects that *occupy* space. The concepts of time and space cannot therefore provide a metaphysical starting point. Whitehead argues instead that they (along with subjects and objects) are abstractions, reified entities that are *to be* explained by the contingent, changing, but nevertheless concrete elements and events from which they are abstracted. In contrast to the notion that time is an ordered succession of instants without duration and that space is a system of points without extension, Whitehead suggests that duration is the field of the event: points and instants, spatial and temporal divisibility and extensiveness, are the 'properties' of a duration. Duration 'is the old-fashioned "present state of the world"' (Whitehead, 1978: 320). Time is a succession of durations, and it is by 'becoming temporal' that a duration incurs the realization of an enduring object (Whitehead, 1985: 159). In short, an event (a concert, or a sound, or a molecule) does not move *through* time and space and nor do changes occur *in* space and time. Instead, motion and change are attributable to the differences between successive events, each with their own durations. 'There is a becoming of continuity', Whitehead (1978: 35) writes, 'but no continuity of becoming'.

There are undoubtedly some points of resonance between Deleuze's understanding of sense as 'aliquid' – as both extra-Being and inherence – and Whitehead's concept of an eternal object. Eternal objects, for Whitehead, are 'the pure potentials of the universe' (1978: 149). They can be qualities, such as colours or sounds, or figures, like pyramids. As such, they come close to being universals – 'though not quite', Whitehead adds (1978: 48). The point in the context of Whitehead's work is that eternal objects are neither delusions nor secondary qualities (like the red of the fire) that a mind *mistakenly* perceives to be an attribute of matter. On the contrary, the perceiver of the colour red is also part of (is enfolded into) the event. Indeed Whitehead conceives of each 'perceiver' or element in an event to be a relation, or rather a prehension, which is by definition constituted by its prehension of and by other prehensions in a nexus (an event). Thus, as Deleuze (2001: 78) explains, '[t]he eye is a

prehension of light' and 'seeing' is an achievement conditioned by the event. Nevertheless, although prehending and being prehended are important dimensions of process, they are not sufficient (they do not deliver meaning) in themselves. It is the manner in which prehensions are received – their 'subjective form' – that shapes the character of the entity: 'how an actual entity becomes', Whitehead (1978: 23) writes, 'constitutes what that actual entity is'. The singularity of an event is based not simply on the *coming* together of prehensions therefore, but on their *becoming* together in a particular way. The question as to whether an entity – a scientific artefact or work of art for example – is 'real' or whether it is a 'representation' is thus displaced in favour of the question as to what it can do. What does *this* particular set of relations and *this* specific mode of belonging-together problematize?

Although the contemporary Belgian philosopher of science, Isabelle Stengers, does not conceive of an event in exactly the sense that Deleuze and Whitehead do, her understanding of it is certainly informed by a similar interest in problems. For Stengers, a scientific experiment is an event only if it makes a difference between a before and an after, that is, if it is able to invent new practices, and new ways of thinking and feeling about a problem. This is precisely why Stengers puts modern science under the sign of the event, for by inventing 'the power to confer on things the power of conferring on the experimenter the power to speak in their name' (2000: 88) a new relation between fact and fiction was introduced. The event constitutes one of the most important and valuable aspects of Stengers' approach to science, because it enables her to respect the singularity of modern science without confirming its privilege on this basis. For although the event is the creator of difference, it does not identify in advance for whom it will make a difference, or in what way. It is not the bearer of signification. Instead, '[t]he scope of the event is part of its effects, of the problem posed in the future it creates' (Stengers 2000: 66). *All* those who are touched by an event define and are defined by it, whether they align themselves to it or oppose it. Not only does the event have no privileged representative therefore (science is not the domain of scientists alone), it is also impossible for any participant in an event, by definition, to stand outside of it and to pass judgement on it, or to explain it *away* with reference to a history, culture or geographical area. As in Deleuze and Whitehead's conception of an event, this is an understanding that foregrounds contingency, 'without basing contingency on some specific ontological foundation (such as language,

discourse, the body, or materiality)' (Mackenzie, 2005: 9).

In *The Fold* Deleuze draws on Leibniz and Whitehead in order to emphasize the constant enfolding, unfolding, and refolding of matter, time and space. 'The unit of matter,' he (2001: 6) writes, 'the smallest element of the labyrinth, is the fold, not the point'. In this way, Deleuze delivers a profound blow to any philosophy that rests on a distinction between the knowing subject and the object for knowledge. In Deleuze's 'objectless knowledge' (Badiou, 1994: 67), the object refers not to a spatialized relation of form-matter, but to a *temporal* modulation, a variation, in a continuum. Correlatively, the subject, which also represents variation, is a 'point of view'. This does not mean that the subject 'has' a point of view (which would imply a pre-given subject), or that the truth varies from subject to subject (which would imply that the truth is relative), but rather that the point of view is 'the condition in which the truth of a variation appears to the subject' (Deleuze, 2001: 20). For Deleuze, truth is variation. And, as an immanent inflection of the continuous, the event is the condition of truth, the condition of what is possible to be true in any local situation (thus the opposite of the truth, in Deleuze's account, is not the false but the absurd, or that which is neither true nor false). Which is precisely the problem for Alain Badiou. The event, understood by Deleuze as that which emerges out of an ontological univocity, 'as what singularizes continuity in each of its local folds' (Badiou, 1994: 56), is too much *of* the world, is so much a part of the world, in fact, that Badiou feels obliged to call its singularity into question: how is it possible to distinguish an event from a fact if 'everything is event'? Deleuze's concept of the fold is so profoundly antiextensional, Badiou argues, so labyrinthine and directly qualitative, that he is unable to account for the singularity of an event or rupture at all.

Perhaps Deleuze's contribution to event-thinking should ultimately be judged by the extent to which he was able to invent concepts that affirm and extend events. This, he argues in *What is Philosophy?* (with Guattari, 1994), is the role of philosophy itself: 'There is a dignity of the event that has always been inseparable from philosophy as *amor fati*: being equal to the event, or becoming the offspring of one's own events' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 158). Being equal to the event means willing the event in a way that involves neither resignation nor *ressentiment*, that is affirmative, that transforms the quality of the will itself. In this *ethical* task, Deleuze owes as much to Nietzsche as he does to the Stoics. Indeed in this context, Philip Goodchild (1996: 53) argues

that the eternal return should be understood ‘not [as] a theory of time, but [as] a technique for living the event’. Less ambitiously however, one might argue that Deleuze’s conception of the event – and particularly his emphasis on the problem, and on the way that the problem, which is conditioned by the event, will always be different and irreducible to the solutions it engenders (just as an event always exceeds the bodies in which it is actualized) – offers a practical orientation for the way that ethics itself, including Deleuze’s own ethics, might be judged. That is: ‘less by the types of solutions that are being proposed for the problems than by the way in which the positioning of the problem and the solutions proposed situate and involve those to whom they are addressed’ (Stengers with Ralet, 1997: 221–2). This does not involve inventive problem-solving. It involves inventive problem-making.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Andrew Barry, Andrew Goffey, Adrian Mackenzie and Alberto Toscano for comments on earlier drafts of this entry. All errors are my own.

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Chronotope

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Keywords Bakhtin, science, space, theory, time

The relevance of a concept can be evaluated not only for its rigor or efficacy at the basis of a theoretical system, but also by inquiring to what extent, and through which forms, this concept has been diffused beyond the limits of the discipline or area of knowledge in which it was originally proposed. The power of certain categories is connected to the fact that they allow themselves to be translated into the languages, and according to the parameters, of other fields of knowledge. Considering the transformations that have occurred in the passage from one field to another, one can therefore claim that the importance of a concept cannot be disassociated from its ability to generate images and stimulate metaphorical appropriations.

One of the most evident demonstrations of this claim can be found in the way that the category of time–space, introduced in the first decade of the 20th century by the physicist Albert Einstein, was taken up by Mikhail Bakhtin as a reference for his concept of *chronotope*. In the introduction to his article ‘Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel’, written in the 1930s, the Russian thinker defines it thus:

We will give the name *chronotope* (literally, ‘time space’) to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. This term is employed in mathematics, and was introduced as part of Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. The special meaning it has in relativity theory is not important for our purposes; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not entirely). (Bakhtin, 1981: 84)

If we take the power of influence of their theories as a criterion, and the fact that they produce a complex set of discourses that have been more or less institutionalized, on several levels of cultural reality, there is no doubt that Einstein and Bakhtin are among the most respected names in western thought. It is unlikely, therefore, that the consonance between the concepts of space–time and the chronotope, as well as the strong effect and the continuing interest they arouse, is fortuitous. It is more

reasonable to suppose that both concepts express fundamental questions and problems of physics and the theory of language, which is to say that both concepts efficiently synthesize the attempts to equate epistemological questions considered central to the 20th century, questions related to dissatisfaction with the ways available up to that moment for dealing with notions of time and space, movement and position, duration and extension, change and structure, history and context, possibility and determination.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the concepts of time–space and chronotope play specific roles in the histories of their respective areas of knowledge. When these roles are compared, the discrepancies between the two terms become clear. The Einsteinian concept fulfills the function of contradicting common sense in ‘pre-scientific’ thought, which conceives space and time as ‘real things’, directly observable by sense experience, a conception that is to some extent endorsed by Newtonian physics. At the same time, it is opposed to Kantian idealism, which regards space and time as a priori categories. It should be noted as well that time is incorporated into space, is one of its dimensions in a four-dimensional space. The Bakhtinian concept acts as the negation of a formalist tradition, which defines language in terms of intrinsic data. This is a question of foregrounding historical factors, understood as those factors that define a given concrete reality. Although the concept affirms that time and space are inseparable, it is time that is given priority, regarded as synonymous with history.

There is therefore a significant difference. Einsteinian thought explores the consequences of disconnecting what are considered fundamental concepts from the experience of the human senses, which obliges the notion of science to conciliate radical speculation with the need for an experimental demonstration of the facts. For Bakhtinian thought, it is a matter of defending a positive conception of knowledge, based above all on the primacy of the notion of history as a concrete instance of reality to the detriment of idealistic interpretations, which make use of transcendental presuppositions, especially concerning aesthetic questions, from which is derived the great emphasis given to the body as material reality of the world.

It must be said that the conceptual-metaphorical play developed in Bakhtin’s work, despite the

explicit admission of being inspired by Einstein, does not privilege a debate associated with the transformations of classical physics within those of modern physics, but mainly the confrontation between a Ptolemaic model of language, in which a unique linguistic consciousness and the centripetal character of social forces prevail, and a Copernican model (also referred to as Galilean), marked by centrifugal forces and by a relative, plural, dialogic linguistic consciousness. It is possible to suppose that the Einsteinian inspiration arises from the appropriation, in a very broad sense, of the notion of *relativity*, understood as a generic opposition to everything intended to be *absolute*. In Einstein's theory, however, relativity only makes sense when the velocity of light is regarded as an undisputed constant. It is not a question of opposing *relative* to *absolute*, but of determining to what systems these values can or cannot be applied.

It is tempting to suppose that, in the ambivalence of Bakhtin's concept relative to Einstein's, the ambivalence of a good part of the field of humanities in the first part of the 20th century is revealed. This field seeks to claim its scientific basis in two conflicting ways: in one, by drawing near to the natural sciences as a model of positive and socially legitimated knowledge; in the other, by distancing itself from them through the attempt to establish theoretical and methodological specificity. This duplicity explains why, on a fairly regular basis, concepts are shared by disciplines, even if, owing to the particularities they take on, they can be regarded as metaphors in relation to another discipline's theoretical context. Independently of the degree of fidelity or freedom in the passage from one context to another, the concept-metaphors make up a common field of interest whose theoretical productivity and power of imaginative suggestion are seen in the developments appropriate to the limits and openings of each area of knowledge.

If chronotope is 'almost but not entirely' a metaphor of space-time, one may ask if such irrefutable ambivalence does not indicate the very difficulty of distinguishing the metaphorical from the conceptual operation. In Bakhtin's theoretical model, the chronotope acts as a concept to which specific features are attributed and, at the same time, as a metaphor that evokes aspects of the Einsteinian concept. And yet, a rigorous separation between the two uses cannot be established either; to what extent the term aspires to generality, with its foundational and propositional function, and to what extent it does not have its own meaning, but merely operates in a diffuse and suggestive way by analogy, cannot be defined.

Time-space and chronotope meet, conceptually and metaphorically, in a common epistemological field that has selected as a basic problem the human determination of knowledge, which includes the debate over the universal and the particular, absolute and relative, fact and discourse, what can be demonstrated and what can be imagined. The thought of Einstein and of Bakhtin share, even though in different senses, the tension between the acceptance of a human scale for knowledge – in which its historicity is primary, to which the limitations and potentialities that ground it in a specific context are connected – and the transposition of this scale, the search for which is beyond the human capacity for perception and conception.

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Contingency

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(Translated by Thomas Burns)

Keywords catastrophe, dialectical images, expectation, experience, fortune, memory, necessity

To think of contingency today means to reflect on a series of other concepts, such as chance, accident, rupture, shock, catastrophe, chaos, fortune, luck, indetermination and freedom, and to dialectically confront them with as many others, such as necessity, fate, experience, rationality, continuity, progress, *historia magistra vitae*, teleology, order and determination. From Aristotle to Derrida (1972) – by way of poets like Mallarmé with his ‘*Un coup de dés*,’ which ends with the phrase: ‘*Toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés*’ – the number of authors who think about the question of contingency is large. Here, we shall analyze this question on the basis of a few ideas of Walter Benjamin. First, however, it is important to quickly recount some of the uses of the term contingency and the conceptual context in which it is encountered.

A distinction has been made since Aristotle between events that are necessary (cf. *anankê*, necessity) and those that occur by chance (*Physic* II, 5–6). From chance occurrences, he also distinguished between good and evil fortune. His definition is important: ‘Chance and what results from chance are appropriate to agents that are capable of good fortune and of moral action generally. Therefore necessarily chance is in the sphere of moral actions.’ The ‘deliberate intention’ is decisive in this case. He also established a hierarchy that has become standard: ‘no incidental cause can be prior to a cause per se’. Chance, *tyche*, is a type of efficient, or incidental cause, that is differentiated from ‘spontaneity’, where there is no rational choice. Aristotle writes: ‘an inanimate thing or a lower animal or a child cannot do anything by chance, because it is incapable of deliberate intention; nor can “good fortune” or “ill fortune” be ascribed to them, except metaphorically. . . . The spontaneous on the other hand is found both in the lower animals and in many inanimate objects.’ For the atomists, however, as in the case of Epicurus, fortune is associated with *anankê*, blind necessity, which operates without a specific end. Men work for the freedom of means

to go against this fixed rule: such contingency he understood as the concept of *tyche*.

This ancient model will partly be followed and partly criticized by the theologians of Christianity. Among the pagan gods, Fortune was the one who had the longest life. St Augustine was ironic in his *City of God* (IV, 18) when he asked: ‘How is it, then, that the goddess Fortune is sometimes good, sometimes bad?’ For Aquinas, ‘while there are no proximate causes of fortuitous events, there is an ultimate cause’ (Bolwin, 1999: 9). Aquinas argues, to save the moral aspect of action, ‘that we cannot fear that God’s knowledge of the future fixes its character. Rather, we can only say that God knows what we know as future contingents, together with all other things past and present, in a glance, in a flash, in a timeless instant’ (Bolwin, 1999: 10). And the author continues: ‘contingency, chance, and fortune are features of the world because God has willed them there’ (Bolwin, 1999: 11). These arguments are similar to those of Augustine (*De civ. Dei* XI, 21) and Boethius (*De Consol.* V 2–6).

In modernity, this theological perspective gradually gives way to a teleology based on the idea of progress that projects a reason and sense of history. The enlightenment optimism of Leibniz and Alexander Pope, co-opted also by theological models that gave meaning to the Theodicy, is shaken after 1755, the year of the Lisbon earthquake, and especially after 1789. Voltaire took advantage of the natural catastrophe, in his *Poème sur le désastre de Lisbonne*, to criticize both the Christian doctrines that saw in it divine punishment and the optimists who believed they lived in the best of worlds. He offered no meaning for what had occurred, a lack that was something new. If Voltaire sometimes still gave a moralizing reading to history, with the new historiography the desire to include everything in an attempt to rationally comprehend history beyond each isolated fact gradually became established.

During this period and in the 19th century an attempt was made in historiography to overcome the notion of chance and contingency. If Raymond Aron could write in the 20th century that ‘*Le fait historique est, par essence, irréductible à l'ordre: le hasard est le fondement de l'histoire*’ (1981: 21), in the previous centuries the opposite occurred. The young Friedrich the Great had written in the 18th century: ‘*La fortune et le hasard sont des mots*

vides de sens' and Montesquieu and Gibbon were not less critical of those concepts. The teleology of nature, in Kant, and of the spirit, in Hegel, was gradually taken over by a concern for a 'scientific' historiography that would be impartial before the facts. On the other hand, we may think that the distance between experience (*Erfahrung*) and expectation (*Erwartung*) increased so much in modernity that we can no longer construct experience, tending to live enclosed in the present and in the expectation of new events. Experience is no longer sufficient to ground expectation. Benjamin was recognized to have theorized this fact with his concept of the end of experience (*Erfahrung*).

Walter Benjamin did not directly employ the notion of contingency, but we may regard him as the theoretician of history who went furthest in thinking about contingency. The theory of allegory that Benjamin developed in his book on German Baroque drama emphasizes the role of that trope in the destruction of the 'false appearance of totality' (Benjamin: I 352), which enlightenment historiography and historicism tried to defend. This destruction is correlated with the 'cult of ruins' (Benjamin: I 354) and of the fragment:

When, with Baroque drama [*Trauerspiel*], history is staged, it becomes so in the form of writing. The word 'history,' with its transitory characters, is found on the face of nature. The allegorical physiognomy of nature-history, which *Trauerspiel* stages, is effectively present as ruins. . . . What is encountered there in the form of débris is the highly significant fragment: this is the material of Baroque creation. (Benjamin: I 353–4)

For the Baroque man, we might say, to use an extreme expression, life is summed up by the production of the cadaver. The world of Baroque drama is not the only one dominated by the sad, ambiguous figure of the sovereign who 'holds in his hands the historical event' (Benjamin: I 245). In fact, in the 17th century, the stage also penetrates history and one of the ways to perceive this phenomenon is to consider the new concept of sovereignty during this period. The Baroque man 'is obsessed with the idea of catastrophe as the antithesis of the historical idea of Restoration. It is on this antithesis that the theory of the State of Exception (*Ausnahmezustand*) is built . . . if the religious man of the Baroque holds on so tightly to the world it is because he feels himself being dragged by it toward destruction. The Baroque is not aware of any eschatology; what exists in itself is a dynamic that joins and exalts all earthly things before they are given up to consummation' (Benjamin: I 246). It is this dynamic that is at the basis of the Baroque allegory as an exercise of infi-

nately *resignifying* a world/signified 'disenchanted' and emptied from any totalizing meaning.

Allegory in the 19th century, or more precisely Baudelairean allegory, emerged from the sense of the transitory and contingent that is rooted in the advent of the modern city. The law of the city – the law of Hausmann, the mayor of Paris who wanted to redesign the face of the city – is that of constant destruction and construction. The photographer Eugène Atget – whose photos of Paris, in which the city appears uninhabited, enchanted not only the surrealists but Benjamin himself – documents and witnesses a city transformed into the ruins of itself: in the texts that came with the prints of his photos, he noted '*va disparaître*'. The Baudelairean cult of images is precisely the response to constant and irreparable loss: 'What you know you will no longer have before you turns into an image', Benjamin writes in his '*Das Paris des Second Empire bei Baudelaire*' of 1938. This feeling of the ephemeral nature of the world creates melancholy, the 'spleen' that Benjamin defines as 'the feeling that corresponds to permanent catastrophe' (Benjamin: V 437).

Benjamin also asserts that 'the experience of the allegory, which fixes itself on the ruins [*Trümmern*] is properly that of the eternal ephemeral' (Benjamin: V 439). Instead of the feeling of the continuity of time, one has the sensation of drowning in the avalanche of seconds: 'the minutes cover a man like snowflakes', he (2003: 335) says, and goes on to write: 'This time is historyless'. The modern individual who has missed the streetcar of history remains at the station, paralyzed. 'Why speak of progress,' Benjamin asks, 'to a world that sinks into a deathly rigidity? . . . The concept of progress should be founded upon the idea of catastrophe. It is not the always imminent but the always given' (Benjamin: V, 592; I 682–3). The historian/allegorist of Benjamin is the one who turns to the ruins of history/catastrophe to collect its fragments. In this vision of history, there is no longer a place for traditional, representational, historiography, which presupposes a 'distance' and an 'impartiality' between the historian and his/her 'object', as well as the corresponding figure of the historian as someone who himself firmly grips the reins of his knowledge.

In the essay 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' (1939), Benjamin developed a conception of the present time as a *time of shock*. In modernity, what was once the exception – shock – has now become the rule. Starting from a reading of Freud's text *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1921), Benjamin points out the incompatibility in our psychic economy between perception/consciousness and memory. Quoting Freud, he claims that 'emerging

consciousness takes the place of a memory trace' (Benjamin, 2003: 317). It is not the place here to recount the Freudian theory of trauma, but only to note how Benjamin translates into Proustian terms the equation derived from it: 'Only what has not been experienced explicitly and consciously, what has not happened to the subject as an isolated experience [*Erlebnis*], can become a component of *mémoire involontaire*' (Benjamin, 2003: 317). The modern world would be the world of shocks and its inhabitants would be totally mobilized to protect themselves from them and, in such a way, prevent the destruction of the ego. For Benjamin, such attentive vigilance would also prevent the building of authentic experience [*Erfahrung*], in which 'certain contents of the individual past combine in the memory with material from the collective past' (Benjamin, 2003: 316).

He detects the experience of shock in the member of the crowd, as well as in the experience of the worker at his machine or the pedestrian in traffic. For him: 'The catastrophe [must be seen] as a continuum of history' (Benjamin: I 1244), or even, in a wry mood, 'Catastrophe is progress, progress is catastrophe' (Benjamin: I 1244). If he gives a definition of 'the present as catastrophe' (Benjamin: I 1243), it is precisely because 'The ideal of the experience of shock is catastrophe' (Benjamin: I 1182). On the other hand, for Benjamin, the time of genuine *experience* is that which is deduced from the rhythm of handiwork; in his world, activities that correspond to this kind of experience are, in addition to the work of the artisan, agriculture and travel. The *mémoire involontaire*, however, cannot restore this organic time of the world of experience; it too is 'historyless'.

The act of the historian/allegorist, who also freezes the past *in images*, corresponds to this interruption of history. Benjamin's most famous concept, the *dialectical image*, is the result of this conception of historiography as the destruction of the 'false appearance of totality':

Both the paralysis of thought [*Stillstellen*] and its movement belong to thought. Wherever thought is paralyzed in a constellation loaded with tensions there appears the dialectical image. It is the caesura in the movement of thought [*Es ist die Zäsur in der Denkbewegung*]. Naturally, its locale is not arbitrary. It must be sought, in a word, where the tensions between dialectical oppositions are found at their greatest. Thus, the dialectical image is the object itself, constructed by the presentation of historical materialism. It is identical with the historical object; it justifies its removal outside the continuum of history's path. (Benjamin: V 595)

Just as for the allegorist the world rid of all ontologically determined meaning was transformed into a set of images that should have been reinvested with meaning, in the same way the historian/collector sees history fall apart in images loaded with tensions: he revives them starting from his *now*. (Benjamin: V 578.)

The dialectical images are also defined by Benjamin as 'the involuntary memory of redeemed humanity' (Benjamin: I 1233). That is, the 'now' that is at the basis of the knowledge of history establishes the ground for the *recognition* of an image of the past that, in fact, is an 'image of memory. It looks like the images of the past itself that rise up before people at the moment of danger' (Benjamin: I 1243). Instead of the search for the (mimetic) representation of the past 'just as it was', as the traditional historicist and positivist positions on history supposed it (that is to say: representationalists and enemies of the concept of contingency), Benjamin wants to articulate the past historically by appropriating it 'from a reminiscence'. The historian must have a presence of spirit (*Geistesgegenwart*) to pick out these images at the moment they offer themselves: in this way he saves them by paralyzing them (Benjamin: I 1244). This history, built on the basis of the involuntary memory, rejects and eliminates the 'epic moment of the exhibition of history', its representation according to a monologically ordained narration. 'Involuntary memory never offers . . . a path but rather an image (from which comes 'disorder' like the imagistic-space of involuntary memory) (Benjamin: I 1243). This image is *read* by the historian and therefore is a hieroglyphic image, a kind of writing: 'Reading what was never written'. These words of the poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal that Benjamin quotes might serve very well as an epigraph for his work.

To this reading guided by the chaotic rhythm of involuntary memory corresponds a fragmented historiography (which is not a simple *mimesis* of the omnipresence of shock and the trauma of modernity, since the historian aims his knowledge toward a *political* intervention in *his present*). Benjamin incorporates into this historiography – guided by the *principle of similarity*, which rules memory – the main artistic principle of the vanguard, namely, montage/collage (Benjamin: V 574). What gives way to the destructive force of the principle of montage/collage is a certain modality of tradition, namely, that of the *Würdigung als Erbe*, the apology of the past as heritage and continuity, which Benjamin calls a *catastrophic* modality of tradition, to the extent that it *conceals* the fragile moments where continuity can be broken (Benjamin: V 591s.; I 1246).

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Space

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Abstract The turn to space is best understood as part of a more general struggle to produce a material thinking that has preoccupied social theory over the last 20 years or so. Its effect has been to multiply both the number of inhabitations that are understood to exist and the sensory registers through which they can be characterized. Most particularly, this proliferation of inhabitations has meant that nearness has been replaced by distribution as a guiding metaphor and ambition. The paper is in three parts. Using the work of Julie Mehretu as a guide, the first part considers the different ways in which space makes a difference. The second part then uses three vignettes to understand the range of spaces that can be produced and how they become attuned. Finally, there is a brief conclusion.

Keywords materiality, process, space

Introduction

During the last 20 years or so, a 'spatial turn' has made its way across the social sciences and humanities. It has arisen from all kinds of theoretical and practical impulses, but its effect has been clear enough: the identification of what seems like a constantly expanding universe of spaces and territories, each of which provides different kinds of inhabitation – from the bordering provided by the womb, through all the things in the home that are just out of reach, through the corporeal traces of buildings and landscapes that provide a kind of half-remembered poetics, through the ways in which vast political and commercial empires – and the resultant wealth and misery – can be fashioned from the mundane comings and goings of ships and trains and now planes, through all of the billions of invisible messages that fleetingly inhabit the radio spectrum and each another dimension on to life.

There are no doubt many reasons to believe that the spatial turn will prove to be of lasting significance. But, in the final analysis, or so I would claim, the 'spatial turn' has proved to be a move of extraordinary consequence because it questions categories like 'material', 'life' and 'intelligence' through an emphasis on the unremitting materiality of a world where there are no pre-existing objects. Rather, all kinds of hybrids are being continually recast by processes of circulation within and between particular spaces. The world is made up of all kinds of things brought in to relation with one another by this universe of spaces through a continuous and largely involuntary process of encounter and the often violent training that the encounter forces. This material schematism that has had some obvious forebears in the social sciences and humanities. I think of Gabriel Tarde's micrometaphysics, Pitirim Sorokin's forays into socio-cultural causality, Torsten Hägerstrand's time-geography, or Anthony Giddens's expeditions around social theory in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It has achieved more grip of late because of theoretical developments like actor-network theory, and the consequent rediscovery of authors such as Tarde and Whitehead, as well as the influence of the writings of authors like Deleuze and Guattari. As and probably more importantly, a whole series of fields have been constructed out of the resurgence of what Paul Carter (2004) calls 'material thinking', the 'performative' working methods and procedures of writings (and, very importantly, other

methods of exposition) that emphasize how the whole business of praxis and poesis is wrapped up in the stubborn plainness of things, in ‘tool-being’ (Harman, 2002). These fields must necessarily emphasize the materiality of thinking, and include the study of material culture, the sociology of science, performance studies from dance to poetry, site-based art and architecture, various aspects of archaeology and museum studies, some of the excursions into interaction design, as well as various developments in cultural geography like non-representational theory. In particular, they have been forced to take the energy of the sense-catching forms of things seriously (Critchley, 2005) – rather than see things as mere cladding – because of their object of enquiry and, as a result, have begun to forge a new approach to ‘theory’, one which is both more and less abstract, more and less empirical.

In this short piece, I can only begin to outline why the processual sensualism that a material schematism provides is so important and how the study of the spaces of the world is now changing to accommodate that fact. So, I will begin by listing some of the dos and don’ts that this sense of space dictates. Then, I will move on to suggest three ways in which space makes more than a difference. I will argue that space opens up whole new worlds by making it possible to write about life without falling back into a romantic quest for a place of safety and about society without falling back on to static categories and about knowledge of being without falling back on the recondite. Finally, there is the briefest of conclusions in which I foreshadow the possibility of new a-where-nesses.

Why Space?

I am a great admirer of the intricately layered, flickering topographies of Julie Mehretu, the Ethiopian-American artist. Though one can see all kinds of echoes in her work – the historical push of Delacroix and Goya, the geometric swirls and abstractions of Kandinsky, Klee, Malevich and Mondrian, the enveloping wash of colour field painting, the various iconic and graphical moments that act as the frames of popular culture, such as brands and comic books and tattoos, the kinds of excerpt protest represented by practices as different as those of graffiti artists, propagandists and situationists, and the poetics of contemporary architects like Hadid or Ando – I think she also produces something new, a sense of what high-velocity hybrid landscapes made up of many kinds of actor and of plural events happening at many locations might look/feel/work like.

Mehretu’s canvasses try to incorporate many kinds of spaces, many kinds of dynamics, many kinds of existences, many kinds of imagination, holding each of these spaces in tension and never trying to resolve them: collisions, concordances, cataclysms, they are all here, along with ‘speed, dynamism, struggle and potential’ (Mehretu in Fogle and Ilesanmi, 2004: 14). Instead of resolution, she sees her task as trying to produce a sense of trajectory which is probably the nearest thing to what used to be called history that social theory can now offer.

It seems to me that four closely related principles underlie her moves, principles that should be at the root of any approach to space. The first is that everything, but everything, is spatially distributed, down to the smallest monad: since the invention of the microscope, at least, even the head of a pin has been seen to have its own geography. Every space is shot through with other spaces in ways that are not just consequential outcomes of some other quality but live because they have that distribution. It is a bit like modern biology, which has discovered that the process of cell growth relies on a sense of where things are to produce particular parts of an organism, a sense that is more than just the provision of a map but rather is a fundamental part of the process of growth, built into the constitution of organ-ism itself. This is much more than complexity. Rather, it harks back to the insights of Gabriel Tarde on complex composites: that small can be as complex as large, indeed that the smaller can be the bigger entity, that the world is heterarchic through and through with the same method pertaining at all levels, and that the big therefore foregrounds some of the features of the small (Latour, 2002).

Second, there is no such thing as a boundary. All spaces are porous to a greater or lesser degree. For example, bodies caught in freeze-frame might look like envelopes but, truth to

tell, they are leaky bags of water, constantly sloughing off pieces of themselves, constantly leaving traces – effluent, memories, messages – through moments of good or bad encounter in which practices of organization and community and enmity are passed on, sometimes all but identically, sometimes bearing something new.

Third, every space is in constant motion. There is no static and stabilized space, though there are plenty of attempts to make space static and stable. Process (or perhaps, more accurately, force-being) is all in that it is all that there is, process arising out of informed or ‘transducted’ material and the lines of force of invention that result from ‘creating a novel entity other than the entities given in disjunction’ (Whitehead, 1978: 21). In this Whiteheadian microphysics ‘the world is a flux of vectors, vectorial connections actualized in the events through which it pluralises itself by expressing its own energetic activity in variable configurations’ (Alliez, 2004: 2). (Such an emphasis on creative self-determination as a sacrament of expression could no doubt be associated with many other neo-monadological positions: for example, Tarde’s micrometaphysical institution of the social, or Deleuze’s cartography of the movements and rhythms of thought, with its underlining of the concept as an open, consistent and intensive multiplicity, or equally his work on the movement-image as a material image that the biology of the brain discovers with its own means.)

Fourth, there is no one kind of space. Space comes in many guises: points, planes, parabolas; blots, blurs and blackouts. Some want to have it that the meeting is the thing. Others that it is scaling. Others that it is emergence. Others that it is translation. Truth to tell, all these things exist – and none – as part of the tuning of local variant systems (Levinson, 2004). In a world without levels, the words are necessarily approximations of the right size of the world that chime with the finding that the fundamental fact of human communication is its variability, co-evolutionary construals that are a part of how we learn to environ the world and how the world learns to environ us (Wagner, 2001).

What Mehretu’s work also simultaneously represents is a turning away from four other ways of thinking space. One is as part of a search for authenticity achieved. The literature is still replete with notions of space as a place in which everything comes together, if only for a little while, in a centred space in which things are co-located in such a way that presentations can come into alignment, thereby producing a sense of well-being which also confirms certain values. Even many convinced non-humanists have a longing for some kind of transcendence, be it an aesthetic, a synthesis, or even certain kinds of immanence which when triggered can expose a latent subjectivism which restricts referentiality to the ‘human’ (Harman, 2002).

The second turning away is from a search for a space that lies outside metrics. Mehretu’s work takes measuring, dividing and calculation in general as simply other ways of spacing out the world, with their own magic: indeed, in her projection of her drawings on to larger canvases, she is one of a long line of artists who have shown that measurement is not the enemy of art but a fundamental part of how art is made (Steadman, 2002). But, too often, essays on space have tried to picture the world as though the history of metrification is the polar opposite of creativity. Yet metrics have added in as much as they have taken away, producing not only new practices and apprehensions of motion but also fertile sources of conflict, as in the case of recent conflicts around post-socialist land, which have produced the phenomenon of the ‘vanishing hectare’; vanishing ‘as diminutions of people’s expected allotments, as false entries on property deeds, as reduced sites of personhood and economic value, and as diminished grounds for the experience of locality’ (Verdery, 2003: 32).

The third turning away is from space as a site separated from movement, in which mind and body can come to rest, an idea in all probability fostered by a sedentary perception of the world mediated by the allegedly superior senses of vision and hearing which arise with modern modes of transport and with the modes of seeing adopted by the cinema and television. This kind of perspective is currently being challenged by a ‘wayfaring’ perspective which stresses movement, both in terms of the many vicissitudes and sensory registers of travel-encounter and in terms of the stress on the movement-image, as Mehretu’s paintings show so well (Ingold, 2004). Thus, every place is regarded as a knot tied from the strands of the movements of its

many inhabitants, rather than as a hub in a static network of connectors. Life is a meshwork of successive foldings, not a network, in which the environment cannot be bounded and life is forged in the transformative process of moving around (Morris, 2004). Thus things do not just follow one another: it is the peculiar linearity of Western culture that dictates this perception, a linearity made up of writing, clocks, and other one-after-the-other manifestations of a particular practice of causality.

The final turning away is from the idea of space as somehow separated from time (May and Thrift, 2001). This is to argue against a notion that still has great currency, and not just in the flow of everyday life but also in theoretical excursions such as those based on the work of Bergson, in which time is seen as lending itself to spatialization but at the expense of losing what is most essential to temporality: its dynamic movement (Grosz, 2004). But this is to misunderstand the equally dynamic nature of space, making it into a static backdrop to time's activity, with only a limited positivity of its own. Such a viewpoint ignores the myriad poetics of movement occasioned by situational identity and latency, including horizontality and verticality (Vesely, 2004). Perhaps part of the reason for such a continuing obsession with time as the dimension of change is that Western societies now have such a heavy load of time weighing on them in the shape of all manner of archives holding on to all kinds of memories. Further, most of their ideational techniques still tend to be backward-looking means of summary and even monumentalization, although one might argue that there are signs of a cultural shift in the guise of practices as varied as corporate strategy and science fiction which are producing increasingly formalized geographies of the future in which time and space are refigured as potential.

Three Vignettes

I want to finish off this entry by concentrating on three vignettes, which together start to show what I am trying to convey. It is a painful but necessary step to restrict the canvas I am working on while simultaneously signalling just how extensive that canvas really is. Rather like Mehretu's pictures, then, these vignettes are meant to act as indicative but hopefully potent summonings of particular characters and swarms, rather than as restorations of every nook and cranny of a particular field.

Being with Others

I want to start with whales. The latest research on bioacoustics shows that whales appear to use 'singing' as a means of communicating over thousands of miles of ocean. Whale 'society', then, is premised on a much larger scale than that conventionally associated with humans: 'being with' other whales might mean communicating with whales who might be hundreds of miles away – and thus taking the long time delays involved as normal – and determining other whales' position in relation to distant continents and land masses rather than any nearby features. Whale space, in other words, is not so much stretched as routinely practised in the large as well as the small, all in a medium, the ocean, which has its own dynamics and sensory registers. This should come as no particular surprise. Large carnivores and many birds have similar extensive ranges and can read the land or the air in some of the same ways, so that we can argue that near and far just do not have the same connotations for them as for human beings.

But the world of whales also intersects with the worlds of others. It is too much to say that they communicate with these worlds. Rather, in von Uexküll's phrase, they are attuned with other worlds-for, though not necessarily in harmonious ways – as one of von Uexküll's favourite examples, the spider and the fly, shows all too well. Thus whales and human beings can become attuned but in order to make contact with their prey human beings have to adjust to the spaces of the whales, just as whales have to become attuned to the spaces of krill. Two examples will suffice. One is the whaling industry, originally one of the prototypes of large multinational organizations in its assiduous attention to travelling the world in order to do

violence to whale prey. This industry formed a vast geography of sites and materials, from the network of whaling stations of organizations like the Muscovy Company, through the large number of specialized intermediary practices and ways of life encapsulated in the harpoon and then the rocket harpoon, the whaling boat, or even humble carved whale teeth (or scrimshaw, which now often fetches vast prices as art objects) as well as all those whale-derived products that were spread all over the world: whale oil, sperm oil, baleen, spermaceti, whale meat or even the sperm whale ambergris that fixes the odour of perfumes. Or think now of an organization such as Greenpeace which has been intent on saving whales since 1975, when the first Greenpeace vessel, the *Phyllis Cormack*, engaged with a Soviet whaling ship off the coast of California, and which was instrumental in securing the International Whaling Commission's moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986. Greenpeace has been forced in to adopting the same multinational structure as the whaling industry in order to both escape and engage with jurisdictions that are meaningless to that which the organization wishes to save. Map is superimposed on map is superimposed on map.

What is interesting is the way in which human society is gradually gaining the same kind of capacity as whales: we are increasingly beings who can live with distant others as if they were close to. The spaces in which humans can be together have progressively increased in scale as new forms of materials, which are also new forms of spacing, have allowed new kinds of social relation to exist. Human reach is greater and becoming continuous at scales that were formerly the subject of stuttering or, at best, periodic contact. But only, it has to be hastily added, in certain registers and in certain zones. In large parts of the world, it may be possible to use a mobile phone to call for help – but no one will come.

In turn, various kinds of political projects have begun to come into existence that communicate with distant others on the premise that they are (or can be made) contiguous that before would have been more difficult, perhaps even impossible. For example, it could be argued that at least one impulse for the contemporary project known as 'Europe' is to forge a more hospitable and responsible citizenship from a permanent and permanently volatile cultural diversity. This kind of integralism (Holmes, 2000) – one in which help would come when needed – can only arise from the organization of many interlocking and overlapping spaces on the basis of political aspirations that are only half-understood and are easily foreclosed, or perhaps this is how political organization ought to be understood now, as an affective and performative set of spaces that, like science at its best, 'stops thought from just turning in self-satisfying circles' (Stengers, 1997: 5).

Affecting Others

Space is not just a series of interdigitated worlds touching each other. It is constructed out of a spatial swirl of affects that are often difficult to tie down but are nevertheless crucial. To illustrate this point, I want to turn first to the subject of empires. Empires are often built out of a palette of emotions. Take the case of the British Empire in India. Over a long period of time, the British presence in India was remarkably small: even at the late Imperial high tide mark, the 1901 census showed only 154,691 British inhabitants of India (Buettner, 2004). So how did so relatively few mainly middle-class households control such a large space? There are many answers, of course. One was the hybrid nature of the Raj: as subaltern studies historians have shown, the Empire in India consisted of imperial power mixed in with existing systems of authorizing power. Another was the scrupulous administrative techniques of the Indian Civil Service. Yet another was the careful measurement and dividing out of Indian space (Edney, 1997) and the construction of associated roads and barriers (cf. Moxham, 2001). One more, on which I will dwell for a while, was the setting-up of formalized circuits of departure and return which could and did represent affective spaces of commitment. For example, there was the circuit of departure and return constructed by middle-class families, which included all manner of aspirations and longings tempered by forbiddingly high death rates (Collingham, 2001). The Empire in India was a remarkable example of how a cardinal space of emotions was able to be constructed by these families, most especially through the exchange of

commodities (which themselves had complicated geographies, of course). In particular, gift-giving played a central role in the emotional economy of Anglo-Indian society (as it did, it might be added, in the relation between occupiers and the Indian elite). Gift-giving allowed a series of emotionally-charged mechanisms of colonial identity formation to be set up that worked especially through extended kin networks that were both the recipients of gifted largesse and the main means of regulation (Finn, 2004). These gifting mechanisms were at their most redolent in the transport of poignant objects such as mourning rings and broaches, which were vehicles for transporting the hair of deceased bodies around the world and thereby producing corresponding emotional tugs and reminders of here and there. What we see here is a set of interlocking circuits of Empire whose geographies were fundamental to the Empire's reproduction. Space was not incidental: it was what had to be worked on for the Empire to work (Wilson, 2003). Indeed, it has been argued that the deep emotional ties produced within and between middle-class families by circuits of gifted commodities were an early and very effective means of minimizing transaction costs, thereby making the Empire in India a much more efficient operation than it would have otherwise been. In turn, the fortunes that some of these families built were almost certainly one of the main sources of fuel for the late Georgian consumer economy and the Victorian railway boom, thus producing economic effects far beyond their original purview on spaces that were far-removed.

Organizing Others

Let me end by considering one other means by which space is produced. That is by and through the exigencies of performance. Modern commercial organizations are made up of many extensions of practice, each with their own methods of proceeding, that have now become naturalized as the stuff of 'organization', from flip charts to divisional structures to inventories to commercial statistics to various software packages, that have in turn produced their own modes of knowing which are acted out in various ways. For example, 'organization' is encapsulated nowadays in endless workshops, seminars, conferences and degree courses that reciprocally confirm particular modes of existence. Increasingly, therefore, in opposition to formalist approaches (which themselves can be seen as bids to enshrine technique), organizations are seen as composites, made up of many things which have been placed into more or less intense alignment by a combination of historical circumstance and the inspired actions of those long gone. If this is indeed the case, what holds organizations together and pushes them on? One of the answers is increasingly taken to be 'performance' (Thrift, 2005).

This is a word that is clearly a moveable feast but, in truth, it simply means an ability to act convincingly into the situation that presents itself by taking whatever propensity for dynamism may be offered that is also a practical ethic of discovery and invention. Organizations are rarely made up of practices that are so mechanical that they simply reproduce themselves. Usually, they consist of sets of root practices which can very often go wrong or, at the very least, require radical adjustment to keep the same (Law and Urry, 2004). In these circumstances, improvisation is often called for, improvisation which sometimes produces solutions that become the base of new practices. This process of almost continual improvisation is forced by the exact configuration of forces that presents itself to actors at any point in time which in turn requires a more or less skilled response to the arrangement of things, a sense of the propensity of the situation that the Chinese call 'shi', the potential born out of disposition (Jullien, 1995).

A critical element of 'shi' is space. For much of what counts as configuration is exactly that: a continuous re-arrangement of things in response to events. So what counts as shi requires all manner of spatial operations: linking, contrast, separation, combination, tension, movement, alternation, oscillation worked out in a series of different registers: bodily movement as exemplified by gesture, the different combinations of sound, touch, vision and smell that typify a situation, the lie of the land which pushes back on the body in all kinds of ways, for example, through balance, through the tools that are to hand, and so on (Ingold, 2004).

And so we arrive back at Julie Mehretu's speculative cartographies which are not only dynamic but also *strategic* arrangements. And this strategic element is important, for it is precisely the function of her art to capture the potentiality of potentiality, by deriving a portfolio of the various ways of inducing the efficacy to operate which also describe new states. And some of these states will be new hybrid actors, glimpsed for the first time at the beginning of the runway as they prepare to go about their work.

Conclusion

And what does this all add up to? I think we can see it as the beginnings of new ways of thinking about efficacy and causality, about how we are in the world where there is no settled ground but where there is still coherence, where nearness is replaced by distribution. Roughly speaking, predominant ideas of causality have tended to be linear and self-contained plots, assuming that people do things that, through progressive aggregation into more capacious and more effective organizations, become social 'forces' (Kern, 2004). Now, we can see that this model of operativity is so simple as to be not just misleading but harmful. As a result, we are beginning to lay down new causal pathways in which how we pay due attention matters, in which becoming able to add or assemble is more important than subtraction, in which abstractions are lures, not generalizations, in which the demand for coherence can still include wonder, in which, in other words, new forms of friction are materializing as backgrounds change size and shape (Thrift, 2004, 2005; Tsing, 2005). And, as that happens, so space takes on not more relevance (since it is difficult to think of a world in which space is other than relevant) but more grip. It is no longer a by-product of something deeper or a convenient prosthetic or a concrete assay but, rather, pre-treated as it increasingly may be and made up of fragments as it undoubtedly is, it is the very stuff of life itself.

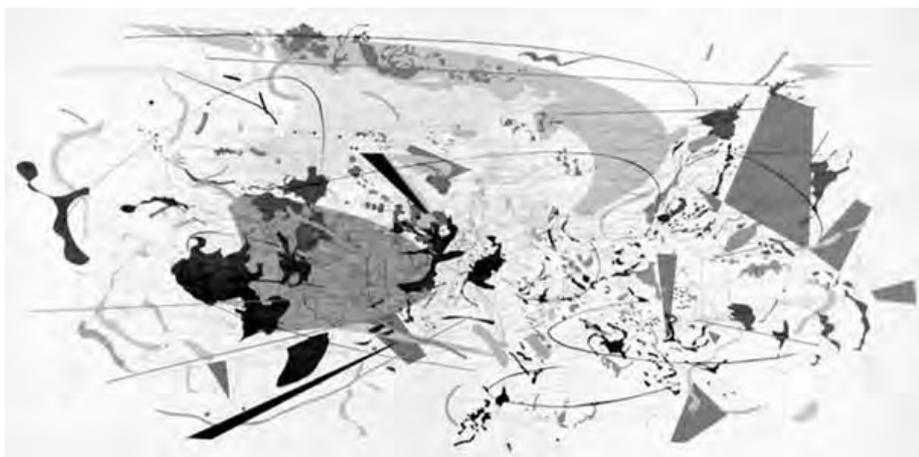
And if we can get that sense of space right it might feel like something that is both caring and in need of care.

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Knowing Space

Rob Shields

Keywords genealogy, knowledge, space, spatialization, topology

Introduction

Knowing space is of universal social interest and the topic of some of the most historic knowledge projects and texts produced by human cultures. How is space known? How might we take stock of our spatial knowledges across cultures? What are the elements of a genealogy of space? If history and geography have a descriptive bias, a genealogy would go in a different direction, attempting to both avoid describing and ‘speaking for’ while critically exposing the conditions and formations of time–space discourses (however fragmented and discontinuous).

Yet conceptions such as space and time are intrinsic to the intellectual ordering of our lives and our everyday notions of causality. When we turn to our daily speech, read the headlines of our newspapers or scan learned journals, we find an unexpected cornucopia of spatial references, elaborate expressions and elegant spatial metaphors which position the term within our own knowledge as well as practice. ‘Space’ evidently plays an important role in knowledge and in knowing the world. Nearly every philosopher and social thinker has dealt in some way with space or spatiality. Analysis is complicated by the intangibility (virtuality) of physical space. ‘Space’ is also translated in different ways between languages and between disciplines: engineers conceive of space as a void; physicists, mathematically as a set of dimensions (e.g. from 2-dimensions of a surface up to 11-dimensions in particle physics). And, in the late 20th century, social scientists began to understand space not as a void but as a qualitative context situating different behaviours and contending actions.

Etymology/Translation

The *Oxford Dictionary* presents more than 17 definitions for ‘space’, which is (like the French *espace* and the Italian *spazio*) etymologically descended from the Latin *spatium* but whose English-language meaning is often more closely related to the Latin *extensio*. Hindu philosophy defines *Akasa* (*akasha* – space/ether. Sanskrit, from *kas*, ‘to shine’) as an infinite but indivisible

imperceptible substance that has as its sole nature to be a static principle of extension (in contrast to movement, *prana*), or an eternal matrix or context of accommodation (*kham-akasa*, see *Khândogya-Upanishad* I. 9, 1). Italian and French writers such as Lefebvre (1981), Castells, Bachelard (1981) and Zevi have felt at ease with the use of the full range of meanings, denotative and connotative, of ‘*spazio*’ and ‘*l’espace*’. In the *Dictionnaire Larousse*, ‘*l’espace*’ denotes ‘place’ (*lieu*), ‘site’ or an area, ‘surface’, or ‘region’. ‘*L’espace*’ does not mean just ‘space’. By contrast, English-language theorists have often limited their appreciation of space to a quantitative definition with reference to distance and to time (and vice versa, e.g. graphically on a calendar).

Shan Hai Jing/Kitab Nuzhat

A small selection demonstrates the relevance of a genealogical approach, for the first geographers are historians and mythographers. One of the first books, *Shan Hai Jing* (*The Guideways through Mountains and Seas* (P’o Kuo [Guo Pu], 1985)), though misinterpreted as mythology by subsequent generations, was originally a geographical compendium describing the character of regions at the edges of the Zhou Dynasty empire (approximately 1046–771 BC). Virtually spanning recorded history, including the history of European contact and of printed books, commentaries on *Shan Hai Jing* mirror cultural changes in the successive dynasties. Its classification changes in Chinese historiography from bestiary and mythology, to between travelogue and strategic guide, depending on the extent to which it was found to be useful to the Imperial court as an empirical reference in dealing with peripheries and foreign contacts.

As Herodotus remarked, map-makers both challenged and structured how the Earth was understood as a flat plane (Herodotus e.g. IV: 36). For example, Ptolemy’s later concepts of latitude and longitude were related in part to an interest in defining *Klimata* – ecologico-ethnological characteristics of regions (Ptolemy, 1969). The most voluminous 12th-century knowledge project was the geographical encyclopaedia *Kitab Nuzhat al-Mushtaq fi Ikhtiraq al-Afaq* (*The Recreation for Him Who Wishes to Travel Through the Countries*) (Idrisi Muhammad ibn Abd al-Aziz [Al-Idrisi], 1990). The *Kitab Nuzhat* built on previous Arab geographies but also involved teams that did fieldwork. Although this

Sicilian masterwork was unknown in Rome until the 16th century, its organization of research and its narrative and cartographic representation of knowledge – including a large silver globe (destroyed AD 1160) and a circular map – were, in the most profound sense, world views which influenced far more than cartographic practice: It inspired Imperial desires and possibly Columbus. It anticipated the organization of state knowledge-enterprises in later centuries, from the Inquisition to the collecting practices of Napoleonic armies to Royal Commissions (see *Virtualities*, this issue).

Extensio/Topology

However empirical geographies have attempted to be, there has been no consistent historical consensus on the nature of space that would establish cartographic method once and for all. Statements of the ‘problem of space’ by Aristotle, Euclid, Descartes, Leibniz and Newton, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, along with modern writers such as Lefebvre (1981), have marked out entire epochs in the treatment of space. Enlightenment philosophies of space depended on Euclid’s geometry and presumed a three-dimensional *extensio* known through geometry. However, the Aristotelian tradition casts space as a mental category by which objects are named and classified. By contrast, Kant (1953: 41–51) cogently argues that space is neither cognitive nor subjective. Privileging only relations over a geometrical reality involves attributing to space relations that are proper to objects. But if all continuous motions in a three-dimensional space are real, not much is saved by denying the reality of space itself. At a minimum, space can be successfully argued to be an intangible substance and the substantial bearer of topological properties whose consequences we can notice in ordinary experience.

Classical approaches emphasizing three dimensional space break down both in everyday usage and metaphor as well as with the mathematical exploration of a second major anomaly in Euclidean geometry: the ‘Parallel Postulate’ – through one point in a plane it is possible to draw only one straight line parallel to a given straight line in the same plane. This Euclidean law can be violated if the three-planar dimensions of space are warped – such as in the geometries produced by Lobachewsky and Riemann in the first half of the 1800s. The art of Escher demonstrates the paradoxes of these mathematical ‘phase spaces’ – more projected topographies of mathematical solution sets than any Euclidean ‘lived space’. Physicists and mathematicians envisioned an infinite number of spaces, all in motion with respect to each other. This opened up a relativist plurality of spaces and

helped legitimate the possibility that the history of the earth and its discoveries might be construed differently in different sociocultural spaces. Ever since, Cartesian absolute space has become just the topological space that describes the human experience of embodiment. Other mathematical topologies may better describe the social configurations of those bodies in everyday life (Von Uexküll). Thus we are led to examine alternatives which might more appropriately describe the complexity of global culture than the commonsense, Euclidean ‘spatialization’. In this plurality of spaces, it makes sense to talk of ‘*social spaces*’, which gain meaning as the changing topologies mapping affinities between bodies, meanings and sites (Mach, 1901: 94; Poincaré, 1952: 50–8).

Social/Space

Durkheim audaciously proposed a correspondence between social structure and the society’s notion of space laying the ground for structural anthropological studies. He provided the example of the Zuni Indians, concluding that their space was nothing else than, ‘the site of the tribe, only indefinitely extended beyond its real limits’ (Durkheim and Mauss, 1963: 12). One could venture from reports of Aboriginal conceptions of space as the ‘Dreamtime’ that landscape can become not just sedimented traces but an historiography, read through embodied presence, perigrination and pilgrimage. This view of social space is mobile and topological. It emphasizes qualitative heterogeneity, varying not only from place to place, region to region (some being perhaps sacred, others profane); but it is not locked within one topology: from the mid-1950s space is argued to be contested within societies. This heterogeneous social space must be produced and reproduced as a cultural artefact and performance.

The multiplication of spaces was deeply disturbing to the commonsense mind of both the European Left and Right. The implied subjectivity and relativism threatened the stability of objective reality, of what could be taken for granted as truth. Space, it was argued, must ‘exist before social groups can be perceived to exhibit in their disposition any spatial relations which may then be applied to the universe; the categories of quantity have to exist in order that an individual mind shall ever recognize one, the many, and the totality of the division of his society’ (Needham, 1963: xxvii). Such opinions are part of an attempt to realign social science with the natural sciences (thus to re-achieve the lost Kantian orthodoxy of one space: the alignment of ‘social space’ and ‘physical space’). This was crucial to the 19th-century achievement of a homogeneous spatialization allowing and legitimating the power practices of

an expansive European imperialism (Lefebvre, 1981).

Piaget's experimental research challenges the Kantian assertion that space and time *are a priori* modes of conception. For Durkheim (1976: 11) also,

space is not the vague and indeterminate medium which Kant imagined; if purely and absolutely homogeneous, it would be of no use, and could not be grasped by the mind. Spatial representation consists essentially in a primary coordination of the data of sensuous experience. But this co-ordination would be impossible if the parts of space were qualitatively equivalent . . . To dispose things spatially there must be a possibility of placing them differently, of putting some at the right, others at the left, these above, those below, at the north of or at the south of . . . space could not be what it is if it were not, like time, divided and differentiated. . . . All these distinctions evidently come from the fact that different sympathetic values have been attributed to various regions . . . and that almost necessarily implies that they be of social origin.

Knowledges of 'space' are part of social and cultural processes. Yet social space is not just a cognitive mapping. It cannot be derived entirely from forms of social solidarity. This would render space entirely cultural and thus epiphenomenal. Space could be discarded as inconsequential. How might one understand conflicts over social space or the production of 'counter-spaces' of resistance? How might one understand the juxtapositions within social space and its nested spaces within spaces in which very different rules apply?

Spatialization/Difference

In the late 1960s, Lefebvre turned Durkheim's hypothesis of countless social spaces back on the West to consider struggles over the organization and meaning of space. What are the real relations masked by the spatial phantasmagoria of a Cartesian absolute, a priori and ineffable 'social space'? Is this contradictory and paradoxical structure not a type of cultural 'signature' of a dominant 'modern' technocratic and capitalist 'social spatialization'? This made social space appear to be a homogeneous, smooth order. 'Distance' became its most important feature. Rigorous discussions of the spatialization of this system were marginalized, even though influential writers of the first half of the century had placed a priority on the geographical expansion of capitalism as a 'fix' for system contradictions and inefficiencies. But the importance of non-Euclidean mathematical spaces in science set the stage for late 20th-century re-appreciations of social space.

Making *distance* the basis of the social appreciation of spatialization is Eurocentric and technocratic. Distance – a word we should be extremely careful about – has been treated as an invariant quantity with a meaning in and of itself regardless of cultural variations in the qualitative meanings associated with distance. In such a spatialization of the world, alternatives are masked (Shields, 1991). We need to know space as not just about relations and distance between elements but as a social produced *order of difference* that can be heterogeneous in and of itself. 'Knowing space' is not enough – trigonometric formulae, engineering structures, shaping the land and dwelling on it. We need to know about 'spacing' and the spatializations that are accomplished through everyday activities, representations and rituals.

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Mobility and the City

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Keywords gender, globalization, migration, place, space, transnationalism

The City as Centering

The city is often thought of as a material (lived) and imagined (ideological) space that came into being as a result of a consolidation of power (social, cultural economic, political). It is hence often represented as an economic node or hub, a centrifugal point for the collection of resources, a crucible of ideas and innovation, the locus of imagined communities, and a source of identity and security. Cities are privileged sites of consolidation, power and dwelling. John R. Short (2003: 18–23) describes three urban discourses – *the authoritarian city* (cities as ‘sites of social aggregation that involve compulsion, order, and discipline as well as freedom, anarchy, and self-realization’); *the cosmic city* (cities as religious artifacts reflecting and embodying cosmologies); and *the collective city* (cities which are ‘sites of collective provision, collective consumption, and the workings of civil society’).

With the emergence in recent years of the discourse on global/globalizing cities, the centering role of cities is further emphasized. For example, the term *global cities* has now gained common currency to represent the ‘mega-cephalic’ corporate and financial centers for capital accumulation within a hierarchical articulation of global space. Apparently, during the Apollo space flights, it was reported that one of the astronauts, looking back to Earth, expressed amazement that he could see no boundaries. This new view of our world as the ‘blue planet’, famously captured in NASA photo 22727, presented a view of the Earth with no territorial markings but made up most visibly by lights delimiting a global pattern of cities, consisting of a broad swath girdling the mid-latitudes plus many pinpricks of light elsewhere (Beaverstock et al., 2000: 123). In this formulation, cities are the only visible nodes in the global imaginary; other spaces are invisible.

Counter-Topographies

Yet, these electric nodes of light on space photos are actually connected by massive electronic flows of information as well as material flows that cut

across territorial boundaries. Historically, cities have always existed within interconnectivities comprising all manner of linkages and networks. These very systems of flows sustain and generate urban space in the first place.

Increasingly, translocal (often transnational) mobilities disrupt this sense of the city as centrality, as stasis, as a gathering together, as a permanence. The experience of city life as centering is being shot through by the multiple possibilities of combining ‘here’ and ‘there’, absence and presence, ascription and disavowal, in everyday life – astride boundaries and across ever-widening distances and spaces. Mobility, traveling, migration and unmoorings (often circular, multi-directional, ridden with detours) are the quintessential experience of these times and often one arrives in the city only to leave again. Cities are hence as much spaces of flows as they are spaces of place.

This is not to say that cities are ‘places which are leaking away into a space of flows’ (Thrift, 1997: 140). With information and communication technologies speeding up interconnectivities between places and enhancing the simultaneity of absence/presence, being in the city is a multidirectional rather than a centering experience. In as much as the city as a locality is constantly reconfigured by ‘hybrids of the “newly arrived” and the “previously there”’ (Short et al., 2000), human experiences in terms of mobility have also grown so much larger than can be encompassed by the spatial fixity of the city. This is accompanied by both pains and gains for the individual as may be illustrated by examples from either end of the migration spectrum.

The embodied urban experiences of unmoored transnational lowly paid migrant workers whose navigation of transnational routes to and from ‘home’ and ‘host’ (the city) are not inevitable but perpetuated by the city’s disciplinary policies of ‘use and discard’. For example, policies ensuring the transience of female foreign domestic worker bodies in cities such as Singapore, in turn, reinforce the permanence of transnational mobilities among unskilled labor migrants. With little chance of sustainable employment in her home country where she is a citizen and even less likelihood of becoming an immigrant-turned-citizen in the country where she is employed, the migrant domestic worker is locked into unending circuits of transnational care, affection, money and material goods in order to sustain the family in its

transnational form. One needs to ask the question: Do transnational mobilities always work to the benefit of individual transmigrants attracted to the city? Or do the resources and cushioning effects provided by transnational connectivities somehow make it even easier for the cities to extract labor power from transmigrants while abdicating responsibility for their social welfare? Such abdication of responsibility – the lack of provision for rights and resources – is often justified by dint of the fact that transmigrants are non-citizens who have roots and networks anchoring them to the sending nations elsewhere (Yeoh et al., 2004).

The experience of upper-end skilled/professional migrants in the global city ('foreign talent' as they are referred to in Singapore) is also not necessarily one of centrality and consolidation as far as the social spheres of life are concerned. Often, in order to circulate from one global city to the next, family forms have to be made flexible. Being in the city often means being away from the family as in the case of Hong Kong 'astronauts' and their families (the so-called 'astronaut wives and parachute kids' syndrome). Against the centering, inclusive effects of city-living, there is also the need to recognize the simultaneous embeddedness in the 'city' and 'elsewhere', and the need for constant mobility in linking the two in order to sustain social and cultural institutions such as the transnational family.

The importance of grappling with the way 'centering' and 'mobility' work with and against each other in specific contexts is implied in Michael Smith's (2001) *Transnational Urbanism* where he uses the 'transnational optic' as a counter to the globalization perspective, as a bifocal lens which brings into view bodies – disposable labor or embodiments of talent in circulatory flows – and at the same time frames them within contested historical and geographical contexts as socially and spatially situated subjects. As Ryan Bishop communicated to me before, 'the tension between storage/archive/consolidation on the one hand and circulation/amnesia/dispersal on the other reveals the inherent urbanism operative on both sides of the tension' (pers. comm.). In the city, sedentarist administrative procedures and disciplining border controls have an in-built tendency to immobilize human bodies; at the same time, other contradictory impulses to move, circulate, defy fixity and transcend boundaries are equally powerful.

Costs?

As already implied, there is nothing inevitable about the simultaneous impulses of centering and connecting in the shaping of globalizing cities. Feminists, for example, have insisted on giving

attention to the *politics* of transnational urbanism. Not only has mobility across borders intensified in complex ways, there has been a feminization of many of these flows as a result of changing production and reproduction processes worldwide. Globalization processes, in which production activities are relocated from core economies to those of the periphery to take advantage of cheaper input costs, have drawn on the pre-existing gender relations and targeted cheap and flexible female workers – many from countries with declining employment opportunities – to enter factory employment in export processing zones and industrial parks in rapidly industrializing countries. The other numerically more important form of female labor migration is linked to reproductive activities, such as domestic service and the sex industry. Major accounts of cultural globalization to which the transnational framework is linked tend to be masculinist, for they 'make no attempt to identify the processes that increasingly differentiate the power of mobile and non-mobile subjects' (Ong, 1999: 11). In traversing transnational space, men often feature as entrepreneurs, career-builders, adventurers and breadwinners who navigate transnational circuits with fluidity and ease, while women are alternatively taken to be missing in action from globalized economic webs, stereotyped as exotic, subservient or victimized, or relegated to playing supporting roles, usually in the domestic sphere or as a trailing spouse (Yeoh et al., 2000). As Freeman (2001: 1018) observes, 'travel, with its embodiments of worldliness, adventure, physical prowess, and cultural mastery, is widely constructed as a male pursuit.' In short, that 'women stay home and men go abroad' is a taken-for-granted expectation (Clifford, 1997: 6).

We also need to be suspicious of the claims that the transnational subject embodies liberatory potential that could challenge 'oppressive nationalism, repressive state structures, and capitalism'. Aihwa Ong (1999: 15) reminds us of the 'diverse forms of interdependencies and entanglements between transnational phenomena and the nation-states' which trouble any easy assumptions equating mobility with emancipatory impulses. Indeed, the hypermobility and the easy transgression of national borders in today's globalizing world may well be liberating or emancipatory for the individuals involved, but may also reinforce existing social ideologies, including those of the nation-state. It is important in a feminist approach to transnationality not to somehow attribute a sense of inevitability in thinking about transnational processes but to look them squarely in the eye and ask the all-important question as to who reaps the gains and who bears the costs of rapidly developing transnational social practices in global

cities. Is it the transnational subject himself or herself, in subjecting his or her body to the constant state of being ‘neither here nor there’? Or are transnational families at risk, and does the cost fall mainly on women who often bear the emotional costs of holding the family stretched across countries together? Or do those outside the transnational project, such as the poor and those with little access to networks, bear the brunt of growing transnationality as a privileged discourse?

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Junk Space

Bobby Chong Thai Wong and Ryan Bishop

Keywords architecture, modernization, multi-cultural space, urbanism

The rapid growth of urban areas that began in the 18th century led to numerous theories and practices about the proper and rational use of space. Often the terms ‘proper’ and ‘rational’ emerged from specific historical and intellectual traditions peculiar to European nations. The categories and standards to be pursued for urban space on a global scale were carried forward by imperial enterprises and later international capital and organizations. Usually deviations from these are dismissed as underdeveloped, chaotic or irrational ways of conceptualizing space. What these evaluations ignore, of course, is the larger spatial context in which any specific space occurs. We wish to use two student projects from studios run by Bobby Wong at the National

University of Singapore’s Department of Architecture to explore descriptions and evaluations of urban space at the end of the 20th century made by Rem Koolhaas. Specifically we are interested in exploring his provocative concept called ‘junk-space’, which he claims to be a ubiquitous global phenomenon.

This space has come about through the process of modernization (including globalization) that cannibalizes itself or has exhausted itself or become the apotheosis for the disenfranchised and the dispossessed. Koolhaas (2004) uses the analogy of space junk (that is, debris in outer space floating free of any context or control) to describe this coagulation. ‘If space junk is the human debris that litters the universe, junk-space is the residue mankind leaves on the planet’ (p. 162). The two student examples reveal the strengths and limitations of Koolhaas’ concept, and to modify and supplement this concept we will use the work of Walter Benjamin (1996, 1999) to provide a more

nuanced sense of the use of urban space than that allowed by Koolhaas.

Koolhaas' captions and writings implicitly bestow an abstract quality onto all junk-spaces, rendering them more or less equivalent. But before such 'abstractness' totalizes junk-space, we wish to explore some hypothetical projects that would simultaneously support and render problematic the totalizing dimensions of Koolhaas' analysis. The first is a racetrack town proposed along the Malaysian North–South Highway, a scheme developed by a group of students led by Paul Chang. The studio was investigating 'Anywhere' architecture occurring sometime in the mid-1990s, the height of the real estate boom that gripped Southeast and Northeast Asia, and the moment as well as sites of numerous examples of junk-space upon which Koolhaas draws. The 'Anywhere' architecture, in fact, explicitly manifests the qualities of junk-space insofar as it deploys a range of architectural strategies and assumptions peculiar to modernism without taking into account the context in which the building materializes, as well as ignoring notions of scale and fit. The scheme proposed by Chang's team zoned strips of land, of approximately four kilometers in width, parallel to and on either side of the Highway as land possible for real estate development. In this space would be built the racetrack town.

The scheme was premised on a reality occurring at the time of immense profits to be made from real estate development, made possible by the construction of the North–South Highway, Peninsula Malaysia. The actual site of placement was irrelevant, befitting Anywhere architecture. The natural topography and vegetation offered no obstacles because they could be overcome by technology. Similarly, knowledge of actual racetrack construction could be overcome simply by copying and transporting virtually in digital form a given track and overlaying it across the said terrain. The Monte Carlo racetrack was chosen. The racetrack forms the basic armature to lay out the other urban elements of the town: mechanical garages, car show rooms, hotels for weekend getaways and so on. Similarly the various urban technologies upon which great profits could be generated from real estate speculation along a major new artery of international transport were replicated and modified in the site. The highway links the flows of goods, vehicles and peoples between nations while the racetrack depends upon the use of automobiles and expenditure of natural resources for no instrumental purpose of transportation, but merely going about in circles with limited traffic. The scheme, therefore, pushes the 'noble' profession of architecture into recycling its body

parts; signs that are correlated with modern architectural elements (flat roofs, transparency, wall planes and columns as points on plan) that were once thought authentic and original were now constantly being reused, recovered and rearranged. Similarly the term Monte Carlo, which invokes the authenticity of space and its use, is decontextualized and 'transported' into a part of the world other than its own site, the racetrack. Renamed the Marlboro Race Town, to further link language, space and corporate branding, the town takes on a character oddly reminiscent of but quite unlike that of the original.

The town embodies important elements of Koolhaas' junk-space through its appropriation, replication, decontextualization and improper use of space/architecture that forces a rethinking of accepted standards and practices in a creative manner. Koolhaas' junk-space, as exemplified in this project, resembles Benjamin's notion of inscription as articulated in 'Painting, or Signs and Marks' (1917). Inscription reveals a de-historical use of space, one that discounts context and tradition within a given site. The inscription presumes the space as capable of conversion into a tabula rasa, which can be inscribed and erased at will. The racetrack reveals such an inscription while also revealing a counter-historical understanding of space. That is, one can attempt pure erasure and pure replication but within the process of replication change occurs. What Chang's team shows us is a latent and unavoidable political project inherent in even the modernist, ahistorical, apolitical strategies of universal architectural practice. Koolhaas' junk-space, unlike Benjamin's notion of inscription, seemingly ignores or downplays these ineluctable aspects of replication and recontextualization.

But there are spaces that might be labeled, pejoratively as 'junk space' by Koolhaas that reveal a complexity of embedded local knowledge interacting with global modernity and commenting upon it in ways not grasped by an outsider. Such a fecund, critical use of space can be detected in the second student example: a shopping centre in Singapore located along North Bridge Road on a site between Peninsula Plaza and the Capital Cinema. The scheme, a Master's thesis by Lim Fun Kit, is driven by a thematic issue called 'Unveiling the Verses' and came into being mainly as a result of a number of coincidences. In the first place, there is a coincidental axis of entrances to two important religious structures: Masjid Burhani mosque and St Andrew's Cathedral transept. These two elements face one another. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks in the USA and the Jamal Islamia incidents in Singapore, the scheme's deployment of this coincidence between mosque

and church took on added significance. The Dawoodi Bohras, members of an Islamist sect hailing from Gujarat and custodians of the Masjid Burhani, while practicing a highly orthodox form of Islam (in matters relating to dress, prayer, physical comportment and food), are also merchants ('Bohra' means 'to trade') who want to trade and exchange. The confluence of trade and worship, regardless of religious or ideological background, carries particular resonance in Singapore's history. The proposal examined building a shopping complex with the thought that while exchanging goods and services for money, the building could also become an instrument of the faithful to share Islamist values. This additional form of exchange to be carried out on the site reveals the long historicity of exchange between Islam and Christianity from colonial times to the present while also taking advantage of the import of trade and exchange within Islam itself.

To highlight these levels of exchange, Lim adopted several strategies. First, he had the mosque and the cathedral look at each other by adopting and transposing the morphological structure of the cathedral nave and its columns such that its sectional symmetrical center coincides with the axis, thus framing in perspective the façade of either building depending on the direction of one's gaze. The use of the Christian motif of the cross interacting with an Islamic site of worship (and trade) does not stop there. Lim goes further by mapping repeatedly the diagram of the cruciform (nave, two aisles and with transepts turned 90 degrees inward in alignment with the nave) from one end of the site to the other. Extensive use of an abstracted crucifix in the design of the shopping complex would be acceptable for Islamic worshippers, because shopping in its 20th-century guise of mass consumption is largely a global capitalist enterprise which links it to Christian uses of capital and trade that differ from those dictated by Islamic law.

The replications of the transept can be used in various ways to structure space. In total, there are six of these replicated transepts, two of which are used in the plan to form two reflective pools. They are placed in a symmetrical relationship to each other in the mosque/transept axis, and therefore, frame the entrance to the rear of the mosque. The remaining four replicated transepts are transformed into volumetric containers. One of these houses the *madrakah* while another houses the library.

Because the plan highlights exchange at many different levels, Lim uses the metaphor of the *hjab* (the dress that veils the Muslim females) to articulate barriers to exchange in the midst of shopping as an activity while at the same time providing the

possibility of transgressing barriers. The library walls are formed by transparent glass partitions, with the perimeter book stacks lining the inner sides of the partitions. The many changing gaps found amongst books within each book stack provide visual cues for shifts between the inside and outside of the library. Similarly the space for the *Madrakah* exposes and transgresses barriers, except it does so aurally rather than visually. The container is made up of solid dense concrete with a perimeter opening that separates the wall from the ceiling. As a result, readings of the Quran can be heard, though not seen, in and amongst the shoppers immediately outside the *Madrakah*. The architectural metaphor of the *hjab* is also used in the department store to screen areas specifically dedicated for women's clothing and lingerie. Within that space, Muslim women can do away with their *hjab*s without transgressing their accepted practice. Because it is away from the male gaze, women, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, can shop with a sense of privacy.

'Unveiling the Verses' operates in a densely allusive and complex environment, and if its appropriation of modernist architectural practices was deemed 'junk-space' by Koolhaas for its apparent lack of modernist context, then it would only highlight the fact that every site – every space – contains a range of invisible contexts that shape the visible space in very specific, often contested, ways. What is of further interest in these two schemes, themselves junk-spaces in Koolhaas' terminology, lies in their emergence. Each has its own narrative, and when seen together with their own images and drawings, correlations can be made with Walter Benjamin's idea about signs and marks. Benjamin indicates that signs, whether they are made through graphic lines, geometric or written lines, are lines that are printed, scripted over something, while marks emerge from them. In this sense, then, the racetrack town operates an inscription, the lines found in them mere graphic lines that demarcate a racetrack from a background, which could have been made on any landscape. These graphic lines, following Benjamin, only impress a sign. The shape and pattern of the racetrack may or may not be a copy of the real Monte Carlo, something which was not ascertained at the time. As a result there is an air of ambiguity in the scheme. Building types and forms are vague. Besides the grandstand, buildings are mere blocks in the landscape with vague presupposed functions attached to them. Forms and functions can change as and when the aspects of the symbolic, libidinal or the political economy dictates.

The shopping center site, however, works with the mark in ways Benjamin would find familiar, for

it materializes the political dimensions of the caption that Benjamin thought essential to understanding and conveying the mark. There is something specifically real about this project, which involves guilt and atonement; very much like Benjamin's description of Belshazzar's Feast in the Old Testament. The coming together of the mosque and the cathedral after 9/11 and the entire making of the shopping complex centered on an exchange, disguised as shopping, is a way a community can overcome a present by gesturing towards a future, so that the past, present and the future can be magically fused. The reception of this space – with voices reading the Quran, the visual confrontation between cathedral and mosque, the visual separation between two worlds mediated by book stacks and glass partitions – slows down spatial perception in ways that involve the body. In the case of Koolhaas's aphoristic analyses of 'junk-space', the cognitive is privileged. But as these two sites reveal, the body, the imagination, the mind, space, and local-global context and interaction are more deeply intertwined than Koolhaas' 'junk-space' often allows, despite its provocative potential. Koolhaas claims a ubiquity of 'junk-space' at

the turn of the century and, to a certain extent, bemoans its existence. But the category remains so large and elastic as to perhaps outstrip its usefulness, especially when one delves deeper into the trajectories at play in any specific site.

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Science

Celia Roberts and Adrian Mackenzie

Abstract How could social scientists and cultural theorists take responsibility in engaging with science? How might they develop an experimental sensibility to the links between the production of knowledge and the production of existence or forms of life? Critically outlining key fields in the social and cultural studies of science, we interrogate a number of approaches to these questions. The first approach tries to make sense of how science operates in relation to economic, political and cultural forces. The second analyses science as a form of embodied work or practice. The third engages with science as collaborative-collective elaboration of events, ranging across cultural theory, contemporary art and participant ethnographies. This outline sketches a vector of responsibility across this diverse range of engagements, suggesting that contemporary movements between science and other knowledges constitute ethical and political imperatives.

Keywords art, experiment, feminism, knowledge, practice, science

Introduction

What does it mean to live with science? What sensibilities or practices are conducive to living with science? The metaconcept, science, is hardly a coherent formation, whether viewed from within, without or somewhere on the margins. And as anthropologist Paul Rabinow (1999: 181) writes, 'the present is a good time to desist from employing totalizing categories like epoch, civilization, culture and society', and it could be added, science. The ways in which sciences are lived and affect lives, human and non-human, are difficult to marshal in any single direction. For the social sciences and humanities, divergent paths head toward and away from the sciences, and these are travelled in very different ways. Sometimes, head-on confrontations occur, as happened in the 'Science Wars' of the mid-1990s, when some scientists (Sokal and Bricmont, 1998) argued that much social and cultural theory is mired in poorly understood science. The Science Wars, it might be said, followed in the aftermath of a long series of attempts by philosophy and social thought to unmask science. Today, in the aftermath of the Science Wars (Ross, 1996), and the avalanche of social constructionist explorations of different sciences as themselves local, contingent organization of knowledge, it is important to ask how other knowledges, which themselves do not count as science, stand in relation to science. What kinds of movements between science and other knowledges are possible or desirable?

Science Operating in Economic, Cultural or Political Fields

A first major task for social and cultural analysis is to make sense of how science operates and meshes with political, financial, commercial and popular cultural processes, ranging from micro-subjectification to global assemblages (Ong and Collier, 2005). The entwining of science with contemporary relations of production is well and extensively analysed, but the modalities of linkage, and the ways sciences take shape, seem to shift constantly. From the

Enlightenment through 20th-century critical thought, the power of science is valorized positively or negatively in terms of reason as an ordering force, marshalling and controlling natural phenomena and discovering laws and regularities. For philosophers ranging from René Descartes, Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Nietzsche to Martin Heidegger, and for recent cultural or historical studies of science such as Barbara Duden (1991) or Lisa Cartwright (1995), the operational power of science stems from its abstract appropriation of existing forms, matters, bodies or relations. Carolyn Merchant (1980: 43), for instance, argues in this vein when she describes the development of modern science as involving 'a slow, but unidirectional alienation from the immediate daily organic relationship that had formed the basis of human experience from earliest times'. From this standpoint, the task of social and human sciences is to unmask science, to show how science constructs a total world view within which all phenomena are mathematized or mechanized. This world view, precisely because it treats the object of knowledge as fully knowable, ruptures connections between subjects and objects. Indeed it institutes a separation between subjects and objects, between knower and world. It inscribes relations between things in the world as mechanical, as governed by laws of cause and effect.

The objectivity of science, and claims made in the name of objectivity, have been criticized as partial and distorted on several grounds. According to the feminist philosopher of science, Sandra Harding (1993: 8), Western science systematically marginalized individuals and other existing knowledges: 'European science has progressed primarily because of the military, economic and political power of European cultures, not because of the purported greater rationality of Westerners or the purported commitment of their sciences to the pursuit of disinterested truths'. Science functions as an instrument of power. Feminist analyses have argued that sciences naturalize 'social-cum-cultural constructs' of gender, sex and nature (Jordanova, 1989: 5). Scientific ideas and concepts contain, in other words, 'implications about matters beyond their explicit content' (1989: 2). 'The biomedical sciences deploy, and are themselves, systems of representations' (1989: 5): they contain metaphors, analogies, personifications, images and literary devices that can be analysed as ideological and normative programmes. They serve interests and maintain cultural patterns (1989: 39; cf. Stafford, 1994). Objectification has its own contingent circumstances and effects. The historian and philosopher of medicine, Barbara Duden (1991), for instance, describes how scientific knowledge of human reproduction is lived, encountered and interpreted by women in contemporary America, in contrast to German women of the 18th century. Accounts of different encounters with scientific knowledge show that the scientific world view proceeds unevenly, at different rates and in negotiation with a panoply of other forces. Other theorists examine this question in terms of political economy, regulatory frameworks and scientific policy instruments, investigating the interactions of science, law and state (Jasanoff, 2005).

These critical approaches to science, however, retain a distinction between the practical content and the social context of science, with their analyses focusing on the latter. This means that the power of science is figured as derivative of social forces. The limitations of this figuration are explored, and sometimes overcome, within the field of science and technology studies.

Science as Practice

Three decades of work in the social studies of science have established an alternative treatment of science. Theorists have repeatedly rejected critiques of science as anti-social or non-cultural form. Instead they have argued that even in its most abstruse theoretical constructs or highly technical practice, science turns out to be just as local, particular and contingent as anything else. The efficacy of the sciences, their effectiveness in the world, their translatability or universality, can be shown to be historically produced and culturally specific because they are cultural or social. Every general attribute of science, ranging from the figure of the scientist (Shapin and Schaffer, 1989), experimental practice, fact (Latour and Woolgar, 1979),

or scientific apparatus (Pickering, 1995) through to scientific concepts is analysable as a skein of relations between bodies, gestures, habits, things and signs put together in specific locations (Lynch, 1993). All science is situated knowledge (Haraway, 1991). This is still a contentious assertion outside social and cultural studies of science, but its ongoing relevance is hard to deny. Whenever a science is examined, its results, its modes of existence, its practices, institutions, theories and ideas, no matter how global in appearance, can be traced back to contingent conditions. For some sciences, this tracking might involve more arduous work than others. The high-profile epistemologies of physics pose different analytic challenges to field-historical sciences such as ecology, ethology or epidemiology.

Science studies' analysis of science renovates concepts of society just as much as science. Theories such as ANT (actor network theory) no longer treat the social as an explanation of the scientific (as in some social constructionist accounts of scientific knowledge). The social, the scientific and any other domain of the *collective* (culture, media, economy, state, etc.) are constructed together:

We collectively elaborate an emerging and historical *event* which was not planned by any participant and which is not explainable by what happened before the event or what happens elsewhere. All depends on the local and practical interactions in which we are presently engaging. (Latour, 1994: 50)

If sciences are no longer seen as grounded in the social or the historical context, where do they come from? Where does their productivity and force arise? Their advent and development, in all its cultural, economic, technical and political complexity, becomes conceivable only as 'local and practical' interactions, elaborated 'collectively'. This treatment of science as *event* has been echoed in anthropological and cultural studies of science. For instance, Paul Rabinow (1999: 180) writes that '[f]rom time to time, and always in time, new forms emerge that catalyze previously existing actors, things, temporalities, or spatialities into a new mode of existence, a new assemblage, one that makes things work in a different manner and produces and instantiates new capacities. A form/event makes many other things more or less suddenly conceivable.' New assemblages make new things conceivable, unfurl new temporalities and spatialities. In various forms, sciences generate new distinctions, classifications, boundaries and differences that bring different configuration of force to bear on existing identities, groups and institutions. This general argument has been instantiated in different venues and at different scales. Pickering's (1995) account of contemporary high-energy physics as a 'mangle of practice' parallels Shapin and Schaeffer's (1989) well-known historical investigation of Boyle's 17th-century air-pump. Lily Kay's (2000) historical account of the entwining of information theory, cybernetics, structural linguistics and molecular biology in post-Second World War biology broadly concurs with Anne-Marie Mol's (2003) exploration of how a single scientific object, such as a particular disease, turns out to be temporally, spatially, socially, and materially multiple.

Collective Elaborations of Science

Beyond the major dimensions of critical engagement with science lingers another long deferred question: what can the non-scientific knowledges do with the sciences that is not a pale imitation or representation of them? What would be the best form of relation to science for the human sciences? This question lies behind recent work in the history and philosophy of science that attempts to address the singularity of sciences without reducing them to generic notions of the social. In her book *The Invention of Modern Science*, for example, the Belgian philosopher of science Isabelle Stengers (2000: 58) writes:

I want to show that the singularity of the sciences does not need to be denied in order to become discussable. In order to make scientists actors like any others in the life of the city (the 'political' preoccupation), it is not necessary to describe their practice as 'similar' to all other practices (the 'sociological' preoccupation).

Discussion of the singularity of the sciences is in contrast with the many earlier attempts to understand their generality. For Stengers (2000: 67), the key component of any transformed relation between human and natural sciences resides in understanding the singularity of sciences, and, at the same time, 'avoiding any way of describing them [the sciences] which implies that scientists have a privileged knowledge of what this difference that singularizes them *signifies*' (original emphasis). We cannot assume, in other words, that scientists have better access to the significance of the singularity that constitutes their work. The work of social scientists, theorists and other analysts, then, is to enter into discussion with each other and with scientists in such a way as to frame scientists as actors in a collectively elaborated event. These discussions could take different forms encompassing theoretical, artistic and activist dimensions.

Theorizing with Science

Contemporary philosophical, social and cultural theory is magnetized by certain sciences. These sciences are no longer objects of critique as they were in much critical theory of the last two centuries. Evolutionary biology, and Darwin's work in particular, is increasingly regarded as a well-spring of concepts, approaches and styles of argumentation vital to theoretical invention. The philosopher Elizabeth Grosz (2004: 8) writes that 'Darwin creates a real committed to a concept of temporal becoming. He creates a science in which history, and thus the eruption of unexpected events, is central, in which life is focused on and a response to local and global events'. She treats Darwin's writings as a source of concepts of history, becoming and events. Darwin's theory of evolution is linked to political and feminist projects by the pivotal concept of life, a primary contemporary object of knowledge, production and experience. Similarly, the theorist Manuel DeLanda (2002) has argued in painstaking detail for the development of 'intensive sciences' through 'mechanism-independent processes' located in recent physical and life sciences. Both authors regard science as a lever against abstract essences or ahistorical universals that plague social thought.

In a similar way, certain high-profile sciences can be treated as a source of epistemological challenges. The work of Karen Barad (2003) engages with quantum physics. Like many philosophers and physicists, she argues that quantum mechanics challenges existing notions of subject, object and action. However, she goes further than many others in presenting the experimental apparatus and the theoretical propositions of quantum mechanics as materials that can be used to question any separation between observer and what is observed. Much of the undeniable fascination of such projects is that they transport scientific concepts and results into the orbit of theory-making within the humanities and social sciences. They remain problematic in certain respects. Theory is developed at a certain distance from science, a distance that hazes over conflicts, differences and practices in science. They tend, then, to bracket out the contested nature of scientific knowledge, as established by social studies of science, in important ways. Science becomes itself data to be interpreted by theory. The political-cultural problems of engaging with science in this way are largely left to one side, since the interlocutors for science-infused social theory lie almost exclusively within the humanities and social sciences themselves. Scientists are no longer actors here; at most they are the bemused inventors.

Making Science Art

Not only philosophers and cultural theorists, but many more artists have begun to work with scientific practices, materials, concepts and scientists themselves in diverse ways. Scientific instruments or materials (supercomputer, petri dish, tissue culture, MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] scan, telescope, etc.) becomes part of the work. The phenomena or results generated in scientific practice are taken up in artworks, and the process of doing science itself has figured in some performance. Artists collaborate with scientists to create works that make scientific theories or the cultural implications of science perceptible in different ways.

Sometimes working within scientific institutions or laboratories (as, for instance, in the many artist-in-residence programmes burgeoning around biological and biotechnological research), sometimes themselves developing scientific expertise (as in the case of artists such as the Critical Art Ensemble, Natalie Jeremijenko or Eduardo Kacs), some of these projects could be seen as contributions to the public understanding of science. Their funding by research foundations and trusts such as Wellcome Trust or NASA suggests that from an institutional standpoint, art has become an important vehicle to carry science into the public sphere. However, many of the art projects are not reducible to this. The arrest of the artist Steven Kurtz by the FBI on charges of bioterrorism in the USA in May 2004 indicates that state sensitivities to artists working with scientific materials are quite complicated. Even within art institutions themselves, the status of these works is uncertain. SymbioticA, a group of artists based in Perth, Western Australia, develop installations that contain biological materials such as living tissues. During exhibition, these works have evoked disgust, outrage or horror in spectators. What does it mean for an artwork to generate such a response when it is based on scientific practices or materials?

Acting in Science by Doing Social Science

Other scholars begin from conventional forms of social scientific observation of science and scientists. Mutating methods developed within anthropology and sociology, they move towards active engagement with the life of science. Combining the use of ethnographic methods, critical science studies and feminist politics, the American anthropologist Rayna Rapp (2000) participates in the production of scientific knowledge. Taking the notion of multi-sited ethnography in new directions, Rapp works in laboratory and clinical settings, engages in disease-related activism, spends time with families and community groups, and undertakes lengthy interviews with women undergoing amniocentesis, sometimes becoming an informed advisor or even friend. In some clinical settings Rapp acts as a medical translator, feeling unable to refuse to become involved when women and couples cannot understand the information provided to them in English. In other settings, she is asked by clinicians to provide impromptu support to 'crisis-racked' patients, and to provide criticisms and suggestions to clinical teams (Rapp, 2000: 21). Rapp also describes strategically using the popular media (*Ms Magazine*) to promote her study and to collect data through encouraging women to write to her about their experiences (2000: 19). In relation to the science of amniocentesis, Rapp spends six months learning the manual tasks associated with karyotyping, cutting and pasting laboratory images of chromosomes. This 'informal internship' at the prenatal diagnostic laboratory (2000: 191), she argues, helps her to understand the scientific processes of genetic testing as a form of affective labour, in which difficult decisions are made about the meaning of scientific data and what results might mean in individual cases.

Many of Rapp's methods recast the traditional role of the anthropologist towards one that privileges political feminist engagement without distancing from the production of scientific knowledge. Rapp consciously works at the boundaries of mainstream social science, testing the limits of what Donna Haraway (1991) calls situatedness. Her empirical terrain, she suggests (1991: 12), is 'open-ended and unbounded'. The field, for Rapp (2000: 19), is never neutral and her participation in the field constantly 'contaminates' the supposed objectivity of the traditional ethnographic stance. In her own writing, this engagement opens the possibility of juxtaposing materials from the multiplicity of fields constituting amniocentesis in contemporary America. This non-hierarchical juxtaposition of different fields (the laboratory, the clinic, the media, the community group, the family) raises the profile of pregnant women as 'moral pioneers' or 'moral philosophers of the private' by understanding them, just as clinicians, scientists or technicians at the laboratory bench, as actively participant in the life of science (2000: 306). A major finding of Rapp's study, she states (2000: 307), is that, like scientists and clinicians, women involved in amniocentesis 'really think'.

In a different form of experimentation that is openly linked to affects of canine love and sex, Donna Haraway's (2003) recent work with dogs represents an experimental engagement

with science. Building on her previous analytic work on technoscience, Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto* combines an analysis of canine genetics and social genealogies of dog breeds with stories about her own experiments with dog agility trials and personal history. This combination generates a situated affective account of people who work with dogs as active in the production of science. She (2003: 3) argues that '[t]he practices and actors in dogs' worlds, human and non-human alike, ought to be central concerns of technoscience studies'. Haraway's method of working with these materials – dogs, dog trainers, stories – in this work is heavily framed by biological understandings of animal and plant ecologies. For instance, she (2003: 31) uses the concept of co-evolution to enmesh nature and culture: 'Co-evolution has to be defined more broadly than biologists habitually do [I]t is a mistake to see the alterations of dogs' bodies and minds as biological and the changes in human bodies and lives, for example in the emergence of herding or agricultural societies, as cultural, and so not about co-evolution'.

In contrast to readings of evolutionary theory such as that of Elizabeth Grosz, the account of dog and human life Haraway proposes here is firmly located in contemporary sciences such as population and developmental biology. It does not attempt to extract non-metaphorical conceptual content from these sciences. Rather, it takes them up in sometimes surprisingly direct ways. Working with the concept of co-evolution directly from science, she also broadens it, and risks making scientific statements such as 'I suspect that human genomes contain a considerable molecular record of the pathogens of their companion species, including dogs' (2003: 31). Such statements have unstable tendencies. They are irreducible to natural or cultural determinisms that mistake local and provisional terms such as 'nature' or 'culture' for the world. Rather, they attest to the enmeshing of life and signification, to the convergence of 'trope and flesh', to the fact that 'flesh and figure are not far apart' (2003: 32).

What is at stake in such statements for the social sciences in relation to science more generally? Taking co-evolution of humans and animals seriously means occupying a complex, ambivalent position. Haraway (2003: 97–8) writes that '[t]hrough their dogs, people like me are tied to indigenous sovereignty rights, ranching economic and ecological survival, radical reform of the meat-industrial complex, racial justice, the consequences of war and migration, and the institutions of technoculture'. While this covers much ground that we have not engaged with here, the trend of these connections is to link scientific knowledges with political problems that sometimes seem quite remote. The analysis of 'multi-directional flows of bodies and values' (2003: 9) in *The Companion Species Manifesto* seeks to re-imagine 'grasslands ecologies and ways of life' (2003: 97) that were taken apart by the ranching practices of which the dogs in question were part.

Conclusion

Almost everyone eats, breathes, perceives, moves and sometimes thinks through science or its products. People understand themselves as organisms, as lifeforms, or as matter (even if we go on to dispute how we came to be that); we handle and apprehend energies, materials and forces in different forms and processes invented under the aegis of science. In the different trajectories sketched above, the cultural and social analysts of science occupy precarious and difficult positions. What do their approaches open up? At stake here is a notion of responsibility associated with experimentation. Isabelle Stengers (2000: 148) writes:

Every scientific question, because it is a vector of becoming, involves a responsibility: 'Who are you to be asking me this question?' 'Who am I to be asking you this question?' These are the interrogations that the scientist, who knows the irreducible link between the production of knowledge and the production of existence, cannot escape.

Stengers (2000: 89) argues that scientific questions are 'vectors of becoming' because they invent 'the power to confer on things the power of conferring on the experimenter the power to speak in their name'. A scientific question makes something new in the world. This is not because scientific knowledges drive technological applications, but because they are events,

they make a difference between before and after. Responding to an event entails responsibility. Questions of justice, politics, morality and power are never far from these events. In asking questions of science, social and cultural analysts also produce vectors of becoming and assume responsibilities that are fundamental to collective life.

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Alternative Science

Shiv Visvanathan

Abstract This entry counters the paradigmatic status of modern western science by pointing to the existence of alternative knowledges that precede this hegemonic form, and by showing the fruitfulness of alternative sciences that have emerged in contemporary times. It argues that the idea of an alternative science demonstrates that issues of knowledge determine the possibilities of a politics that connects the question of alternative lifeworlds to alternative livelihoods, lifestyles and life cycles.

Keywords ethnoscience, monoculturalism, museumization, pluralist world, Swadesi movement, universalism

I

An idea of an alternative science somehow eludes a dictionary definition of the term. Such a definition would fail to capture the poignancy, the Alice in Wonderland existence, of this word and its world. An alternative presupposes a dominant domain. Alternative sciences are seen as supplanting or substituting the current models that dominate science. They assume the hegemony of modern western science that is seen as both 'the best' and the most dominant form of knowledge. Yet alternative sciences have always existed, whether one considers Ayurvedic medicine or traditional agriculture. Only these sciences never made a claim to a universalizing validity that modern western science insisted upon. In fact, it is only modern western science that has systematically adhered to its claims to be the universal basis of knowledge. As a result, an alternative science today is often seen as another paradigm or gestalt that can challenge the current dominance of science and offer a parallel claim of universalism. Such terms of discourse create a captive text. It sets up a Kuhnian frame where only one system of knowledge can survive at a time and where the idea of a pluralistic regime of proliferation is seen as a cognitive weakness. Such a model of knowledge creates what has been called a 'monoculture of the mind' and it is precisely this which the discourse of alternative sciences seeks to break.

The phrase 'alternative science(s)' demands an unfreezing of narratives, especially those of the history of science. Second, it requires that we examine the relation of science to the other forms of knowledge and explore how competing or dissenting forms of religion or politics have sought to anchor themselves in some notion of a critical or alternative science. To the unfreezing of history and the politics of the other, we can also add the politics of knowledge.

The idea of alternative science opens up a critique of an internalist and the esoteric history of science, as opposed to the usual emphasis on an exoteric and externalist understanding of science. The latter tends to provide a linear reading of science as one rational cumulative sequence of knowledge from Aristotle to Einstein, sensitive only to issues of social and professional organization and those of political economy. The former emphasizes issues of epistemology, cosmology and ontology, and also sensitizes one to a non-secular history of science, relocating its roots in occult, magical and religious debates. It seeks to emphasize that the roots of creativity of modern science lie in these diverse traditions and that the attempts to create a battle between science and religion are of recent origin. The dream of alternative science is a dream of science located in a different politics, a dream where epistemology and cosmology might be as important as political economy. The politics of knowledge is thus not only about the politics of the axiomatics of knowledge itself. It can debate how a notion of method or an attitude to nature can be a source of violence. It does something more. It shows how modern

politics, especially democracy, tends to black-box the content of knowledge. Knowledge, rather than being an abstract entity or system, becomes a lifeworld connected to livelihood, lifestyles and life cycles. Thus stated, the idea of alternative science is an attempt to open modern western science to the possibilities it has suppressed both within and beyond itself. It seeks to reset, as it were, the fundamental maps of modern knowledge and the questions we ask of it. To open up this captive text, we have to unravel or extricate ourselves from the standard Herculean ventures that the history and philosophy of science set for us.

II

The first of these intellectual problems is what we might call the Weberian agenda fulfilled at one level by the Sinologist and embryologist Joseph Needham. The Weberian question was, why did rational bourgeois capitalism and its great corollary, modern science, develop only in the West. Max Weber attempted to answer the question by relating both capitalism and science to their roots in Protestant thought, and seeking to answer why the conditions necessary for capitalism did not develop elsewhere. Joseph Needham performed the Weberian exercise for science. His *Science and Civilization in China* (Needham, 1954) is an attempt to show that, while the Chinese invented everything from the compass to tea drinking, science in the modern western sense failed to develop there. Despite a deep ethnography of Chinese astronomy, medicine and agriculture, Needham failed to ask explicitly the question of whether Chinese cosmology constituted the basis for an alternative science. One is still caught in the failure of the Chinese to develop a modern science. Even for a Needham, other forms of knowledge still exist as a prelude to science. China, for all its achievement, remains a failed chrysalis for science.

If the Weberian question is one Procrustean frame for the genesis of the alternative science question, the battle between science and religion becomes the other dubious binary stemming the possibility of an alternative science. Questions of an occult science, of spiritualism as a science, or a Theosophist science all join an epistemological circus of defeated knowledges. The affiliation between feminist politics and such ideas of alternative science added to the sense that alternative sciences fuelled a search for the irrational. One senses this in the early reaction to Mesmerism or Theosophy, where a search for a more non-violent science, or a pluralistic notion of the body, was conceived as part of the irrationalist assault against the foundations of science.

What was only a suspicion with Theosophy became a certainty in the age of fascism. The Nazi search for a racial science or the Lysenkoist idea of genetics created, as it were, a stigma around alternative science. Conventionally, the idea of an alternative science recalls the horrors of Jewish physicists under the Nazi racist science or the travails of the geneticist Vavilov under a Lysenkoist attack (Lecourt, 1977). A search for freedom became identified with the irrationalities and whims of despotism. While Hitler and Stalin hardly constitute testimonies to alternative science, it is necessary to break this hyphenation of memory, whereby a dominant science virtually defines its idea of alternatives, in order to open the domain to new possibilities. To do that, one has to examine how western science constituted its epistemological self by defining its attitude to the other.

III

Zygmunt Bauman, in his *Modernity and Ambivalence* (1991), talks of the ambivalence of modernity to the dichotomies it has built to sustain itself. The modern has always been ambivalent to the stranger, whether as nomad, alien, monster or exotic. It has always sought a hegemonic mode of relating to the other and to *other forms of knowledge*. Modernity has always only been hegemonic in the way it constructed the primitive, the peasant, the nomad, the tribal, the madman, the woman, the patient and the worker. It panopticonized all these forms of life, but, more particularly, appropriated and sucked out these life forms as forms of knowledge. The 'primitive', like the patient, was the object of the gaze, to be studied, objectified, measured, evaluated, mapped. The patient's knowledge of his body or the tribal's knowledge

of his environment was read as irrational or condemned as ethno-knowledge. The ‘primitives’ were not only children of a lesser God but of a lesser science. It was not just that science was monoparadigmatic; its monoculturalism extended beyond the surveillance of the gaze to the fact that the creation of the object had to deny the subjective self and its knowledge. In relating to the other, modern western science either eliminated, assimilated, ghettoized or museumized them. Science had no place for defeated knowledges; the idea of an alternative science arose as a charter to challenge the current politics of knowledge.

It was that great dissenting scientist Alfred Wallace who formulated the problem long before Thomas Kuhn. In his *Wonderful Century* (Wallace, 1898), a portrait of the achievements of 19th-century science, Wallace begins with a celebration of western science and then observes that a science at its moment of dominance tends to be coercive and to ignore competing theories and hypotheses. Wallace believed that the success of science made it ethically and cognitively imperative for the scientist to invent and explore alternatives. Wallace was, after all, one of the first critics of the efficacy of vaccination and one of the most original defenders of spiritualism. Wallace’s sense of alternatives was at one with his biology. As opposed to the dominant evolutionism of Huxley, which advocated the survival of the fittest, Wallace’s work was a search for diversity and the creative role of diversity in evolution. Wallace’s perspective was complemented by the observations of the geologist and aesthete Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy who once asked: ‘If God appeared on the earth and enquired of civilized western man for the Aztecs, the Incas, the Red Indian, Australian aborigines and other slowly disappearing races, would he take him to the *museum*?’ (1947). Coomaraswamy in fact argued that the museum, as the annex of the laboratory, smelt of death and formaldehyde, embodying as it did the objectivity of a scientific culture that ‘preserves the folk song at the very moment it destroys the folksinger’ (1947).

Within a theory of alternative science, the museumization of knowledge, rather than being a humanistic attempt to save knowledge, disembods and fossilizes it. The museum also encodes the doctrine of progress that often vociferously believes that there is a linear evolutionary sequence between folk knowledge, traditional religious knowledge and scientific knowledge. A theory of an alternative science cannot permit such limited grids of linearity, as this not only embalms the past but also pre-empts a pluralistic future.

The whole modern idea of order-building, of which the panopticon and taxonomies of modern science are a part, uses two strategies. Zygmunt Bauman, following Lévi-Strauss, has dubbed them the anthropogenic and the anthropoemic approaches. The first annihilates the stranger and his knowledge by devouring them. It is a strategy of assimilation, of making the different similar by scientificizing it. The anthropoemic strategy vomits the stranger ‘from the limits of the ordinary world’ and, where exclusion is not possible, it destroys him/her physically. Both strategies negate the possibility of an alternative science and can be classically seen in the modern idea of Development (see Sachs, 1992).

IV

Modern development was a process of nation-building. It was predicated on a social contract between science and the nation-state to guarantee national security and promote development. Its grammar was embodied in the model of transfer of technology from metropolis to periphery, a sequence that involved a movement from invention and innovation to development. If the project of development embodied the monocultural paradigms of knowledge, critiques of development opened up, as it were, the framework for a postmodern democracy. One must emphasize that this debate is not a monologue of binaries. The state or the corporation often seeks to absorb, as well as suffocate, the dissenting knowledge. I will provide my examples from India, partly for reasons of intellectual convenience.

The initial debates on development were debates about policy and planning, creating an efficient ambience for professionals. To counter the technocratic impetus of science with the need for justice and equity, the left movements of the 1950s began a campaign of taking science to the villages. The Indian technocrat even articulated the idea of the scientific temper that he almost visualized as a pedagogic vaccine which, if imbibed, would rid the superstitious tribal

or the illiterate villager of ignorance, astrology and communalism. There is a complete black-boxing of science and all one talks of is community or participative development. One participates in science, one extends it, one questions scientifically but one does not question science. One merely celebrates it as given.

By the 1960s and 1970s, when the development paradigm was revealing its first cracks, there was a split in policy between science and technology. Science was conceived as universal, but technology was seen as local and adaptable. This was the age of the intermediate technology movement, where local knowledge and local materials accounted for both creativity and survival. It was the age of Schumacher and Claude Lévi-Strauss, the one announcing the prospect of *intermediate technology* (Schumacher, 1973) and the other the arrival of the savage mind, the *bricoleur* and *ethnoscience* (Lévi-Strauss, 1962). Ethnoscience was a savage science, an inferior science, a local science, articulated in a local language emphasizing local ingenuity. Lévi-Strauss's *The Savage Mind* (1962) is a powerful exercise in local myth, local science, but it is quite clear that he considers the *Scientific American* as superior to tribal ethnoscience. The idea of local knowledge or ethnoscience hierarchizes science, with western science thus encompassing traditional and folk knowledges. One can borrow Reserpine from a traditional medical system and appropriate it, while discarding the local discourse on healing. Intermediate technology *à la* the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was a discourse of technological contexts that left the scientific texts untouched.

It was in the 1980s and 1990s, as development became more visibly genocidal and ecocidal, that dissenting scientists and human rights groups opened the black box of science, challenging it as a method, a cosmology and as a vision of justice. It was within the pluralism of feminist, anti-development, human rights and environmental groups that a framework for an alternative science was once again created. It needed four separate axioms to sustain it.

The first was the idea of cognitive justice. The idea of cognitive justice goes beyond the concepts of voice or participation to emphasize that the victims of development were theorists, i.e. men and women of science. It holds that the tribal, the patient, the worker, the nomad are scientists and that they carry their own notions of coping and inventing with them. Such a notion of knowledge cannot be reduced to a patronizing or romanticized idea of ethnoscience as an inferior or defeated science. It also demands, as it were, a simultaneous congregation of knowledges and knowledge-makers to debate their assumptions. The idea of cognitive justice does not ask for expert representation but for actual presence. Bruno Latour made famous a parliament of things for science (Latour, 1993). The social movements sought to make famous a parliament of knowledges for science, where a sense of cognitive plurality prevailed.

One must emphasize that cognitive justice was not merely the undergraduate insistence on equivalence or equality that held Zande medical practice and western medical practice in the same balance. It was not an esoteric plea but a practical idea, an appeal by marginal and traditional societies who felt that they had something to add to western science, to its ideas of complexity, time and sustainability. It also sought to legalize the position by claiming that constitutions recognize the relation between knowledge, forms of life and survival.

The idea of alternatives requires the idea of a commons of knowledge. The idea of the commons has been applied to a community's access to natural resources. A commons is a domain where an ordinary villager finds building materials, herbs and sites of grazing. But a commons of resources includes a commons of skills and habituses that sustain these sources of knowledge. A commons cannot be reduced to a collection of commodities or information to be patented. It is a heritage but not something that one archives or museumizes or patents. It is a legacy available to all, sustained by careful use. The commons is also not a monoculture but a zone of diversity, of Vavilovian domains of skills, memories, techniques and theories, which many marginal societies employ to cope with disasters and development.

Finally, one opens up the black box of invention, of science, to question its very epistemology. There were two classic epistemological challenges to science during the development debates. One came from the Patriotic and People-Oriented Science and Technology Group (PPST) and its intellectual mentor Dharampal, who argued that agriculture in India was an

epistemology that the colonial British destroyed. More intriguingly, the chemist and engineer C.V. Seshadri argued that the laws of thermodynamics were not only ethnocentric but also oriented to a capitalist idea of organization and work (Seshadri, 1993). The dominant notion of efficiency tended to emphasize high temperature gradients while most of the work nature did and Third World communities pursued took place at ambient temperatures. The ambient hardly functioned in the calculus of modern energies. As a result, when choices had to be made, their logic worked against the poor of the Third World and their biomass economies. An alternative science of energy beckoned, on grounds of both survival and justice.

One must emphasize that this goes beyond the contention that western science, like other sciences, is a bundle of local practices locally grounded. The emphasis is not on origins but on the drama of the encounter. Seshadri is asking whether current notions of western time are adequate to understand ecology and energy. His is a search for cosmologies and epistemologies engaging with each other, looking for improved ideas of efficiency and sustainability based on more profound ideas of time. It is a dialogue of cognitive systems, not just of the political economy of energy.

IV

Probably one of the finest examples of a cultural model for alternative sciences arose during the last phases of the Indian national movement. The Swadesi movement, which was triggered by the partition of Bengal in 1904, led to an efflorescence of ideas in education, culture, science and technology. The self-critique that followed constituted one of the finest articulations of alternative science in the public sphere. Indian attempts to critique science and technology (S&T) can be schematically visualized in terms of the groups shown in Figure 1 (Visvanathan, 2001).

The nationalist movement faced a simple problem. How does one reconcile science with Indian civilization? The ensuing debate produced a repertoire of fascinating responses. Two things marked this process. The first was the notion of hospitality. The Indian national movement allowed a host of Englishmen to participate in the debate and many of them created what I call the other colonialisms, a site where India served as a model of possibilities that England has lost or repressed within itself. Second, there was nothing provincial about the experiments. In one sense, the neighbourhood reflected the wider cosmos.

Some nationalists realized that science was the model of the future and claimed 'Benares and Puri have had their day. What is there in Benares but fat bulls and fat priests? What is there in Puri but cholera?' (Visvanathan, 2001). The Swadesi nationalists saw science and the discipline of science as a model for the *rishihood* of the future. The chemist P.C. Ray went to the extent of contending that it was the disciplinary rituals of science that destroyed native aniline and madder dyes and the indigo industry. In response, the geologist and art critic Ananda Coomaraswamy criticized this fear and trembling about science and contended that what India had to preserve was diversity, the distinctiveness of the various shades of red in every village. Coomaraswamy also wrote a critique of why India would not use the gramophone, as mechanical contraptions destroyed the sense of *communitas* with society and nature. If the traditionalists criticized modern western science for having no filter against obsolescence, the Theosophists built a critique of science as a mode of violence. They criticized the vivisectionist impetus of science, arguing that experimentation on animals would lead to experimentation on men. They advocated homeopathy as an alternative medicine that was both anti-vivisectional and more sensitive to the individualities of patients. Neo-vitalists like Patrick Geddes and Tagore focused not only on the possibilities of a new biology, but on the idea that the modern university needed to recover the sense of dissenting academies because they helped to reshuffle the ideas of knowledge in a university. If Geddes worked on the ecology of the university, Tagore believed that a dialogue of civilization had to precede the remaking of the modern university. India and the West had to debate their competing notions of nature. Tagore and Geddes forecast a clash between the western city science of nature and the forest science of India (Visvanathan, 1997).

For Gandhi, every man was a scientist. Gandhi saw himself as a scientist; he criticized the iatrogenic power of science and simultaneously maintained that the patient was a scientist responsible for the iatrogeny of western medicine

Swadesi Nationalists

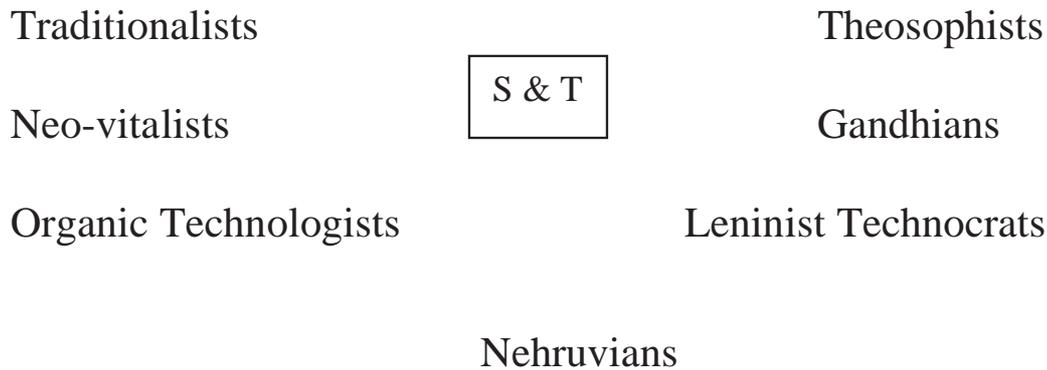


Figure 1. Indian critiques of science and technology

Albert Howard argued that Indian agriculture was a science whose understanding of soils transcended those of modern fertilizer-based agriculture. Howard saw the farmer as a man of knowledge and his organic farming was an attempt to transfer from India what England had lost as a result of Liebig and Bosch and their commitment to artificial fertilizers.

The Leninists believed that India had to reconstitute its energy base and they advocated a society based on the scientific method. A revolution in science presupposed a revolution in standards, calendars, planning. In the Indian debate, modern science itself was seen as an alternative. However, it was not a monoparadigmatic one, but one feasible model within a context of embedded alternatives. What Leninists like Meghnad Saha articulated in a technocratic way, Nehru absorbed into a more Lockean model of science. The point one wishes to emphasize is that a whole matrix of knowledges was created where science, rather than being fundamentalist, absorbed, negotiated and dialogued with other forms of knowledge to create a pluralist world of cognitive possibilities where emergence rather than reductionism was emphasized.

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Knowledge as an Ecology

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Keywords biotechnology, Buddhism, co-evolution, epistemology, knowledge and information lineages, ontology, process, South Asia

Knowledge and, in its lesser form, information, can be considered as an ecology, a many-splendoured jungle brought about by evolution. Such knowledge can decode or read reality as in science. It can create new reality(ies) through technology, that is, through the application of science. Or it can create reality(ies) as in stories, art, etc. Or it can transform reality(ies) as in some mind, body and non-human technologies.

Knowledge, and in its lesser form, information, is historically delivered to us in the present with knowledge and information lineages stretching back millennia or centuries or shorter periods depending on the nature of the knowledge/information transmission lines, whether they be oral, the hand-written word, the printed word or the digital form. These knowledge/information transmission lines change, responding to their physical and cultural environments, creating new knowledge/information and excising old knowledge/information. Each such lineage possesses built-in ontologies, epistemologies as well as the resultant concrete knowledge/information. Ontologies and epistemologies could often be implicit and not formally expressed in the knowledge/information.

But in regions where there have been formal discussions – and proper organizations for such discussions – formal ontologies and epistemologies have emerged. They have emerged for instance in Greece and South Asia. One sees a wider variety of formal thinking on ontologies and epistemologies in South Asian thought. The core civilizations of the world with their formal apparatuses for discussion and onward transmission in the form of the written word allowed different regional lineages of knowledge/information to emerge. There was cross influences across regions, yet there was a distinct regional flavour to the different knowledge trees that emerged.

One of the civilizations that influenced the making of Europe, through Greece, was Sumer, a civilization with close connections to the Indus culture that was contemporary with it. Archaeological finds indicate that close trading connections and other contacts were maintained between the two regions. The language of both the Greeks and

the Aryan invaders of the northwest Indian subcontinent, as well as the intervening Persian Empire, had a common source. There are thus interesting similarities between the gods of the ancient Greeks and the Vedic gods, as well as similarities between the societies depicted in the epic poems of the Homeric and Vedic traditions. Greek historian Herodotus wrote that Darius I (521–486 BC) would frequently call Greeks and Indians together for counsel and discussion. Later, Aristoxenes (350–300 BC) mentions a dialogue on human life between Socrates and an Indian philosopher (Chowdhury, 1988). Possibly because of these links, some of the ideas prevalent on the subcontinent from 700 to 500 BC – which are found in the later Vedic hymns, the Upanishads, and in the philosophies of the Buddhists and the Jains – appear in later Greek thought. For example, the search for one reality in the Upanishads is echoed by Xenophanes, Parmenides and Zeno, the founders of Greek mathematics who sought the One Reality. Pythagoras, one of the founders of Orphism, is alleged to have travelled widely and been influenced by the Egyptians, Assyrians and Indians. Almost all of the religious, philosophical and mathematical theories taught by the Pythagoreans were known in India in the sixth century BC (Rawlinson in Goonatilake, 1998). Thus, Pythagoreans, like the Jains and Buddhists, refrained from destroying life and eating meat.

The concept of karma, representing the ‘cycles of necessity’, was also central to the philosophy of Plato, for whom rebirth is due to the hand of necessity, men being reborn as animals or again as men, a belief common to all major South Asian religious systems. Vitsaxis (1977) has shown that in structure and method, general approach, and the growth of parallel lines of thought on specific points, the two traditions show common features.

Empedocles (490–430 BC), a disciple of Pythagoras, propounded the four-element theory of matter, consisting of earth, water, air and fire, and the four-humour theory of disease, later followed by Hippocrates. This has parallels with the earlier pancha bhuta concept of prthvi, ap, tejas, vayu and akasa – earth, water, heat, air and emptiness (ether) – and with the tridhatu of the earlier Rig Veda and the tridosha of Ayurveda. One could note that the pneumatic system in the Hippocratic treatise *On Breath* is theorized in the same manner in the Indian concept of Vayu or Prana.

Similarly, atomic theories occur in the two systems, appearing earlier in South Asia than in Democritus, taught by Katyayana, an older contemporary of the Buddha. And Heraclitus's belief that everything is in a state of flux is preceded in more sophisticated language by the *anicca* and *anatta* discussions of the Buddhists. The influence of South Asia on Greek thought is firmly expressed by Clement of Alexandria in the second century AD when he says that 'the Greeks stole their philosophy from the barbarians' (Halbfass in Goonatilake, 1998: 30).

From the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries, with the exponential growth of science in Europe and its spread across the world, one sees a tendency for regional civilizations to come under one hegemonic whole, a process accelerated through the present globalization. But the present is also characterized by a shift to Asia whereby regional elements can enter the dominant knowledge system aided by Asians working in science and technology pursuits in both the West and Asia.

But the knowledge/information field is not limited to that of human culture. There are historically derived lineages in biology (3.5-billion-year-old genetic system) and extra-somatic computer-based knowledge/information trees (say, 60 years old) with, respectively, their own knowledge/information trees. These three systems – the cultural, the genetic and the artefactual – are in the expanding world of biotechnology and advanced information technology beginning to merge and exchange information across the three lineages and their respective knowledge/information jungles. With massive computer storage and processing of cultural information through information technology (IT), and the bringing in of biological processes into IT as well as new biological developments which transform our very human modes of apprehending the world, the merging of cultural, biological and IT knowledge/information has profound implications.

If in the future we will be constructed and reconstructed – from biology, culture and artefact – what should be our epistemological, philosophical, ethical, and subjectively felt guiding principles? If 'we' would then be 'cyborgs' and hybrids, what should the interiority of robots, of constructed hybrids be as they navigate reality and tunnel through time in our lineages?

The person is not a 'what' but a process, a thought in line with Buddhism's view that the universe's components are in a state of impermanence, of ceaseless movement; nothing is durable or static. Being is only a snapshot in the process of becoming, lasting only the length of one thought. There is no stable substratum of the self; the self

is just a stream of physical and psychological phenomena that is always perishing. One analyses oneself, knows oneself only to realize that there is no self in the first place. In Buddhism, this elimination of the sense of self sets one free. The realization that the self is a process means that the future becomes open-ended. In the Buddhist analysis, unsatisfactoriness and anxiety become essential to the 'I' because these are the I's response to its own groundlessness.

This is the phenomenology of flow for human thought, and we could extrapolate this perspective to the other two lineages. The Buddhist analysis also suggests a moral compass for the future of merged knowledge streams; such a perspective includes a profound moral code of altruism, and it is not entirely farfetched to think that these principles could also apply to future scenarios.

A study which evokes some of the same philosophical approaches in charting the future technology is Varela et al.'s (1993) *The Embodied Mind*. They propose a bridge between the mind as conceptualized in science and the mind of everyday experience, through a dialogue between Buddhist meditative practice and cognitive science. The approach was applied to a variety of themes in neuroscience and cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence and evolutionary biology. In doing so, they approach what we considered as the three lineages, namely the internal flow of our thoughts (the culture within the minds), the flow of genes (evolutionary biology) and the flow of 'artificial thoughts' (artificial intelligence). Varela and his colleagues evoke the flow patterns that one observes internally through Buddhist meditation and find here the key to tackling the other two realms. They tackle the problems of non-self and of everflowing streams, and describe the dynamics of the three lineages. Their discussions are located in specific debates with the research communities in these three areas. They reject the subject-object dichotomy that arises in different forms in all the three lineages.

They consider that the inside and outside of the lineages jointly move forth, 'enacted' by the subject and the external object. A process of co-evolution results because the environment is not given but is enacted and brought into being through a process of coupling. The world is not taken as a given, with the organism representing or adapting to it. Their Buddhist approach transcends this duality, the outcome being co-determined by both the inside and the outside. This position would be the same, whether one's perspective is human-cultural or that based on artificial intelligence. One would act as the environment for the other, and together they would enact an unfolding future. Tackling the problems of the future requires

radical reorientations, sometimes returning to very old observations.

Encyclopaedias are universal compendia of available information. Any new encyclopaedia must recognize the new non-Diderot world. This is the re-emergence of non-European civilizations and the merging of biological and digital information with the cultural. The new encyclopaedia must reflect this as well as the ontological and epistemological bases on which the different turning points of the knowledge tree/jungle have occurred. This would imply that ontology and epistemology should be made overt in the encyclopaedia and not implied as universal. Such ontological and epistemological concerns would also be germane to the biological and digital aspects when viewed from the point of view of evolutionary epistemology.

Moving around in this hybrid information jungle evokes a comparison with exploring the jungle by the forest dwellers. The latter are immersed in a tangle of information extruded by thousands of plant and animal organisms that surround them. They would sniff around and explore only one or two, ignoring the bulk. So it is in the emerging new jungle of information. The new encyclopaedia would help us hunt for new information that their histories suggest are inter-

esting, while ignoring other information carriers and their contents.

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Science, Technology and Society

Michael M.J. Fischer

Keywords actually practiced technoscience; collaborative ethnography; deliberative democracy, power and accountability; epistemes and infrastructures; harmonization and local regulation; reflective arts

STS (Science, Technology and Society) has become an increasingly vital emergent field in the last quarter of the 20th century along with the transformations of the technoscientific infrastructures of the modern world. Unlike the older fields of history and philosophy of science which took as their interlocutors the idealized philosophical versions of how the universal truth of science was claimed to be established, STS has taken scientists and engineers as active collaborators in understanding how the specialized components of actually practiced science and engineering knowledge in their localized contexts can

be configured into broader, yet informed, approaches to living in a complex world. Unlike so-called policy studies which also take for granted the local political cultures in which they operate, STS places such political cultures into comparative perspective to make assumptions more accountable, especially in the disjunctions and differences that inevitably arise in attempts at global harmonizations (of clinical trials, of patent protection and intellectual property rights, of precautionary versus risk-benefit approaches to regulatory sciences).

While the intellectual lineages of STS are varied, key are (1) the early 20th-century debates about the cultural constructions of rationalities (Max Weber's notions of rationalizations of different cultural spheres, based on their own logics and differences between value- and instrumental rationalities; Ludwik Fleck's Durkheimian account of thought collectives and what would be later called by Thomas Kuhn (1962) 'paradigm

shifts' among scientists; Evans-Pritchard's (1937) comparison of how science and witchcraft systems each protect themselves from falsification, and the dialectic between physical mechanisms and social distribution of blame for disasters); (2) the mid-century structuralist accounts of cultural logics, cybernetic stabilization, and system transformation (Claude Levi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Roman Jakobson, Norbert Weiner, Thomas Kuhn, Marshall Sahlins); and (3) the triple stranded growth of ethnographic approaches in the UK, of the so-called new sociology of science or strong program (SSK) at Edinburgh, in France of actor network theory (Bruno Latour [1987, 1993], Michel Callon), and in the USA of the anthropology of science pioneered in the History of Consciousness Program at Santa Cruz, the Anthropology Program at Berkeley, the Science and Technology Programs at Cornell and RPI, and the STS Program at MIT.

At MIT, in 1996 three calls were placed for an STS approach that is integrative across disciplines, technically and scientifically competent, culturally resonant, and cross-culturally attentive. The calls placed were (1) to test and contest the disciplinary tools of ethnography and history, visual studies and literature, national institution building and transnational policy competitions; (2) to internationalize the conversation around the changing roles of the university and the technosciences as they globalize, exacerbate inequalities, and generate alternative modernities; and (3) to move the pedagogical sites of STS into engineering, medical, science, and law schools.

The attempt at 'integrative' weaving is not only the effort to reconnect the five cultures (of science, engineering, humanities, arts, social sciences). It is also to counter the specialization, compartmentalization and even secrecy or lack of ability to communicate among subfields of science and components of big engineering projects, both to allow checks and balances to operate and also to prevent the privatization of moral judgment, the enfeeblement of public discussion, and discriminatory restriction of access to the hierarchies of power and knowledge. It is also to contribute to the creation of multilayered institutional abilities to recognize and negotiate the differing knowledges and needs of societies and social strata.

Science and technology are often thought of as having a center-periphery structure. A focus on (and from) the peripheries can often also ipso facto be a focus on the histories of exchanges in scientific knowledges, e.g. the Kerala toddy tappers who provided the Portuguese material medica/botanica compiler Garcia da Orta, and his Dutch successor Hendrik van Reede, with the knowledge on which Linnaeus was trained at

Leiden; on hierarchies and access to centers of calculation (e.g. strategies used by Japanese women physicists to get resources from their international mentors to circumvent their lack of leverage within the patriarchal Japanese system); and on alternative genealogies of knowledges too often codified in textbook histories as universal, as if one could simply build science modularly in any place (a kind of naïve trickle-down modernization theory of science) without attention to the embeddedness of science and technologies in both sociopolitical factors and cultural imaginaries. The scientists and politicians who built the elite science institutions of India, China, Russia, Brazil and elsewhere in the post-World War II period were hyperaware of leveraging comparative advantages, of playing off one power against another, and of building particular kinds of niches.

The question is thus raised whether STS should not be integrally woven into the technoscientific curriculum, as questioning counterpoint, as a recombinant reagent, rather than in the old imagery as marginal critic, idealistic vanguard, elitist irritant, off to the side, out of the way, easily dismissed. Are these a better way to develop cultural critiques of the biosciences, bioengineering and biomedicine than, for instance, the new discipline of 'bioethics', whose socializations, formulations, and positionings institutionally and intellectually push it toward being part of the public relations legitimation for medical centers and corporations? Are these a better way to develop practical understandings for engineers and applied scientists of their roles in shaping contemporary institutions than simply adding to their curricula new courses in management or business?

At issue is perhaps what Michel Foucault might have recognized as an emergent new episteme, not totally divorced from older ones, but reconfiguring them and us in new cultural, social and material logics. At issue are conceptual analogues to the third generation fiber-optic cables that were being laid in the 1990s around the globe, expanding the connectivity and bandwidth of the new technological infrastructure, at the same time challenging and forcing reorganization of the old national postal systems by new multinational telecommunications corporate structures.

STS in this vision is not just a para-site commenting from the sidelines, but together with the principals figuring out how our technoscientific worlds should operate with what sorts of regulatory structures, pedagogies and accountabilities. The principals here increasingly are scientists, engineers, bureaucrats, entrepreneurs and other professionals, but also patient groups, community organizations, and other affected and

concerned members of the public sphere, civil society, governance and the reflective arts.

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The Human Sciences

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Keywords dualism, La Mettrie, materialism, Simmel

A persistent theme of the human sciences is the reduction of socio-psychological human life to the study of the material basis of the human organism. One of the best examples of this was La Mettrie, who was the first person in the modern era to give expression to the idea of man as no more than a machine. He did not, however, employ the term ‘a science of the human’. This concept owes much to the English translation of *Geisteswissenschaft* which, in its German form in the late 19th century, contained a large ambiguity. It could either mean a ‘science of the spirit/human’ and lead towards materialism and monism, or it could mean more generally the humanities. The humanities, which are a celebration and expressive elucidation of the human condition as non-reducible to any materialist base, have been in retreat since the late 19th century with the emergence of Darwinism as the valid scientific account of the origin of all species of life. So, a science of the human would seem either to have the capacity to be inhuman or, alternatively, to be humanistic but hardly scientific. In all of the many and various attempts to construct a ‘human science’ these two possibilities represent polar opposites and they are reflected in the two readings below.

I

Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1709–1751), a French physician, was the first philosopher to state that not only body but also mind and soul were determined by physiological constitution. His *L’homme machine* is taken as the starting point of a materialist science of life. In a religious age he attracted notoriety for stating that the soul was not immortal. Today he can be seen as a precursor of attempts to reduce human consciousness and behaviour to biochemical states and inherited traits.

I reduce to two the systems of philosophy which deal with man’s soul. The first and older system is materialism; the second is spiritualism.

The human body is a machine which winds its own springs. It is the living image of perpetual movement. Nourishment keeps up the movement which fever excites. Without food, the soul pines away, goes mad, and dies exhausted. The soul is a taper whose light flares up the moment before it goes out. But nourish the body, pour into its veins life-giving juices and strong liquors, and then the soul grows strong like them, as if arming itself with a proud courage, and the soldier whom water would have made to flee, grows bold and runs joyously to death to the sound of drums.

Words, languages, laws, sciences, and the fine arts have come, and by them finally the rough diamond of our mind has been polished. Man has been trained in the same way as

animals. He has become an author, as they have become beasts of burden. A geometrician has learned to perform the most difficult demonstrations and calculations, as a monkey has learned to take his little hat off and on, and to mount his tame dog. All has been accomplished through signs, every species has learned what it could understand, and in this way men have acquired symbolic knowledge, still so called by our German philosophers.

Nothing, as any one can see, is so simple as the mechanism of our education. Everything may be reduced to sounds or words that pass from the mouth of one through the ears of another into his brain. At the same moment, he perceives through his eyes the shape of the bodies of which these words are the arbitrary signs.

I always use the word 'imagine,' because I think that everything is the work of imagination, and that all the faculties of the soul can be correctly reduced to pure imagination in which they all consist. Thus judgement, reason, and memory are not absolute parts of the soul, but merely modifications of this kind of medullary screen upon which images of the objects painted in the eye are projected as by a magic lantern.

Let us now go into some detail concerning these springs of the human machine. All the vital, animal, natural, and automatic motions are carried on by their action. Is it not in a purely mechanical way that the body shrinks back when it is struck with terror at the sight of an unforeseen precipice, that the eyelids are lowered at the menace of a blow, as some have remarked, and that the pupil contracts in broad daylight to save the retina, and dilates to see objects in darkness?

I shall not go into any more detail concerning all these little subordinate forces, well known to all. But there is another more subtle and marvellous force, which animates them all; it is the source of all our feelings, of all our pleasures, of all our passions, and of all our thoughts: for the brain has its muscles for thinking, as the legs have muscles for walking. I wish to speak of this impetuous principle that Hippocrates calls *enormon* (soul). This principle exists and has its seat in the brain at the origin of the nerves, by which it exercises its control over all the rest of the body. By this fact is explained all that can be explained, even to the surprising effect of maladies of the imagination.

To be a machine, to feel, to think, to know how to distinguish good from bad, as well as blue from yellow, in a word, to be born with

an intelligence and a sure moral instinct, and to be but an animal, are therefore characters which are no more contradictory, than to be an ape or a parrot and to be able to give oneself pleasure.

Such is the uniformity of nature, which we are beginning to realize; and the analogy of the animal with the vegetable kingdom, of man with the plant. (Offray de la Mettrie, 1960)

II

In this next passage Georg Simmel concedes that there is a material and objective determination of the human individual, including our cognitive capacities, but that our being and our values belong to a separate plane or dimension of existence. The concept of human sciences may be said to be held in a perpetual oscillation between the materialism of La Mettrie and the dualism of Simmel. Do we think of the human species as existing solely within the plane of the material, or do we think of it as existing at the intersection of the planes of the material and the experiential?

The order in which things are placed as natural entities is based on the proposition that the whole variety of their qualities rests upon a uniform law of existence. Their equality before the law of nature, the constant sum of matter and energy, the convertibility of the most diverse phenomena into one another, transform the differences that are apparent at first sight into a general affinity, a universal equality. Yet on a closer view this means only that the products of the natural order are beyond any question of a law. Their absolute determinateness does not allow any emphasis that might provide confirmation or doubt of their particular quality of being. But we are not satisfied with this indifferent necessity that natural science assigns to objects. Instead, disregarding their place in that series we arrange them in another order – an order of value – in which equality is completely eliminated, in which the highest level of one point is adjacent to the lowest level of another; in this series the fundamental quality is not uniformity but difference.

We may be aware of the same life experience as both real and valuable, but the experience has quite a different meaning in the two cases. The series of natural phenomena could be described in their entirety without mentioning the value of things; and our scale of valuation remains meaningful whether or not any of its objects appear frequently or at all in reality. Value is an addition to the completely

determined objective being, like light and shade, which are not inherent in it but come from a different source. However, we should avoid one misinterpretation; namely that the formation of value concepts, as a psychological fact, is quite distinct from the natural process.

The meaning of value concepts is denied to nature as a mechanical causal system, while at the same time the psychic experiences that make values a part of our consciousness themselves belong to the natural world. Valuation as a real psychological occurrence is part of the natural world; but what we mean by valuation, its conceptual meaning, is something independent of this world.

We are rarely aware of the fact that our whole life, from the point of view of consciousness, consists in experiencing and judging values, and that it acquires meaning and significance only from the fact that the mechanically unfolding elements of reality possess an infinite variety of values beyond their objective substance. At any moment when our mind is not simply a passive mirror of reality . . . we live in a world of values which arranges the contents of reality in an autonomous order. (Simmel, 1978: 59–60)

The polarity between La Mettrie and Simmel's position is a philosophical one, of monism versus dualism. While it is perfectly correct to ascribe a humanistic approach to many of Simmel's writings, the first part of his *Philosophy of Money* goes a long way towards establishing a theory of value in terms of desire which in its terms is defined as the expenditure of energy against resistance. In other words Simmel's view of the individual is one of a living organism which, like all organisms, expends effort in pursuit of psychic needs. Simmel in talking about life and the human organism is quite prepared to advance naturalistic arguments, but ultimately the sphere of values remain beyond determination. Both Simmel and Max Weber were intellectually open to materialist accounts of psychological behaviour and human attributes, but only up to a point (Whimster, 1995). Simmel drew a philosophical line (which is traceable back to Spinoza), as in the above excerpt. Weber was forced to struggle with the issue, having

written *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–5) which raised a series of awkward questions about the causal status of *Geist*: was it psychologically determined, or theologically and socially formed, and was it a causal determinant in its own right? Weber's solution to these problems was to devise an interpretative science of social reality (which he called sociology) (Weber, 2004). *Whatever* the extent of the materialist science of the individual and peoples – and he did not exclude cognitive and neurological psychology, social actors interpreted their world (with all its materialist determinations) through values that they constructed and sustained. Today the La Mettrie approach is in the ascendancy. The attempt to reduce consciousness to bio-chemical states is analogous to Mettrie's dismissal of the soul. Cognitive psychology, evolutionary psychology, behavioural ecology and evolutionary game theory follow the same path that individuals and social outcomes are shaped by material causes beyond our immediate direct control. Hence, it might be worth insisting on a Weberian distinction: there are human sciences and there is also an interpretative science of social reality.

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Islam and Knowledge

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Keywords Eurocentrism, historiography, Islam, power/knowledge

The confident expectation among the social sciences late in the last quarter of the 20th century was that Islam would wither away as the global advance of westernization brought secularization and modernization in its wake. Not only has Islam failed to follow the trajectory pursued by variants of Christianity, namely depoliticization and confinement to the private sphere; it has, in contrast, forcefully re-asserted its public presence in the world. This re-assertion is often presented in terms of geopolitical or cultural challenges to the integrity and dominance of the western enterprise. The mobilizations in the name of Islam also present an epistemological challenge for the naturalized order of western hegemony. In other words, the invocation of Islam tests the power/knowledge complex that underpins the western order, questioning not only its power but also the knowledge intrinsic to the exercise of that power. The question of accommodating Islam in the world order and within the domestic policies of states constituted by the current international system has tended to obscure the depth and intensity of the philosophical aspects of this challenge. It is not only that the persisting relevance of Islam suggests that the history of the world cannot simply be reconfigured as a scaled-up version of the history of the West, but the evocation of Islam as a horizon implies a deep decolonisation of western power/knowledge.

The most common role assigned to Islam in narratives of world civilization can be understood through the metaphor of postal workers. The 'historical' contribution of Islam is to 'post' the classical heritage of Greece and Rome to its rightful heirs in Renaissance Europe. This movement is mapped out with more or less precision from Asia Minor to Andalusia. This mapping of course is also a narration of the identities of Islam and the West in terms of their destiny. Rather than replaying the Orientalist fantasy of such accounts, it might be more interesting to try and sketch out another way of seeing the relationship between Islam and the construction of the world. To this end, it is not helpful to think in terms of contributions in which different communities of literature give something to the common good;

such a narrative betrays a positivist conception of knowledge in which knowledge is objective and its uncovering and recovering can be simply transposed from one culture to another: assumptions such as this lead to rather simple-minded quests for the Zulu Tolstoy or the Muslim Martin Luther.

Muslim sources see the beginning of a distinct body of knowledge with the collection of the *Ahadith*, the sayings of the Prophet (*pbuh*) as reported by his close companions and wives. 'Classical' Muslim scholarship organized its production of knowledge under various disciplines such as *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *falsafa* (philosophy) and *tafsir* (hermeneutics). It important to make a distinction between Islamic knowledge and Islamicate knowledge. The former refers to the knowledge of the semantic order initiated by the revelations of the Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*), while the latter (following Hodgson, 1977) consists of all those working within a political and social order dominated by the signature of Islam. As such they would not have to be Muslims (i.e. those who would identify themselves as part of a community centred on the Prophet Muhammad's (*pbuh*) mission).

Both Islamic and Islamicate knowledge were influenced by the way in which the Muslim Ummah came to a dominant conceptualization of the relationship of the Divine with the human, in which the gap between the two could not be closed. As a consequence Divinity and humanity did not necessarily share an ontological space, which meant that no amount of human mapping out reality could threaten the independence and viability of the Divine. It could be argued that the development within dominant strands of Christianity of the possibility of closure between the Divine and the human through the category of incarnation had the effect of establishing a kind of ontological continuity between these realms, which meant that human production of knowledge could subsume (and threaten) the ontological space occupied by the Divine. One of the ways in which the different conceptions of the Divine are played out is that until recent times in the history of the Muslim Ummah, there were few cases in which human knowledge is presented as defiant of the Divine or able to subsume the Divine. The different conception of the relationship between the Divine and the human can be seen as contributing to different epistemological histories that engulfed Islamdom and Christendom.

Islamic knowledge has managed to maintain its institutional linkages and still performs a significant role in Muslim communities as a means of linking readings of the Islamic canonical texts with their selective dissemination in other discourses. Islamic knowledge also includes more recent scholarship that sees in the revelation of Islam and the development of its canon (Qur'an, hadith, sunnah) a methodological and epistemological resource. In other words, the canon is mined for its metaphysical and ethical content, but is also invoked as a scholastic tool. This Islamic epistemology is the product of an episteme that is now confined to narrow corners of medressas, and networks of various tablighs, etc.

The Islamicate production of knowledge came to an end around 1800. It was not replaced through a Darwinian struggle in which better knowledge replaced poor knowledge – it was not the replacement of Islamicate memes with European memes, but the gradual erosion of the political–military complex that sustained that knowledge producing complex. In the absence of the political–military–economic complexes that could undergird the production of Islamic and Islamicate knowledge, we have seen the retreat of these forms of knowledges from being part and parcel of a wider literate culture to isolated sites, where they are institutionally disempowered.

The production of Islamicate knowledge has become more or less colonized by the western/modern episteme. In the context of the study of phenomena associated with Islam this has meant the hegemony of Orientalism and its alter-ago anti-Orientalism. Orientalism sees Islam as governed by an essence, which is distinct from other cultural formations of its scale. Anti-Orientalism denies any essentialism to Islamic or Islamicate phenomena; this, however, is only accomplished by the implicit and disavowed acceptance of Western exceptionalism as constructed through the disciplines associated with the social sciences. What remains common to both Orientalist and anti-Orientalist accounts is a belief in the idea that the history of the West is the destiny of the world. Thus Orientalism signifies a field of study that sees the transhistorical nature of Islam as its proper object. Anti-Orientalism rejects any possibility that Islam and the Islamicate world that its venture brings into being can have any substantial specificity (Sayyid, 2003: 31–46).

The possibility of breaking with Orientalism (and its alter ego) in order to articulate an Islamicate epistemology is unlikely to emerge from various attempts to use Islamic knowledge as means of establishing an authentic epistemology for Muslims. Such attempts are marred by a positivism which seeks to establish an isomorphic relation

between Islam's sacred discourses (principally, the Qur'an) and the general field of discursivity as accounted for by (western) scientific epistemology. These attempts are often motivated by the desire to present Islamic knowledge as the precursor of contemporary science; however, in the project to demonstrate the primacy of Islamic epistemology, they paradoxically enshrine its secondary relationship to the discourse of science, thus making the sacred text vulnerable to technologization.

Various debates around concepts such as religion, secularism, feudalism have become important sites exposing the limitations of western historiography. Too often representations of Muslims worked within western historiography as counter history which tacitly confirmed the supremacy of the western enterprise. With the abandonment of the project in which history figured as grand narrative, and the abandonment of a western *telos* (or rather its displacement), the possibility of writing a global history that is not centred on any particular cultural formation beckons. It is in this global history that the semantic universe of Islam demands to be acknowledged with its own distinct trajectory and its own conceptual and analytical vocabulary (see Blankinship's (1991) proposed outline).

Can there be a distinct Islamicate epistemology that is separated from both the traditional episteme and western episteme? Such an Islamicate epistemology is only possible with the cultivation of a Muslim historical sensibility, in other words, a deep decolonization that resutures Muslim narratives of historical continuity with the past. What Islamicate history might look like after deep decolonization remains a question of speculative fiction or futurology. It will be, however, useful to remember that it is unlikely to be a picking up of narratives which were abandoned in the 19th century, nor is it likely to entail a retreat to the power/knowledge complex that emerged with the compilations of the companions of the Prophet (*pbuh*). An Islamicate epistemology could only proceed with a postcolonial critique of the 'Age of Europe' and thus it could not be a recovery of pristine Islam but rather the articulation of the post-western. It is possible to point to a number of developments which herald the post-western without necessarily being motivated to do so. First, there is the difficult and contested emergence of attempts at a non-teleological world history. Some of this is associated with the 'California' school of world history (Goldstone, Pomeranz), and the work of people like Andre Gunder Frank and James Blaut, who have all contributed to unravelling the standard narrative of western modernity and exceptionalism. Second, in philosophy, the rise of post-structuralism has entailed the

deconstruction of western metaphysics, including the uncovering of the ignoble disavowals of the 'great western' philosophers. Third, the expansion of postcolonial critique has meant a departure from issues of literary and cultural representation towards the analysis of the political institution of social orders. These three developments provide an epistemological conditions of possibility for the articulation of the post-western. Whether this post-western would be formed by a new multiculturalist ecumenical globalism or a world of contending *grossraums* remains to be seen.

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Enlightenment (Zen Buddhist)

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Keywords Buddhism, (the) Enlightenment, mind, religion, Rorty, Zen (or Zen Buddhism)

What is enlightenment? Enlightenment in a Buddhist context refers to an individual's awakening to the true nature of mind, but this definition always chases itself since this 'true nature of mind' remains ineffable. The Zen tradition – and the Zen tradition of Far Eastern Buddhism has had the greatest influence on contemporary uses of the term – is most insistent about the necessity of a transmission 'outside of words and letters', meaning it is important as an *experience* rather than as an idea. While it is correct to say that Buddhism presents itself as a non-theistic religion, there are in practice many kinds of Buddhists, and one must therefore generalize with caution about what a Buddhist view of 'enlightenment' would be. For some practitioners, a reified notion of Buddhist enlightenment corresponds to the belief that through meditation

and/or magical purification practices one can, over the course of a certain number of lifetimes, become a spiritual superman who will not undergo rebirth. This belief would seem to suppose a protected, permanent ego and would, thus, be at odds with central Buddhist tenets of impermanence of selfhood or other forms of identity. At the other end of the spectrum of Buddhist beliefs, a process-oriented notion of enlightenment challenges that formation and works with the luminous archetype of total, complete enlightenment as an imaginary standpoint that functions to help human beings live optimally. 'Enlightenment' in this sense would designate more a hermeneutical position than an achieved, particular state of mind.

For most Buddhist speakers, the radical contingency of thought described by pragmatist philosophers such as Richard Rorty has long been a given. It is partially useful to examine similarities between Buddhist views and the claims of western skeptical thought. The most important Buddhist doctrine is known as the 'Four Noble Truths', and

it is found in the Maha-parinibbana Sutta. These truths are: that *dukkha* (pervasive unsatisfactoriness) is universal. Second, we experience *dukkha* because we have not overcome desire: grasping is the origin of suffering. Third, it is possible to extinguish suffering if we can put an end to grasping. Finally, the Eight-Fold path is the set of instructions about how best to end grasping and so to find release from suffering.

The central paradox of Buddhism is that suffering is universal, and yet the cessation of suffering is possible. One understanding of the apparent contradiction between the first and third Noble Truths is to line them up chronologically such that pain is displaced by nirvanic bliss. Another understanding is that 'pain' does not disappear whereas 'suffering' (the psychological amplification of pain) *can* disappear. The Vietnam veteran Claude Anshin Thomas (2004) does not present himself as a person who has left suffering behind at all in his examination of his own suffering, *At Hell's Gate: A Soldier's Journey from War to Peace*. Rather, he movingly and convincingly describes the transformation of his relationship to it. Some readers will nevertheless scratch away at the doctrinal point: Can one *ever* be completely free from suffering? The epigraph to *At Hell's Gate* is a kōan, case 20 from *The Book of Serenity*, in which Fayán (known in Japanese as Hōgen) says, 'I don't know.' Guichen (aka Kueich'en or, in Japanese, Jizō) responds, 'Not knowing is most intimate.' In the first chapter, Thomas describes the terror of battle as experienced by a 17-year-old soldier: 'Soon there were one dead,

two wounded. I didn't know whether to shoot or be quiet. I decided to be quiet because I didn't really know what else to do.' 'Not knowing' goes through a number of incarnations in this text. The passive not-knowing of the boy becomes the active not-knowing of the man. Not knowing means accepting rather than judging or attempting to negotiate with what may be a horrific reality. We shrink from what is horrific, but 'not knowing is most intimate'. The traumatic paralysis of the frightened soldier becomes, in time and through practice, the acceptance of the sitting meditator. We recall Fayán and note the differences, but we also see the interdependence of two apparently incommensurable moments. Many kinds of 'not knowing' are woven into this account, but the waiting and not knowing morph from pain and judgment to a patience that allows for genuine insight.

What is enlightenment? There are many approaches to this word, one of which is to say that knowing not-knowing.

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Ignorance

Ryan Bishop and John Phillips

Keywords authority, epistemology, knowledge, learning, validity

Ignorance (*in-gnor-are*, not-knowing, from the Greek *agnostos*) emerges in the early modern period as privation of knowledge, in both the specific and general senses. Someone might be ignorant of a fact or a state of affairs, in which case they would be in want of knowledge; or someone might exist in a general state of ignorance. In the latter sense ignorance is collocated with sin, alongside darkness and hell (accordingly one might commit an ignorance as one might commit a sin).

The kind of knowledge that ignorance in this sense undermines would thus be that revealed by prophets and sacred texts. The Islamic state, for instance, emerges out of the state of ignorance called *jāhiliyah*, the defining characteristic of the period that preceded the teachings of Muhammad.

Moreover there are two quite different kinds of ignorance: ignorance of things that can be known or learned (a state of contingent ignorance that might ultimately be overcome); and ignorance of things that of their very nature cannot be known (necessary ignorance of eternity or of the great plan of providence, or even just the future). By the 18th century trends in materialism and empiricism had emerged that threatened all credulity towards

this necessary ignorance, prompting Alexander Pope, for instance, to rebuke the new science in his *Essay on Man*: 'The bliss of man, (could pride that blessing find)/Is not to act or think beyond mankind'. The renewed sense of necessary limits to man's knowledge gestured towards a cruelly unpredictable future in a series of persuasive analogies summed up in the phrase: 'blindness to the future, kindly given'. Pope's verse essay is echoed in a famous meditation of Thomas Gray, which has since become a commonplace: 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.' The formula neatly displaces the ancient conception under the sign of an emergent romantic aesthetics that constitutes the other side of the Enlightenment thirst for knowledge.

The standard approach to knowledge after the Enlightenment held that knowledge equals power. This formulation, familiar to almost all readers of this encyclopaedia as well as being a fundamental assumption about encyclopaedias and reference works generally, assumes that through the general spread of information and knowledge, the general populace can learn things to better itself. Through the acquisition of knowledge, the reasoning goes, the standard and quality of life of everyone will improve as the citizenry learns more about the functions of governmentality, economy, polity, technology and nature. The general population will then demand changes in their and others' interests as well as seek solutions to perceived problems. In this way, knowledge becomes the power through which individual and collective self-improvement occurs in a linear, rational movement toward an increasingly intelligent and harmonious society and world. The politicized strand of this essentially liberal tradition includes William Cobbett, who urged young men to acquire grammar as a branch of knowledge, so that they should be able 'to assert their rights and liberties', as well as Lancelot Hogben (1968), who in *Mathematics for the Millions* declared, in an echo of the ancient superstitions that he abhorred, that: 'to be disdainful of the great social task of education is as stupid as it is wicked. It is the end of progress in knowledge'.

Few would argue with the basic premises and ideals that surround and contextualize the knowledge equals power formulation. But some have problematized many of the ways in it is articulated in actual practice. Michel Foucault, for instance, examined the sometimes corrosive ways in which power and knowledge operate under the guise of authority (as in, who has the authority and power to constitute some forms of knowledge as knowledge while rendering other forms illegitimate), as well as the corruptive ways in which 'knowledge' can be used to propagate power within hierarchically stratified social formations. Over several

studies of discursive institutions (concerned with imaginary elements like 'sex', 'madness' and 'crime') Foucault identifies a fundamental transformation of mechanisms of power since the classical age, which no longer involve repressive maneuvers but now consist in increasing, and distributing more widely, specific kinds of power/knowledge, which work to 'incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it' (1981: 136). Increasing a population's expertise in, say, even grammar or mathematics might in fact serve to reproduce more forcefully the hierarchies of power that continue to dominate. Foucault thus opens a general inquiry into the problematic nature of power and how it is instituted.

Taking Foucault in a slightly different direction, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1988) offers a reversal of the 'basic knowledge equals power' equation that argues that ignorance, too, is a powerful epistemological 'site'. Ignorance, she claims, 'is as potent and multiple a thing as knowledge'. 'If *ignorance* is not – as it evidently is not – a single, Manichean, aboriginal maw of darkness from which the heroics of human cognition can occasionally wrestle facts, insights, freedoms, progress, perhaps there exists instead a plethora of ignorances, and we may begin to ask questions about the labor, erotics, and economics of their human production and distribution', Sedgwick writes. 'Insofar as ignorance is ignorance of a knowledge – a knowledge that may itself, it goes without saying, be seen as either "true" or "false" under some other regime of truth – these ignorances, far from being pieces of the originary dark, are produced by and correspond to particular knowledges and circulate as part of particular regimes of truth' (1988: 25).

Beyond being the necessary condition for 'knowledge' per se, ignorance, therefore, can be seen as productively producing power in and of itself. Using the provocative phrase 'the privilege of unknowing', Sedgwick argues that those who benefit from a range of inequitable relations (economic, material, educational, technological, etc.) can generate systems of knowledge production predicated on ignoring the premises upon which their power is based. Those who wield power within or who benefit from such inequitable relations do not know from whence their privilege emerges because they do not have to know. In this manner, ignorance works as a kind of ethical shield, preventing people within a given power structure from knowing how they have come to benefit from inequitable system relations and casts their privilege merely as 'natural' or 'the way things are'. Sedgwick further claims that there is a danger in believing that ignorance is the enemy we, the enlightened, must fight against. 'There is

a satisfaction in dwelling on the degree to which the power of our enemies over us is implicated, not in their command of knowledge, but precisely in their ignorance. The effect is a real one, but it carries dangers with it', she warns. 'The chief of these dangers is the scornful, fearful, or pathetizing reification of "ignorance"; it goes with the unexamined Enlightenment assumptions by which the labeling of a particular force as "ignorance" seems to place it unappealably in a demonized space on a never-quite-explicit ethical schema' (1988: 24).

This work is suggestive of an ignorance of a kind that would no longer be subordinated to knowledge. Instead of the agnosticism that predicates ignorance of an unknowable beyond (the transcendental) one would begin to recognize the structural necessity of an ignorance (an inability to know) without which the other kinds of ignorance and their respective knowledges could never have emerged in the politically charged situations in which they always do. This inability to know thus precedes and organizes all kinds of knowledge, whether considered as fact oriented technique or ideologically oriented wisdom. And thus the most basic and forceful resource for knowledge, in the traditional sense, turns out to be its impossibility (an a priori *inability* to know).

Knowledge, in a strict epistemological sense, is often defined as justified belief. In that case the basic problem of knowledge concerns justification: how do we show that our beliefs are justified? Because justification is always restricted to contingent disciplinary specifics, then we produce knowledge by demonstrating, in widely differing ways, how we arrive at justifications for what we believe. We are thus regularly obliged – in the register of a kind of epistemological doubt – to challenge our modes of justification, and thus to perform the constructive role of scepticism. However, this kind of knowledge is a logical construction that fails to distinguish between the *sense* of a proposition (its truth content) and the *making* of the proposition itself. If the proposition (a judgement of knowledge) is oriented towards its sense, then this establishes knowledge in terms of truth and objectivity: the valid sense – or truth – of a judgement. The question of justification nearly always boils down to this. If, on the contrary, it is oriented in the other

direction, as an activity or performance of the knower, then an alternative notion of knowledge emerges, in which knowledge means exactly the opposite of a gathering of information or the accumulation of true facts. It means *being able to learn*. In that case knowledge recedes the more we believe we know. This more nuanced sense of knowledge, or knowing, has gathered force throughout the 20th century. 'The one who knows', writes Heidegger in the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 'is the one who understands that he must always learn again, and who above all, on the basis of this understanding, has brought himself to the point where he continually *can learn*' (2000: 23). In Heidegger's sense this knowledge would require a historical self-awareness brought about by questioning and contextualizing, rather than knowledge built on assertions about particular facts. The distinction between ignorance and knowledge would no longer be secure.

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Discipline

Bryan S. Turner

Abstract There are broadly five interconnected meanings of the noun 'discipline'. *Disciplina* were instructions to disciples, and hence a branch of instruction or department of knowledge. This religious context provided the modern educational notion of a 'body of knowledge', or a discipline such as sociology or economics. We can define discipline as a body of knowledge and knowledge for the body, because the training of the mind has inevitably involved a training of the body. Second, it signified a method of training or instruction in a body of knowledge. Discipline had an important military connection involving drill, practice in the use of weapons. Third, there is an ecclesiastical meaning referring to a system of rules by which order is maintained in a church. It included the use of penal methods to achieve obedience. To discipline is to chastise. Fourth, to discipline is to bring about obedience through various forms of punishment; it is a means of correction. Finally there is a rare use of the term to describe a medical regimen in which 'doctor's orders' brings about a discipline of the patient. In contemporary society, there is, following the work of Michel Foucault, the notion of increasing personal regulation resulting in a 'disciplinary society' or a society based upon carceral institutions.

Keywords carceral, disciplinarity, postdisciplinarity, postmodernity

Dimensions of Discipline

The social importance of discipline was emphasized by Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930/2002). In his studies of asceticism he noted the significance of discipline for the production of personalities and life orders that have an affinity with the discipline of the labour force in capitalism. However, it was Michel Foucault (1977) who demonstrated how discipline was connected to the detailed regulation of the body in various forms of governmentality. The discipline of the body is a necessary condition for the achievement of a technology of the self, and the cultivation of the self is the precondition of education. Within a traditional curriculum, a discipline may be defined as an organized perspective on phenomena that is sustained by academic training or the disciplining of mind. Like the related notions of cultivation and culture, an academic discipline requires regulatory practices, and a rhetoric of competence, if a specific mentality is to be sustained over time among a community of scholars. Disciplines of mind and body within a monastic context were technologies of the soul. In some cultures, such as Buddhism, these intellectual or spiritual disciplines more explicitly involve the disciplining of bodies.

Bodies of Knowledge

In terms of a body of knowledge, the university curriculum was organized around a number of foundational disciplines. In medieval systems of learning, the *trivium* formed the basic structure of the curriculum as a plan of study. Conflicts within the curriculum have reflected wider battles in society as a whole. Kant's analysis of the relationship between theology and philosophy in his *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1992) reflected the struggle between the Enlightenment and the Church over the authority of reason and revelation.

Disciplinary boundaries in modern systems of knowledge and information are changing rapidly under the impact of new information technologies, the postmodernization of culture, and above all the changing relationship between the university, the national culture and the nation-state. These social and technological changes are in turn features of the emergence of a global economy and the globalization of culture. We are moving into an environment of post-disciplinarity that corresponds to postmodernity. In this educational context, the authority of disciplines is breaking down and there is a fragmentation of knowledge. The erosion of disciplinary authority has its direct professional consequence in the decline of professorial power in university departments. Notions of overarching paradigms and binding epistemology are now out of fashion.

J.-F. Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1984), Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (1964) and Daniel Bell's *The Coming of Post-industrial Society* (1974) were reports on the state of knowledge in the context of new media of communication. Lyotard's study, which was commissioned by the Conseil des Universités of the government of Quebec, was influential as a marker of the arrival of postmodern knowledge as a consequence of computerization. McLuhan's educational publication on the impact of the new media on pedagogy, which was developed for the National Association of Education Broadcasters and US Office of Education 1959–1960, was equally revolutionary. The digital cultures of the post-industrial world no longer have the same level of meaningful stability as print cultures. McLuhan's research suggested that different technologies of communication required different forms of education and training, producing different technologies of the self. The creation of e-knowledge requires flexibility rather than hierarchy and discipline.

The State and the Curriculum

The rise and fall of disciplines have often been produced by changes in the national culture. The cultivation of folk studies, ethnography and literature was an effect of nation-state consolidation, when political elites sought legitimacy in tradition, or more precisely in the 'invention of tradition'. At various stages in the rise of nationalism, the development of certain disciplines has been a necessary foundation for the articulation of a national *Geist*. Writing of culture as the best that can be thought in a society in 1867, Mathew Arnold was in *Culture and Anarchy* (1969) able to assume the moral authority of English high culture and the role of the intellectual as its spokesman and defender. High culture existed to discipline the nation. The Arnoldian vision of English education assumed that a strong national culture required a powerful state to impose its hegemonic force at home and abroad. In a similar fashion, Lord Macaulay's educational Minute of 1835 expressed perfectly the self-confidence of an imperial system. Macaulay asserted that one shelf of any European library was worth the entire native literature of India and Arabia. His Minute initially dismissed Sanskrit from the public domain.

Dictionaries are important in establishing a national project. In the Netherlands, van Dale's *Groot Woordenboek der Nederlandse Taal* of 1864, and subsequent editions, was important in defining national boundaries. However, the fragmentation of modern cultures and the growing hybridity of national traditions have reinforced the feeling among public intellectuals not only that there are no final vocabularies, but that all perspectives are partial. The university has become partially disconnected from any national project; it merely serves the economy. The rise of multiculturalism has provoked a significant detachment or decentring from an inherited national culture. Modern university academics may well experience more connection with the lifestyle and taste of youth movements and popular culture than with an establishment. The very idea of a national disciplinary unity is now questioned. The intellectual context of English culture in relation to the rest of the world has changed radically since Arnold's day, and these changes impact significantly on a cluster of interrelated roles and institutions, in particular the state, the university, the intellectual and disciplines.

Disciplines are artificial constructs; they are not naturally occurring intellectual divisions that might refer to divisions of the mind. They are socially constructed perspectives constituting a particular slice of reality and as such they can always be transformed, relocated or

destroyed. With the erosion of religious faith and the decline of training for the priesthood, Christian theology has been partly converted into religious studies, which itself is often seen to be a version of cultural studies. Disciplines can also be merged or integrated with related fields to construct, for example, interdisciplinary studies. While Soviet Studies has largely disappeared from the university system, European Studies is a growing area of teaching and research. Women's Studies, while often claimed by radical feminists to be a discipline, is in fact a multidisciplinary area of studies rather like the social sciences. Terrorism Studies has emerged since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York.

Globalization

The debate about postmodern methods has indicated a significant context of postmodernization, namely the tensions between the process of the globalization of culture and local resistance to both Westernization and globalization. The postmodern debate in methods and theory can be seen as a consequence of a set of broad changes in world culture that has been described in terms of globalism. At one level, the process of globalization simply means that the world is more systematically connected together by contemporary processes of electronic transformation and communication of information, the development of a world economy, the emergence of world systems of military communication and defence, the growth of global legal arrangements such as the human rights movement, the development of a world system of tourism, and the elaboration of intellectual communication between universities brought together within a system of global education.

The paradox of globalization is that it is closely and inevitably connected with consciousness of localism and localization. That is, the globalization of culture threatens the very existence of local practice and belief, which become engulfed in a unifying process of cultural integration. The need to defend localism is a response to the impact of cultural globalism, particularly through such processes as tourism and multinational investment. The attempt to protect local knowledge, local culture and local practice is thus associated with anthropological postmodernist and hermeneutic emphasis on textuality, locality and indigenous meaning. It immediately establishes cultural relevance and appears to demonstrate in compelling ways what is at stake in the politics of cultural domination and resistance. Indeed, the process of globalization within religious and intellectual systems has given rise to a strong nationalist local and indigenous response. For example, the Islamization of knowledge can be seen as a response to globalization and the integration of Islam into the world system. The reaction to globalization which many believe would produce a unified integrated and universalistic culture is associated with the postmodern emphasis on textuality, localism and indigenous meanings, but it has also become associated with the process of decolonization and the critique of the dominance of Western forms of modernist rationalism.

The processes of decolonization have produced a variety of critical responses to imperial culture and authority. For example, there has been within the Indian subcontinent a profound reaction against the dominance of (English) literary studies, which has imposed a Western canon of literature on Indian culture. The decolonization of literature has involved a critique of this canon, an emphasis on the value of local literary traditions, and the evolution of alternative forms of literary expression. This decolonization of literature was associated with a broader rejection of Western claims to universalism in the work of Edward Said (1978), specifically in his critique of Orientalism, and with subaltern studies. These critical movements in cultural theory are closely related to the debate about postmodernism because they share one basic characteristic in common: a critical rejection of the idea that Western forms of representation and reasoning could be construed as a global or universalistic discourse embracing human culture as a whole. Just as postmodernism has rejected the idea of the legitimacy of the 'grand narrative', decolonizing protests have rejected the legitimacy of the Western grand narrative to determine cultural hierarchies and cultural authenticity. The critical literature of decolonization claims that the local tradition has the same stature and value as the imperial tradition, which assumes global significance because imperial power has been able to impose its autonomy.

Conclusion: The University of Postdisciplinarity

The historic alliance between scientific knowledge and the state of the late 17th century has been partially eroded by globalization and the fragmentation of knowledge, with the result that universities can no longer articulate universalistic values. There is some justification therefore for believing that the postmodernization of knowledge has taken place, thereby intensifying traditional debates about the problem of the relativization of knowledge with the growth of multiculturalism. While this argument is convincing, we need to keep in mind the fact that the university has been, since its medieval foundations, fractured around a contradiction between nationalistic particularity and a commitment to more universalistic standards, and that this tension has if anything increased with globalization. It is unlikely that disciplinary coherence can be maintained in these new circumstances.

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The Knowledge Apparatus

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Keywords argumentation, authority, knowledge, representation, rhetoric

Academic writing, more evidently than other kinds, has evolved in ways that cannot be separated from the *apparatus* of the knowledge that it is supposed to serve. The apparatus (from the Latin *ap-parare*, to 'make ready' or 'prepare for') consists in several things that together maintain the conditions preparatory for all knowledge. The components of the knowledge apparatus function like appendages, arrangements, mechanisms and even kinds of equipment; yet their evident prosthetic character would be misleading if knowledge was regarded as something essentially independent of its apparatus.

If academic writing reveals the apparatus of

knowledge more clearly than do other kinds of writing, then this does not mean that it is absent from other kinds of writing. On the contrary, the knowledge apparatus would be at least implicit in any claim to knowledge (e.g., in journalism, autobiography, or web-logs [blogs]). Knowledge would be nothing without the arrangements, classifications and kinds of assemblage that make it possible, prepare for its emergence, produce it, maintain it and critique it. The conventions, for instance, by which the title and author of a work are identified play very specific functions in preparing for knowledge, as do the several kinds of documentation, attribution, citation and copyright. Where a work neglects any or even all of these conventions, they very often remain implicit, and all the more marked in their absence.

The apparatus of academic writing is homologous in some ways to the functions of the archive,

museum, library and other institutions of knowledge, to which we must add rapidly developing kinds of electronic archiving. Conventions, colloquia, workshops and conferences of all kinds play indispensable roles in maintaining and performing the functions of the apparatus. Delving into established historical archives we find that knowledge is indistinguishable from its many forms of documentation in books, proceedings, papers, journals, encyclopaedias, dictionaries and proliferating forms of electronic storage and access. The function of the 'edition', and the several, often very specific, kinds of scholarship dedicated to producing the so called authoritative editions of the works of knowledge, cannot be overestimated.

Sources like the internet – which offers free web space for virtually unrestricted global dissemination of data, knowledge and ideas – can illustrate negatively the conditions that the conventions of the knowledge apparatus are supposed to protect. Electronic technologies, though, introduce nothing new to the problem of knowledge. Rather, they exacerbate conditions that always seem to have applied. Knowledge is problematized when people *dissimulate* or feign the appearance of knowledge by using exactly those conventions that evolved as ways of protecting knowledge from this kind of dissimulation. The rhetorical procedures of citation and the associated ways of documenting proper attribution are evident amongst the oldest surviving manuscripts. Moreover, such manuscripts are themselves responsible for the preservation of previous knowledge by means of citation and attribution. Accordingly the history of knowledge includes, in every era, instances of false attribution, misquotation, plagiarism of many kinds, and spurious appeals to authority. It is, in these ways, always possible to invent a convincing case for knowledge that has little or even no substance in fact, a situation often parodied in fiction, which is in principle free of the truth criteria traditionally leveled at epistemological statements. Nevertheless, without the knowledge apparatus, which constitutes the means by which knowledge is passed on and by which it evolves and mutates, there would be no knowledge. Knowledge might thus be regarded as simultaneously possible yet problematic at the level of the apparatus itself and so knowledge per se – if we were to accept a notion of knowledge somewhat abstracted and thus protected from the random contingencies of its dissemination – ought first of all to be regarded as an awareness of the means of knowing.

By focusing on the apparently marginal and contingent textual procedures by which the apparatus is realized, we draw attention to the basic preconditions of knowledge, its organization and arrangement. A certain level of self-reflexive

paradox is *inevitable*. The preconditions for knowledge cannot easily be made the object of knowledge. It is a matter of making evident (making known) the structures of knowledge itself, which emerge in ways that provide definitive proof of the imperfectability of knowledge. This is not a misfortune. A knowledge constructed and prepared for, always in advance, remains nonetheless open to permanent revision. Attempts to operate outside or beyond, or even without, the conventional knowledge apparatus take the risk of repeating its most sedimented (mystical, hidden) forms, perhaps constructing or reproducing myths of freedom or origin. Or, instead, such risks may pay dividends in the creative disruption of conventional arrangements, revealing (but we hope not too much) the arbitrary element in knowledge production. Global knowledge depends, on the one hand, on the repeatability of the knowledge apparatus, without which knowledge would not travel; but on the other hand, global knowledge is problematized more forcefully where the knowledge apparatus undergoes subtle transformations.

The common notion of the academic text would be that of the paper or lecture presented at a conference or seminar, published in an appropriate specialist journal or bound in the form of a book. The contemporary idea of the book is limited by the historical development of books as we know them: that is to say, bound editions of lengthy written works. This is unreasonably narrow because the Teutonic *bóc* or 'written tablet' from its earliest known usages was also used to translate the Greek (especially biblical) *Biblos* and Latin *Liber* (both 'written account'). We may thus use *book* to denote, as the OED suggests,

any treatise written on any material (skin, parchment, papyrus, paper, cotton, silk, palm leaves, bark, tablets of wood, ivory, slate, metal, etc.), put together in any portable form, e.g. that of a long roll, or of separate leaves, hinged, strung, stitched, or pasted together.

Thus today we speak of *e books*, *note-books* and *i pods*, which clearly fill the global criteria. There is no scientific distinction by which we define a book today, but we tend to refer to shorter works by other names, like tract, pamphlet, sketch, or essay. The common element of the book – in whatever sense we grasp it – would be the *grammata*, the writing. The notion of book thus develops into the modern sense of a treatise or literary work contained in the numerous leaves fastened at book's *back*, and which can be accessed at any arbitrary point. The object itself is also a book, without reference to its contents – a sheaf of papers protected by covers and bound (thanks to the art of book-making) – the form into which

some specific content of subject matter may be written or printed. Knowledge can thus be dissimulated in the form of a well stocked library. The book itself is similar in status and function to the *grammata*, the written marks, which it supports. Written marks also supposedly *embody* the words and ideas that inform them with sense, but – as a basic principle of their possibility – written marks cannot guarantee the safe transfer of sense. The written mark (which is simultaneously a mental and physical phenomenon) could thus be regarded as the minimal unit of the knowledge apparatus.

The apparent particularity of academic discourse, which tends to make the complexity of the knowledge apparatus more evident than do other kinds of discourse, is an illusion at the structural level – a determined one with several different effects (variously privileging and debasing academic discourse depending on one's perspective). The apparatus that conventions and devices make evident functions across academic disciplines, universities, academies and schools. There would be in principle a corresponding yet differently assembled apparatus functioning at the level, for instance, of the Chinese *wu kwon*, the Japanese *gakko*, and the Arabic *madrassa*. Despite the conventional character of the apparatus (which changes alongside other aspects of historical modality) the distinction between the apparatus and its contingently alterable devices functions as a kind of flexibility, or play. The question thus centers on how we *use* the knowledge apparatus, how we bring it to light and *mobilize* it today. We cannot effectively even problematize knowledge without making use of its apparatus.

The Title

The academic text, as a whole, exemplifies and participates in the perpetuation of a knowledge apparatus. That is, there are formal, constructional components to academic writing that are the apparatus of knowledge itself, not just its articulation. In order to problematize knowledge, global or otherwise, one should have a working knowledge of how knowledge is performed through the various dimensions of the apparatus. The title is the first and most apparent of all textual devices that partake of, while also constructing, the knowledge apparatus. So starting with the title, we notice that it signals a particular relationship between the text (as well as author) and readers. Both a part of the text and separate from it, the title provides the first interpretational strategy for readers to make sense of a text. The title bears a special responsibility, therefore, toward the reader by being simultaneously inviting (welcoming the reader to the text) and controlling (seeking to

impose, from the outset, a specific mode of engagement of reader with text). The title of a text is not unlike the title of the aristocracy, in that an aristocratic title reveals specific information about hierarchical, inherited power relations within a society. Similarly the title of a text reveals specific information about reader relations to the power and authority of the text (and author) to which (and whom) readers must submit.

The title also bears the legal burden of a text's existence, for while the fictional status of the character Hamlet or the theoretical status of the concept of property rights remain relatively free of copyright laws, the text whose name is *Hamlet* and the scholarly article 'Property Rights' are nonetheless bound up with the most complex legal ties. For this reason a title, while it may consist in the same linguistic string as a sentence or phrase found in the work itself (as in Franz Kafka's 'Before the Law', which begins, 'Before the law there stands . . .'), nonetheless operates according to laws of meaning that are quite independent of those that govern its exact double in the text it names.

Epigraph

Avoid haphazard writing materials. A pedantic adherence to certain papers, pens, inks is beneficial. No luxury, but an abundance of these utensils is indispensable. (Walter Benjamin)

The epigraph, a short quotation placed at the beginning of a book, chapter or article, might indicate its theme. The term is also used to describe the short inscriptions on buildings or coins. From *epi-* (upon) *-graphein* (writing) the epigraph is related to the epigram: a short witty expression originally in verse. The epigraph (cited) from Walter Benjamin's (1996) 'One-Way Street' is one of his 13 theses on the writer's technique. The theses (echoing perhaps Karl Marx's much cited thesis 'On Feuerbach', included amongst which is the famous epigram about the point being to change the world rather than just to understand it) provide witty observations on the apparatus of the work's production, the techniques, tools and modes of labor constitutive of scholarly writing. Normally one would not need to add a glossing commentary on an epigraph, for if it is carefully chosen it will resonate with the text appended to it. Nor does an epigraph imply acceptance of the authority of its writer; in fact it might serve to give notice of a critical reflection, revision or even an outright demolition. An epigram can thus be a form of irony. The epigraph on coins would be inscribed on what is called the *exergue*, a part on the coin's reverse for inscriptions. From *ex* (out) *ergon* (work), the *exergue* often names another

conventional part of the work that is strictly *outside* the work: the preface.

Preface/Exergue

A preface can precede a scholarly work by explaining the author's intention, why the book was written, and by indicating its context in earlier or contemporary works treating the same topic. G.W.F. Hegel's famous 'Preface' to *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1977) rejects the customary assumptions that are protected by the conventional apparatuses of knowledge as inadequate to a work such as *The Phenomenology*, which is concerned essentially with truth. Hegel is rebelling against the way conventions of academic discourse tend to frame the statements of a work, thus undermining its deeper intellectual processes. Framed in terms of its statements, a philosophical system would be evaluated by the criteria of truth and falsity and thus, inappropriately, regarded as something that can be accepted or rejected. Hegel wrote the preface to *The Phenomenology* in the way many prefaces tend to be written, that is, *after* the main work had been completed. Many regard it is a considerably more elegant and coherent restatement of the great work that we now find appended to it. Many scholars have since taken Hegel's frustration at conventional framing techniques further. Jacques Derrida (whose work more fully interrogates in its practice the conventions of scholarly framing) constructs his *Glas*, a book on Hegel and Jean Genet, so that it both dispenses with yet includes every convention of the knowledge apparatus: the title does not amount to a full word; the text begins in mid sentence and ends without completing its final sentence; it proceeds in two columns that are related to each other only by chance from time to time; and it is constructed from sections of commentary and argument with glosses, citations, reflections and asides embedded haphazardly throughout. Despite the deliberately chaotic dispersal of the knowledge apparatus, the text nonetheless includes some of the most lucid and sustained critical reading found in his oeuvre.

Subheading: Rubrics and Lemmata

Dividing a text into categories and subcategories is yet another function of the apparatus that shapes both the physical and intellectual constitution of the academic work: the subheading. Not a title but rather a title beneath the title and contained in the body of the text, the subheading both guides readers to follow the argument and organization of a text in specific ways and creates specific emphases on ideas demarcated by the subheading. The subheading functions as means for creating a taxonomy within any text, showing

how its categories and subcategories relate to one another and the knowledge being constructed in the text.

In that case we have a difficulty that reaches into every domain where interpretations are made, or theories applied. We can start by attempting to define and delimit the field of our inquiry. We thus begin with a rubric, a heading, the headword (literally a red head). In that delimitation we make a distinction. On the one hand there is the field to be interpreted, the basic components of a present and practical experience – the rubrics are multiplying – the contents of a perhaps empirical knowledge. On the other hand there are the headings, rubrics and lemmata, concepts, ideas, notions that are from the beginning already setting up the expectations into which the field of our empirical experience must fall.

A lemma in the main sense is 'something taken'. For instance, in Logic, a lemma is a *statement taken* as true, an *assumption*; especially a *premise* in a syllogism. More generally a lemma is the *matter, substance, or argument* of a sentence. The ancient sense includes the idea of a *burden* laid on one, or *commission received*.

The Footnote

Another essential element of the knowledge apparatus is found at the opposite end of a page or even a text from the title. It is the footnote or endnote.¹ The footnote or endnote indicates additional information that would be of use to the reader while not wishing to interrupt, or impose its will on, the flow of the prose in the text.² Often this form of additional information is a reference or set of references indicating where the author has found substantiating scholarly accounts.³ The footnote does yeoman duty in specific disciplines, particularly the humanities: the most text-bound of all disciplines within the university.⁴ Many authors disciplined in specific disciplines would find it awkward if not impossible to write a piece for general academic consumption without notes, feeling such a piece would be so lacking in substantiation and rigor as to risk counting as mere journalism. Such is the case despite the fact that the sciences relegate the most piddling of information to the note as to render it virtually insignificant when placed next to its humanities counterpart.⁵

Bibliography/Works Cited

The bibliography provides a list of academic articles and books the author has consulted when writing the text readers have in hand. Rather like the footnotes, it indicates erudition, thoroughness, and democratic openness to knowledge formation.

The bibliography offers readers a glimpse into the range of materials on a given object of scholarly inquiry while, at the same time, indicating how the author has delimited the object, for there is no absolute end to what should and should not fall under the purview of an author on any subject. The bibliography is essentially limitless but limits must be maintained, if for no other reason than printing expenses and expediencies. However, also like the footnote, the bibliography can be used to quell opposition to the author's argument and conclusion through the very act of displaying erudition, thoroughness and democratic openness.

The works cited list differs from the bibliography in that it indicates only those texts addressed directly in the body of the article/book itself. These addresses can be in the form of citation, quotation, paraphrase, contextualization, agreement, dissent, partial agreement coupled with partial dissent, and numerous other modes of engagement associated with the production of knowledge. While the bibliography is free to include any number of 'extra-textual' sources (that is, works with some relationship to the subject of the author's work), the works cited is limited only to those actually used in the composition of the piece. Because of the exponential growth in published academic materials and the expenses/expediencies of the academic publishing industry, the works cited is quickly becoming the preferred form of citation, especially for articles.

Quotations/Paraphrases

Scholarly texts rely on quotations and paraphrases of other texts related to the topic under investigation. As an important means of documenting and legitimating knowledge, the quotation uses the exact words of other authors/scholars to either undermine the point they make or to provide further support for the argument proposed by the author of the text performing the quotations. Sometimes a quotation serves both purposes at once. The quotation, rather like the footnote and the bibliography, also provides the author greater authoritative status by revealing an intimacy with, and deep understanding of, the important texts on the subject about which the author is writing. Of course, any quotation is completely removed from its original context, and is therefore subject to manipulation and misrepresentation. Academicians, however, try their best not to manipulate others' words for their own ends, as advertising, political rhetoric or journalism might, and work hard to represent the ideas of others as accurately and fairly as possible. The paraphrase functions like a quotation but is a summary of what another author has said without directly using the exact words used by the cited author. Jean Baudrillard

(1994), in his epigraph to 'The Precession of Simulacra', uses the convention of citation in an ingenious way. The citation reads as follows:

The simulacrum is never what hides the truth – it is truth that hides the fact that there is none.

The simulacrum is true.

Ecclesiastes

Eager students have searched for months in obscure apocryphal archives yet no trace has ever been found of an original version of this bogus citation. It can be grasped as a postmodern version, perhaps, of the paradox of the Cretan liar. The Cretan who states, 'Each statement I make is false' is lying, unless he is telling the truth, in which case he is lying. The quotation is thus a simulacrum of a quotation (rather than the conventional kind) and its reference is (thus) to itself. 'The simulacrum' is 'this simulacrum', which is true because it hides the fact that there is no truth hidden in the bogus reference. Baudrillard may, of course, have been thinking of the poem by Francis Ponge that begins: 'This is the word that begins this poem/whose first line tells the truth.' More skeptical students in this way are provided an insight into Baudrillard's more general argument about how simulacra operate in the contemporary world.

Publishers' Imprint

The status of the publisher of a given academic work also lends credibility to the power and persuasiveness of the text. Just as certain academic institutions have higher status accorded to them, academic publishers do as well. Although most scholars will say publicly that the relative standing of an academic press or publisher has little bearing on the quality of a given work, most scholars privately believe it does.

Notes

1. The endnote appears at the very end of a text while the footnote appears at the bottom of the individual printed page. We can also note here that the organization of a book is based on the body for its organizing principle. Thus, the bottom of the page is the foot and the top is the head. We speak of the corpus of an author to indicate the entire works that s/he has written. (Books might even have an appendix.)
2. The note, end- or foot-, is one of the most important pieces of the knowledge apparatus, despite its apparent understated nature. It is the academic hallmark *par excellence*, indicating scholarly thoroughness, authenticity and erudition. It therefore provides citation

and gestures to readers to perform follow-up research of their own, while also signaling that if they did so, they would invariably reach the same conclusion as the author; hence the ease with which the supposed transparency of scholarship is offered.

3. This kind of footnote is meant to quell any objections about the author's argument/information by showing that s/he has exhaustively researched the issue at hand, consulted all extant authorities, and arrived at the apotheosis of scholarly opinion in the text that readers hold in their hands.
4. The length of the section devoted to footnotes can rival the length of the text itself, and the number of footnotes for a short article on history can number in the hundreds. Providing notes of this number and length allows the author to pursue sub-arguments and alternative views of a given point while not impeding the flow of the argument/analysis at hand. The sciences, however, and technological fields do not deploy the note nearly as often as the humanities or social sciences due to their deployment of a knowledge apparatus dependent on experimental and quantitative data, therefore including graphs, charts and formulae. At various times, and still to a certain extent within some social sciences, the humanities and social sciences have envied the look and authority of the sciences, especially post-Second World War, and have appropriated some of these same graphic markers of authoritative knowledge from the sciences.
5. For example, a science article might simply provide details of an experimental environment in a note if the article had notes at all.

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A Note on Knowledge

Couze Venn

Keywords Bachelard, Canguilhem, epistemological history, norm, order, positivity, technical city, truth

Within the field of science and technology studies, the question of knowledge today is readily signposted by terms such as power/knowledge, actor-network theory,

regimes of truth, associated with the names of Foucault and Latour. Furthermore, different conceptual frameworks for theorizing the interrelation of the natural and the social, matter and form, have appeared that continue in a new language the venerable desire to find an overall or implicate order or coherence in the world. In the social sciences, the work of writers like Prigogine and Stengers, anchored in the soil of scientific practice, and that of Deleuze and Guattari, located

in philosophical interrogations, represent different avenues that many have found useful in the attempt to understand the process of production of knowledge by reference to wider issues relating to the relation of being to world. A challenging and complex approach reworks the notion of *techne*, drawing from Heidegger's work, to try and theorize what lies underneath the Foucauldian standpoint of the positivity of knowledge, linking the questioning of science and technology to philosophical issues that go to the heart of the theory of being. *Techne* of course needs to be located within the Heideggerian form of questioning, particularly relating to the ideas of bringing-forth or of revealing what lies concealed, and to the presencing of truth or *aletheia*. *Techne* thus is understood not on the terrain of technology but on that of *poiesis*. These concepts construct an episteme that regards science and technology as the enframing of ways of challenging 'nature' in order to unlock, transform, store, distribute, switch about which are all ways of revealing (Heidegger, 1977). In the background to the standpoint of *techne* one finds the questions about what endures and about the danger inherent in all knowing and inventing that alerts us to the fundamental stakes about existence that directs one's questioning concerning knowledge.

At about the same time as Heidegger was elaborating his philosophy, in France Bachelard, and then Canguilhem, opened up a way of interrogating the process of producing knowledge that has had a profound, if mainly unrecognized, effect on the later discourse, via the work of their students, Althusser and Foucault. They both start out with the conviction that in order to speak about the sciences one has to situate oneself inside their practice, thus marking a break with the conventional 'history of ideas' approach that does not include within its purview the point of view of the science's own questions. Their work is consciously set against the parasitical 'epistemology of philosophers' and against the (then) academic establishment, for example, Bergson and Brunschvicq, and against naive objectivism, which assumes that modern science investigates a reality which is already given or 'natural', out there. Instead Bachelard asserts that science breaks with common sense, and must do so in order to better interrogate a reality that its own enquiry specifies, discussing as example the concept of mass which in everyday language connotes the massive and size, whereas in physics it is consistent with the notion of the tiny, the particle, and even of negative mass (Dirac). Mass in physics is understood by reference to an apparatus of concepts and a practice – of force and acceleration in the Newtonian system, of time and speed and energy

in relativity theory, of the mathematical understanding of propagation, spin, threshold, multiplicity in Dirac's problematic of the particle – that constitute it, each time differently, as a concept of physics. Negative mass is a concept beyond 19th-century philosophies. Bachelard uses the idea of epistemological break to refer to the incommensurability between the conceptual frameworks that constitute concepts in different problematics, ideas that Althusser disseminated in his analysis of science and Marxist theory. As one can surmise, a problematic in Bachelard refers not only to the conceptual framework and the practice of producing concepts and theoretical objects – or indeed of inventing them, since the scientific imagination 'dreams' – but refers also to the specific mode of questioning and the technical apparatus, operating in the 'technical city', that enables questions to be posed and investigated in their 'positivity'; a problematic, then, circumscribes how concepts are 'technically normed' (see Bachelard, 1940, 1951; Venn, 1982).

This is not the place to undertake a critique of Bachelard, but some elements indirectly appear when one turns to Canguilhem, who developed his thoughts in part because the displacements that the former had operated had freed a space for his own research, and in part as a polemic against some of his ideas. For instance he wanted to restore to error a productive function in the emergence of knowledge, rather than its consignment in Bachelard's thought to the outdated history of what has been overtaken by the progressive history of scientific rationality (which he distinguishes from the rationality of the philosophers). Other important differences include the focus in Canguilhem's work on the sciences of life, and on a micro-history of the concept, in contrast to the broad canvas of Bachelard's historical epistemology.

What emerges from the careful epistemological history of Canguilhem is the provisional and tentative character of scientific findings and work; he establishes that attention to the domain of investigation in which a particular concept emerges, that is, its problematic, reveals the specificity of the discursive rules that regulate its use, and the productivity of errors, for it is only retrospectively that a history of emergence can name error. In the Normal and the Pathological he shows that the normal is the result of a whole series of interventions that ground in precise techniques the norms of normality, as in medicine. His studies show that the normal and the normative, error and the pathological, are the two indissoluble and irreducible sides of a whole apparatus of normalization. Crucially, it is by reference to the idea of an order that both error and pathology can be correlated. For example the concept of the organ,

and its metonymies such as organism, organization, organic – appearing from around 1650 to suggest systematic relations between structure and function and between a whole and its parts – operated as relay concept for the emerging problematic of order in the 18th and 19th centuries in which the new, organismic, and vitalist, concept of life is enframed (Canguilhem, 1966 [1943], 1977; Venn, 1982).

This notion of order is important not only for establishing that error is normal, but equally from the point of view of the analysis of scientific knowledge by reference to the domain of the social and cultural generally, and thus to the wider location of the intelligibility of scientific concepts. From the point of view of a history or genealogy of the concept of norm, it would not have been possible to reconstruct the discursive and technical conditions of its emergence without the recognition of the productive effects of elements outside the scientific paradigm of organism, relating to an ontology of order, supporting a particular idea of economy and techniques of specifying and producing the norm. Canguilhem's historical work establishes the constitutive role of culture for science at the level of a genealogy of concepts; it opens up science to its outside and to historicity, something that Bachelard does not do. Additionally for him, the standpoint of norm and of order distinguishes the sciences of life from physics, a point worth pursuing now that a new ontology of order founded in the idea of information is reorganizing the whole field of knowledge. A different economy and a different episteme is at work here that critique needs to bring to light.

A question remains about the problem of truth. Neither Bachelard nor Canguilhem are relativist, although they problematize the Baconian, the empiricist and the positivist conceptualizations of truth. Canguilhem (1975) argued that scientists can often be 'on the side of truth' although they may not be 'telling the truth', as in the case of Galileo's work. For Bachelard it was a matter of

the 'workers of the truth' who produce it as an effect of technics and concepts combining to produce theoretically normed objects, for instance the positron. So, it is a matter of 'regimes of truth' in Foucault's terminology, but also of techniques of producing truth – for instance in relation to IQ tests for measuring something called 'intelligence' – and an economy of truth that opens onto the wider question of an order, that is, of differently imagined coherence to the world, thus onto philosophical reflection. Their interrogation of scientific practice brings one to the point where the political issues about knowledge with regard to norms, normalization, pathology, discipline meet the questions about being and about life and the living that open up ontology and epistemology to the standpoint of a new problematic of being/world.

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Deconstruction

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Keywords Derrida, language, *logos*, *logocentrism*, presence, repetition, writing

The term *deconstruction* was widely picked up, especially in the USA, as a name for the kind of method or procedure that Jacques Derrida and others influenced by him used in their work. Early in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida (1967) talks cautiously of a kind of ‘rationality’ that governs writing, in an enlarged and radicalized sense, which ‘inaugurates the destruction, not the demolition but the de-sedimentation, the deconstruction, of all the significations that have their source in that of the *logos*’ (1967: 10). This notion of deconstruction is best understood in terms of certain effects that are inevitably produced by traditional philosophical texts that fail in their various attempts to isolate or identify a pure value (truth, origin, presence) against diverse conditions that would tarnish that purity. Deconstruction names the powerful and transferable effects of this inevitable failure.

Certain properties of repetition have inevitable effects on values traditionally identified with rationality: truth, justice, religion, ethics and science, in short, all significations that have their source in the idea of what has been called *the logos*. *Logos* means *word* in Ancient Greek, but is used in different contexts for rational account or logical reasoning. The idea of the *logos* thus privileges the rational content of a signification. Derrida is not the first to observe that the *logos* is traditionally determined according to the value of presence, which either is dogmatically asserted by philosophical teaching or is set up as the absent goal of rational questioning. Because experience is always in several ways marked by certain kinds of repeatable mediation, the value of a *pure* presence remains tantalizingly out of reach, lost in the mists of pre-personal history or always yet to come beyond the horizon of an unknowable future. An absolute past and an absolutely undetermined future infect experience, making possible memories and desires, as well as fictions and theories. Experience is mediated in several ways, as problems of language, in a privileged example, show. Relationships to others and to objects seem irremediably contaminated by the mechanical means of communication. Questions of interpretation, translation, imagination, perspective, and

cultural difference demonstrate an irreducible quantum of play in any relation.

The concept of time lies at the heart of all the problems of establishing and maintaining the quest for the value of presence. So long as time is determined in terms of presence (including past presents as well as presents to come) then thought will not pass beyond the constraints of what Derrida calls *logocentrism*. Those conditions and processes that erode or compromise the value of presence will again be subject to attempts at domestication, exclusion or containment.

Language, for instance, tends to be divided up in terms of its supposed immediately expressive component (thought, concept, signified, sense) and the mediational component (word, symbol, signifier, mark). The latter would ideally be controlled and ordered according to the former, as its tele-technological slave. But this is when deconstruction kicks in. It would not be possible to distinguish mediation rigorously in terms of a signifier and signified unless the signified was of a quite different nature to the signifier. The mythical transcendental signified has been given many names, like the medieval *topos noetos*, which represents the divine understanding as a space of pure thought present to itself and undamaged by time, and which serves to guarantee the difference between word and concept. Deconstruction is a name for what *in fact* guarantees the maintenance of the *logos*: the repeatability of the mark. So long as a mark (which can be mental) differs from itself in its repetition then signification is possible. The predicates of writing (repeatable marks with no natural or necessary connection to the meanings they refer to or endlessly produce) guarantee the functioning of both spoken words (repeatable sound images) and thoughts. These predicates ensure the possibilities of social interaction in the always potential absence, in the mark, of sense, reference, addresser and addressee. Derrida coins the phrase *archi-writing* (or proto-writing) to designate the predicates that allow meaningful interaction to occur.

The basic and most problematic predicate of experience lies in the irreducible relation to the other, which in its undetermined state precedes and makes possible all particular relations to actual others. The undetermined relation to the other’s alterity conditions all possible relations and thus remains in the form of the trace, connecting yet keeping separate the actual members, as well as

those as yet unheard of potential members, of a community. Because this trace of the other is a structural condition emerging from the repeatability of the mark, it tends to give rise to the dream of a dimension free from repetition (i.e. free of time): eternity.

Conversely, traditional attempts to topple philosophy's idealism and religion's divinity tend to overemphasize the material grounds of social relations, thus attempting to contain or domesticate the repeatability of the trace in empirical or materialist determinations. Once more, the example of the linguistic sign is often the site of such transformations, when the signifier (as opposed to the signified) is said to be the determining factor in signification. But this reversal of metaphysics always turns out to be a *repetition* of metaphysics, locating the value of presence in an alternative but no less *unanalyzed* space, an alternative *topos noetos*. For this reason Derrida extends the phrase *logocentrism* to *phallogocentrism*, after the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and his doctrine of the materiality of the signifier (the *phallus* as the signifier of the signifier).

Procedures of deconstruction can thus operate according to the laws of *iterability*, a term that combines the possibilities of alterity and repetition. The combination reflects the indubitable law of repetition: what repeats must be the same but

can never be identical. Thus repeatability can be seen to be the source of the metaphysical doctrine of identity, simultaneously both allowing it and yet marking its impossibility. Iterability links logocentrism to deconstruction in so far as deconstruction would repeat the procedures of a logocentric teaching so that, in the repetition, the procedures would themselves undermine the disavowal of iterability.

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Critique

Kiyoshi Abe

Keywords globalization, hihiyō and hihan, Marxism, nationalism, postmodernity, public sphere

Translation of Critique: Hihiyō and Hihan

The term 'critique' can be translated into Japanese in two ways: hihiyō and hihan. The former has a close relationship with the tradition of literary critique (bungei-hihiyō) and the latter with that of critical commentary on society (syakai-hihan). Just like other key concepts that were founded in the contexts of Western Modernity, in Japanese historical-political context the term of critique potentially contains the tension between 'Western universality' and 'domestic specificity'. In the postwar era of Japan, hihiyō and hihan have shown their own way of development and transformation under the Western influences. In this article, I try

to make it clear in which socio-political context the practice of critique has been made and what sort of problems and tasks we now face in critically discussing the society and politics in Japan.

Historical Context of 'Postwar Japan'

Roughly speaking, in the history of Japanese academic discourse, both hihiyō and hihan were under the strong influence of Marxism. After defeat in 1945, Japanese society was under the occupation of the USA, which aimed at the democratization and disarmament of Japan. In this context of postwar reform, the Marxist camp and the liberal camp could enjoy friendly relationships in criticizing the feudal residuals of Japanese society that were regarded as the main cause of the wartime military regime. Certainly facing the Cold War in international politics, the USA changed its occupation policy in more reactive and realistic directions in the late 1940s. However, the

public opinion in postwar Japan could keep its critical edge thanks to the strong presence of Marxism in academic discourse.

Political economy and critical sociology influenced by Marxism and neo-Marxism could function as a normative paradigm to critically investigate the socio-political conditions of Japanese society until the 1970s.

Postmodern Boom

In the 1980s, a new academic mode called 'post-modern' appeared as an innovative challenge to the traditional academic community. There certainly existed a moment of critique in the 'postmodern boom' in the 1980s. But at the same time that academic trend was highly commercialized and channeled into a commodity-oriented direction in Japanese consumer society. In other words the philosophical discourse of postmodernity itself became the sign-commodity, which postmodernistic analysis of contemporary capitalist society has vividly revealed.

Under the postmodern condition in the 1980s, literature and literary critiques turned away from the serious political issues and inclined towards more private and fantastical themes that celebrated 'happy diversity of the postmodern world'. At that time in Japan, to be postmodern was to be 'pop' and often meant to be entirely non-political.

After the postmodern boom of the 1980s the literary critique in Japanese academic discourse reduced its critical edge towards society. *Hihyō* in general became more pop and fun under the post-modernistic slogan of 'anything goes'.

Impacts of the End of the Cold War

Beginning with the democratic revolution of Eastern European countries in 1989, the Cold War finally ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. At that time in Japan, people expected naively that we would enjoy peace and wealth in the post-historical regime of liberal democracy, of which Japanese society was a part. The collapse of socialist regimes was profoundly damaging to the reliability of Marxian critique in academic communities. Though proponents of the Marxist camp in a broader sense tried to show the difference between the socialist regime exemplified by Soviet Russia and the ideal of socialism itself, it seemed that a lot of people who had been more or less sympathetic to the socialist ideals finally gave up their dreams with respect to socialism, whatever sort it may be. To be critical in the sense of being Marxist was regarded as out-of-date in the era of the New World Order, which meant the hegemony of liberal democratic regimes.

However, the reality we faced in the aftermath

of the end of the Cold War was nothing but terrible and disastrous. Not ideological but 'religious' and/or 'ethnic' conflicts flared up around the globe. In Japan, following the crash of the bubble economy in the early 1990s, the nation faced the serious, long economic recession. Moreover, the impacts of globalization compelled Japanese society to reform its political and social system so that it could adjust itself to 'global standards'. In such a socio-political situation it seemed that the critique of society was indispensable to shed the light on the present problems of and the future direction for Japanese society. However, after the Marxian critique had lost its trustworthiness among the public it seemed that there was no reliable way in order to critically engage with the socio-political problems that caused the profound anxiety of the public.

Shock of Globalization and Rise of Nationalism

Experiencing the postmodern attack and the end of the Cold War, the critical discourse in both the literary critique and social science has dramatically diminished. As a result of that, it was desperately difficult for *hihyō* and *hihan* to gain the public support because the critical arguments on the society and politics, which had been dominated by Marxism-influenced academic/journalistic discourses, seemed to be somehow dubious for the majority of the public. Under that sort of 'vacuum situation' of critique, the nationalistic discourse came to take over the public support and succeeded in mobilizing the public sentiments slowly but surely in the 1990s. As Japanese society had suffered a serious recession after the crash of the bubble economy, the impacts of globalization were accepted as the economic-political threats for the nation. That led people to support the narrow-minded nationalistic discourse, which shows a vulgar xenophobia, especially to other Asian people.

Fading of Critical Public Sphere

Decline of Marxian critique and rise of nationalistic discourse has transformed the conditions of the public sphere in Japanese society. For the public sphere to be a social-space where different voices can be heard and rational discussion can be fostered, the moment of critique is indispensable. As long as the critique can point out problems and tasks of each argument, the public discourse can keep its self-reflexivity towards more rational argumentation. However, the nationalistic discourse, which is self-affirmative and narcissistic, can easily exclude and repress the moment of critique as it only tries to mobilize the public

sentiment without being reflective. So, the stronger and more pervasive the support the nationalistic discourse gains from public opinion, the less and weaker the critical public sphere becomes. This is the desperate condition of the public sphere in contemporary Japanese society.

Towards a New Critique in the Future

It is apparent that both *hihyō* and *hihan* are in profound crisis at the present time in Japan. Though the majority of the public recognize and acknowledge that there are a lot of socio-political problems that should be resolved, their concerns and anxieties cannot find the way to critically and self-reflexively look at the cause of those problems. Instead, the ambiguous fear shared among the public sentiment is easily channelled towards the discriminative and racist direction by the pseudo-critical nationalistic discourse.

In this difficult age of critique in Japan, the theoretical and practical task for those who still engage in the critical studies of society and politics in the broader sense is to envisage a new paradigm from which we can shed a new critical light on the socio-political conditions of contemporary Japanese society. In other words, we have to reconsider and re-invent the imported, Western notion of ‘critique’ in a more vernacular way. Of course, it does not mean to essentialize the tradition of *hihyō* and *hihan*. Contrary to that, the ‘vernacular critique’ aims to contextualize and domesticate the critical tradition of Western thought in conjuncture with the Japanese tradition of *hihyō* and *hihan* in order to grasp the ever-widening economic and socio-cultural divisions, in which not a few people living in Japanese society are put under hard and inhumane life conditions.

For the resurgence of critique in Japan, Kojin Karatani’s *Transcritique* seems to be very sugges-

tive. In his book, originally published in Japanese in 2001, Karatani tried to form ‘a space of transcodings between the domains of ethics and political economy, between the Kantian critique and Marxian critique’ (Karatani, 2003: vii) in his own way. His discourse of ‘transcritique’ can be understood as an intellectual challenge that combines the critical traditions of *hihyō* and *hihan* in both more vernacular and orthodox ways.

It seems that *hihyō* and *hihan* are in serious and profound crisis in Japan. However, it is possible for critical discourse to make its voice heard in the public sphere and to show the future direction of society only when the critique can survive the crisis of the harder era.

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Poetic Knowledge

Rajeev S. Patke

Abstract Whether poetry gives knowledge or not is a question that has been debated from a variety of perspectives, depending on how a society or a culture defines knowledge, and on the function it ascribes to poetry in relation to that definition. The civilizations of Asia and the Middle East have generally taken the line that poetry deals primarily with affects, emotions and feelings. The West has had a more complicated history of responses. One way of making sense of this history is to map rival claims as split over the idea of scientific knowledge, where it affects notions of the poetic function. The mapping, through all its manifold branches, gives clear indications that claims to knowledge – both those made on behalf of poetry, and those denied to poetry – depend more on assumptions, predispositions and cultural conditioning than on rational argument or critical debate. The resulting variety also suggests that the cultural relativism that affects such debates is unlikely to arrive at resolutions except of the contingent kind.

Keywords cognitive poetics, language and epistemology, poetry and knowledge

1 The Context for Debates about Poetic Knowledge

Debates about the relation between poetry and knowledge are a significant feature of the diversity that characterizes all human civilizations. In any given system of belief that individuates a person, a community or a culture, the idea of poetic knowledge entails a conscious or involuntary preference for one of two mutually incompatible beliefs: that poetry is a form of knowledge (Position A); that poetry and knowledge correspond to different human faculties, which entail activities and produce results whose values are either complementary (Position B1), or opposed (Position B2).

The claim for poetic knowledge in its weak form merely alludes to the fact that poetry can *transmit* forms of knowledge derived from other domains; in its strong form, poetry is claimed to *produce* or *embody* knowledge uniquely. Position B1 sustains a tension between the relative worth ascribed to two differing conceptions of knowledge; Position B2 dissolves the tension in favour of one or the other conception. To think of poetry as a form of knowing integrates knowledge into wisdom, while it diversifies the idea of truth into a manifold that includes the spiritual and the aesthetic (Position A). To think of poetry as distinct from knowledge (Position B) turns the idea of knowledge away from the claims of religion and the arts towards an ideal of truth derived from mathematics or symbolic logic, 'the true' split off from 'the good' and 'the beautiful'. Each position ascribes a nature and function to poetry in relation to an idea of knowledge and a corresponding evaluation of either. Position A values an idea of knowledge that gives central place to poetry, while Position B splits poetry from knowledge and produces two divergent off-shoots: one regards each as apt to its sphere (Position B1), the other disparages one at the expense of the other, giving us a view of poetry as useless or worse in matters of serious thought or knowledge (Position B2-), or a view that defends poetic knowledge as complete and accuses science of being limited in its approach to the idea of truth and blind to the ideals of religion or spirituality (Position B2+).

The simplest way of distinguishing between whether the idea of poetic knowledge functions in a given belief system as an article of faith or as a sterile oxymoron is to recognize how the weight of beliefs is distributed across a see-saw which tilts on the question of whether knowledge is defined as knowledge-of-x (Quine calls it *knowing-that*) or knowledge-as-y (Quine calls it *knowing-how*), where both x and y are functions of value, x refers to propositions with global applicability (as in mathematics and science), and y refers to mediated representations whose applicability is bound by context and historicity (as in the arts). The metaphor of a 'tilt' can be applied in another sense, as an ongoing contestation in which knowledge is a field fought over by rival ideas of 'the true', 'the beautiful' and 'the good'. Any claim concerning knowledge entails as its predicate an idea of truth that is evoked either solemnly, as in the equation between truth and beauty in Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', or as in the sardonic wryness of Wallace Stevens's 'The Man on the Dump', who evokes the object of what might well be a chimerical pursuit as 'the *the*'. *An Introduction to Arab Poetics* (Adonis, 1990), for instance, claims with reference to an Arab poem, 'the knowledge in this text is not about certainties, nor is it an answer, as is the case with the knowledge offered by religion or philosophy. On the contrary, it is a questioning' (1990: 69).

Position A supports a notion of knowledge that does not differentiate between the imaginative, the rational and the spiritual dimensions of consciousness or experience. It alludes to an origin for poetry in oral cultures, where it embodies as well as transmits knowledge, combining knowledge-of with knowledge-as. Oral poetic forms serve multiple functions. They are at once expressive, affective, communicative, didactic and cognitive in their use of language, rhythm and form; and they articulate shared beliefs concerning the nature of reality and of human existence through songs, symbols, myths, legends, historical narratives, incantations and rituals. Orality held the linguistic articulacy central to poetry close to the imaginative, speculative and regulative reason of ancient religion and philosophy. As poetry moves away from its origins in collective and anonymous orality, defenders of the idea of a unified field for poetry and knowledge face increasing opposition from the division of intellectual labour that subsidizes the development of science.

Position B can sometimes appear to share part of its conception of knowledge with the endorsement of poetic knowledge in oral cultures; but on the whole, and especially as we slide on the see-saw from Position B1 to Position B2-, it prefers to give knowledge a very different emphasis, as referring primarily to an archive of abstract and universally applicable propositions produced by human reason as descriptions of whatever is included in the idea of the physical universe. This archive is subsidized by a belief in the innate order of the 'reality' alleged to underlie sensory phenomena, whose principles are treated as amenable to rational explanations, as an end in itself, and also as means to varying degrees of power over the 'reality' whose properties they formalize into scientific knowledge. This latter function has ensured the usefulness of science to society, and its commensurate power, which includes the power to persuade society to its system of values and the place assigned to poetry in that system.

The history of the equation between science and a specific conception of knowledge is characterized by a progressive subdivision of intellectual endeavour, which began with the separation of science from speculative philosophy and religion. The subsequent division into the various 'hard' sciences (astronomy, chemistry, physics and the life sciences), and the development of the social sciences (economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, etc.) has extended the scope of scientific (and quasi-scientific) inquiry into various aspects of human experience. At the same time, the application of scientific methods to the study of human nature and society has had to moderate the 'truth' recoverable from such projects by the limited degree to which the social sciences are amenable to reason, susceptible of orderliness, and able to sustain claims to knowledge as something other than the local outcome of ongoing contestations between interpretive ideologies. For example, Jean Rancière (1994) remarks that the modern revolution in historical scholarship brought about by the *Annales* group 'consists in knowing how to recognize, in the siren song of the scientific age, the threat of ruin of

historical study, the dilemma hidden under the propositions of its scientificization: *either history or science*' (1994: 6).

2 A Negative View of Poetic Knowledge (Position B2–)

The dialogues of Plato provide one of the earliest and most influential negative evaluations of poetry as performance and representational art. Plato's Socrates condemns poetry as an art that is derivative and unreliable in respect to the real or the true, and unsound and dangerous in respect to the good (*Ion, Republic, Laws*). Plato's love of abstraction turns away from the phenomenal world in order to develop a notion of reality that rejects transience, idealizes truth as that which transcends the world of Heraclitean flux, and fixes on a realm of immutable ideas and forms as the conjunction of the true, the beautiful and the good (*Phaedo, Symposium, Phaedrus, Timaeus*). Ironically, the influence of Plato permitted his vision of 'the true' and 'the good' to subsidize far more positive estimations of poetic knowledge, as in Plotinus and Shelley, while Wordsworth's 'Intimations Ode' provides a remote descendant to Plato's Pythagorean belief that our knowledge of the ideal forms of reality originates in our previous existence, which makes learning a kind of recollection or anamnesis. It is worth noting at this point that, somewhat ironically, Plato's dismissal of inspiration as proof that poetry or its recitation has no creative control over what is uttered is routinely turned on its head, not only by those who take the idea of inspiration positively, but also by those who give credit to intuition and other supra-rational processes of creation which access parts of consciousness or the creative unconscious that are not readily comprehensible to reason, as in the link made by poets like Coleridge and Keats between the creative function and states such as sleep and trance.

3 Poetry as Feeling: Another Negative View (Position B2–)

The claim that poetry deals solely, or primarily, with feelings comes in defensive and aggressive versions. The first view generally finds voice among those who have a low opinion of poetry. Sometimes, it is asserted even by poets, as in the case of Basil Bunting, who is reported as conceding

poetry contributes nothing much to the process of thought, being mostly silly or thoroughly conventional in its philosophical content, or else borrowing any worthwhile system of ideas it may contain from some prose writer – Dante from St Thomas, Lucretius from Epicurus and Democritus. Many poems we consider masterpieces contain little or no thought. (Murray, 1997: 372)

The poet's affiliation to his vocation can only be defended by supposing that Bunting hopes to rid himself of demands that look to poetry for what it cannot give, in the hope of getting better recognition for what it *can* do. In any case, he manages to sound more concessionary than is common among defenders of poetry.

4 Poetry as Different from Science (Position B1)

The commonest view among philosophers, scientists, educationists and even poets is that poetry attends to issues of aesthetics and craft, educates feeling and composes affects, giving emotions and dispositions room to experience in ways that enhance and sharpen the human capacity for pleasure, discrimination and sensibility. It argues that poetry need not be required to give the type of knowledge defined by knowledge-of-x and dominated by science; instead, it endows poetry with powers within the domain of knowledge-as-y. Sometimes this position adopts the attitude that poetry does not produce knowledge, it embodies something different from that which science produces. The *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* summarizes this dichotomy as follows:

The objects of study in science are objective phenomena the truth values of which constitute 'facts'; the objects of literary study, on the other hand, are intersubjective meanings

and values generated from an object which is itself a structure of forms. (Preminger and Brogan, 1993: 931)

The bland version of this division-of-labour thesis may be illustrated through Quine: 'Truth preoccupies the alethic pole of the intellectual sphere and beauty the aesthetic pole . . . The alethic pole exerts the main pull on science . . . The aesthetic pole is the focus of *belles lettres*, music, art for art's sake' (Quine, 1987: 17). Another version of the separation can be sampled through I. A. Richards, who gave currency to the notion that poetic propositions were 'pseudo-statements' concerning experience, which did not entail truth-claims, and the corresponding distinction between the 'emotive' discourse of poetry and the 'referential' discourse of science. A third version is represented by Deleuze and Guattari, whose respect for art brings along with it a firm separation of functions, in which the arts are said to deal with percepts and affects, philosophy is said to deal with concepts, and science is said to deal with referential propositions about reality (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 197).

5 Poetry in Competition with Science (B2)

Broad agreement on splitting poetry from science leaves room for another type of variation, which does not sustain an amiable attitude towards the split enforced by science. Instead, it expresses general or historically contingent anxieties that the dominance of science disparages the kind of knowledge accessible through poetry, and blinds society to the dangers inherent to the narrow notion of knowledge promoted by science (B2+). This position can be illustrated by Goethe's *Faust*, which allegorizes a profound anxiety about the temptation enshrined in the dream of knowledge unfolded by science (or that which Max Weber has taught subsequent generations to recognize as the disenchantment of magic). In more contemporary terms, the Australian poet Les Murray offers resistance to the dominance of a specific construction of knowledge:

Human beings have two main modes of consciousness, one that is characteristic of waking life, one we call dreaming . . . Harmony between our two modes of life promotes health, and . . . aesthetic experience is the supreme harmony between them . . . A poem, or any work of art, enacts this wholeness and draws us into it . . . I call properly integrated poetic discourse Wholespeak, while discourses based on the supposed primacy or indeed exclusive sovereignty of daylight reason I call Narrowspeak. (Murray, 1997: 317, 319)

A 20th-century variant on an old Thomist position that endows poetry with an exalted claim to knowledge of truth can be sampled from the writings of Jacques Maritain. In *The Degrees of Knowledge* (1932), he notes that the notion of knowledge through connaturality had a long history in Western thought before Thomas Aquinas, which became a commonplace in the Thomist tradition, and had analogues in the writings of the Indian philosopher Ramanuja (12th-century AD) and in the Indian tradition of devotional (*bhakti*) literature.

Charles Altieri illustrates another, more modern and systematic form of defence based on the idea of connaturality. He argues that asking poetry for knowledge as defined by Enlightenment ideals is to fall into the trap of supposing that humanity embodies a teleological drive to know itself. Altieri's defence involves an alternative system of value which builds on the affective force of poetry in terms derived from Spinoza. In *The Particulars of Rapture* (2003), he describes the idea of the *conatus* as 'a very general form of purposive orientation exercised by all living agents in their efforts to persist in their own being' (Altieri, 2003: 15). His argument attempts to provide a teleology of the arts based on the body's awareness of affects, that is, on how its conative powers are deployed. In a related essay, 'The Concept of Force', Altieri focuses on how Modernist art resists the impersonal subject positions and universalizing abstractions fundamental to the community of science. He invokes Hegel on the concept of force (from *The Phenomenology of Spirit*) to argue that art objects intensify the capacity to 'keep us fascinated by what remains an "other" to discursive intelligence, an "other" keeping intelligence dialectically aware of its own limitations'. Thus art 'does not allow self-sufficiency

to any knowledge position satisfied by description and by subsuming particulars under generalizations'; instead, it 'extends this sense of irreducible otherness to the domain of emotions evoked and constructed with the work of art' (Altieri, 1998: 88–9).

A different approach, which lives within binarism, but invokes the poetics of Gertrude Stein and Charles Olson to make a claim on behalf of 'common knowledge', is developed by Don Byrd, in *The Poetics of the Common Knowledge* (1994), drawing upon Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela's notion of 'autopoiesis' from *The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding* (1987), and promotes an argument whose flavour can be sampled briefly through his invocation of a distinction from Wittgenstein, between sentences which can be replaced by others without radically altering our understanding of what is conveyed, and sentences in which something that is expressed only by these words in these positions, which Wittgenstein equates, along what may be recognized along Coleridgean lines with poetry.

6 Binary Modes and their Problems

Deleuze and Guattari are respectful towards poetry, Quine bland, Bunting self-lacerating, Murray suave, Maritain effusive, Altieri defensive-aggressive. Their arguments do not follow the same path, but they all endorse a binary mode of thinking which dissolves the tension of weights distributed across the see-saw tilting on the question of whether knowledge is defined as knowledge-of-x or knowledge-as-y. Those dissatisfied with all such positions argue that binary thinking is reductive and simplistic. They challenge the split endorsed by Positions B1 and B2 by arguing that poetry and philosophy are interwoven inseparably in metaphor: they revoke the separation of rational from metaphorical language and thought by arguing that the metaphorical process plays a role that is simultaneously constitutive and disruptive of the concepts cherished by philosophy and science.

One version derives from Nietzsche, who warns that 'Truths are illusions about which it has been forgotten that they *are* illusions . . . Everything that sets man off from the animal depends upon this capacity to dilute the concrete metaphors into a schema' (1989: 250). Derrida joins forces with Nietzsche in order 'to explode the reassuring opposition of the metaphoric and the proper' by demonstrating how 'Metaphor is less in the philosophical text . . . than the philosophical text is within metaphor' (Derrida, 1982: 270, 258).

Another version is represented by recent developments in the field of cognitive poetics, whose exponents (for example, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson) make several claims that overturn much conventional thinking about metaphor. They argue that metaphor is indeed cognitive, but that this function is not confined to poetry (thus they disband the separation of poetic from conventional metaphor), nor to language (thus rendering it primarily conceptual), and basically entails cross-domain mapping, which can be analysed, in respect to its linguistic manifestations, in terms of certain sets of primary mappings. Cognitive poetics thus modulates the claim that 'poetry gives knowledge' towards the idea that metaphor gives knowledge, and not through poetry alone but through concepts, including concepts that find expression through language.

7 Poetry as Knowledge (Position A)

The claim that poetry is the highest form of knowledge divides into two camps: the first treats the idea of poetry as a special kind of language use; the second treats poetic knowledge emblematically, as a type of knowing shared by all the arts. Debate over the cognitive function attributed to metaphor overlaps partly with the second position. It subdivides on the issue of whether the cognitive function of metaphor is regarded as unique to poetry (arguing with Vico and others that all language was originally figurative) or is dispersed through all types of language-use (which obliterates or discards the attempt to distinguish ordinary from poetic language). Paul Ricoeur, for instance, in *The Rule of Metaphor*, distinguishes between poetry, which develops what he calls a 'tensional' conception of truth, in contrast to speculative thought (as in philosophy), which he characterizes as based on 'distanciation': 'the splitting of

reference and redescription of reality submitted to the imaginative variations of fiction' (Ricoeur, 1977: 313).

Aristotle exemplifies the first position when he ascribes an entelechy to each mode of human activity, and distinguishes the mode of poetry from that of history as being more philosophical in providing knowledge of universals while history confines itself to knowledge of particulars (*Poetics*, IX). Aristotle's influence also makes room to argue for mimesis as a source of knowledge-as-representation. Sir Philip Sidney's affirmation that poets do not lie because they do not affirm truth-claims provides another variant of the argument; Hans Vaihinger's *The Philosophy of 'As If'* (1911) provides a 20th-century version of the idea enshrined in Marianne Moore's remark that poems are like an 'imaginary garden with real toads in them'.

The second position may be exemplified through a number of writers who differ vastly in how they make their claim but remain united in the estimation awarded poetic knowledge. Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* asserts that poetry is 'at once the center and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred' (Shelley, 1977: 503). Heidegger invokes the Greek notion of knowing as *aletheia*, and art as *techne* ('a bringing forth of beings . . . out of concealedness into the unconcealedness of their appearance'; Heidegger, 1971: 59), in order to argue that all art is 'in essence poetry' (1971: 73). A related argument involves the claim that the poet as namer is also a truth-sayer: this variation can be sampled from Walter Benjamin's theological version: 'Man is the knower in the same language in which God is the creator' (Benjamin, 1996: 68).

8 The Global or Intercultural Dimension

Claims on behalf of poetic knowledge, especially of the strong kind, are perhaps unique to Western poetics. An intercultural perspective on the typical system of value in any poetical system outside the West brings up an affective-didactic norm in which poetry transmits knowledge-of in a weak sense and embodies knowledge-as in a strong sense. The latter operates along the axis linking the experience embodied in the poem and its presumed effect on the listener or reader. In *Sanskrit Criticism*, V.K. Chari reiterates the ancient belief that 'Poetry is pre-eminently emotive discourse, a presentation of human feelings through their objective conditions, in the manner stipulated by Bharata' (Chari, 1990: 227–8). Earl Miner concurs:

In Sanskrit practice, teaching and delight exist together, being almost indistinguishable in the Indian merger of the sacred with the erotic; much the same is true of some Islamic mystical poetry . . . In the main, Chinese preferred the moral version. In the main, Japanese preferred the wide range of non-moralistic affectivism. (Miner, 1990: 27, 234)

What this brief survey will have suggested is that debate concerning poetic knowledge achieves resolution or consensus only in local or temporary ways. Its ongoing nature suggests that the underlying issues might be matters of belief and desire rather than rationality of argument, although the terms in which they get discussed tend to blur such distinctions.

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Everyday Knowledge

Michael E. Gardiner

Keywords everyday life, Heller, knowledge, Lefebvre, modernity

'Everyday knowledge' (or more precisely knowledges) is a sociocultural universal. All human societies build up a repertoire of shared and embodied norms, techniques and interpretive frameworks. Such 'stock knowledge at hand', as the phenomenologist Alfred Schütz (1967) has described it, allows for the formation of personal identities, facilitates mundane social interactions, and enables practical engagements with the material world. This realization led Agnes Heller to suggest that the everyday represents society's most fundamental ontological category, which she characterizes as the shared 'life-experience on which our intersubjective constitution of the world rests'. It is within this sphere that a human being acquires certain skills and competencies, via acculturation and socialization, that allow

one to become a full participant in social life, especially through what Heller identifies as the crucial media of language, tools and norms. Although the actual *content* of these knowledges is subject to enormous historico-cultural variability, we can, nevertheless, point to several key features: typically (though not inevitably), everyday knowledges are ruled by emotion and affect rather than formal logic; they tend to be repetitive, prone to analogical forms of reasoning and over-generalization; and they are pragmatic, based upon immediate perceptions and experiences and subordinated to the requirements of mundane tasks. Everyday knowledges are a form of *doxa*, legitimated by commonsensical opinions and not reliant on 'certainty' in any scientific sense.

In most premodern societies, such everyday knowledges were complexly intertwined with their more specialized counterparts, to the point where it becomes difficult to separate them. In tribal societies, for example, practical knowledges are imbricated fully with a wider gamut of

mythopoetic, festive and religious rituals, symbols and discourses. These integrated activities, objects and knowledges constitute an overarching totality, a distinctive 'style' of common existence that is permeated with poetical and aesthetic qualities that shape every aspect of sociocultural life. In the premodern context, as Henri Lefebvre (1987: 8) observes, 'the smallest tool to the greatest works of art and learning possessed a symbolic value linking them to meaning at its most vast'.

What seems to be largely peculiar to the Western world, at least since the time of the ancient Greeks, but especially with the advent of modernity, is a heightened *reflexivity* vis-à-vis the boundaries that delineate everyday from more formalized knowledges. Insofar as asymmetries of power are brought to bear on any exercise of boundary-maintenance, this has, historically speaking, involved a tendency to valorize the formal and specialized at the expense of the prosaic, the mundane and the practical. Western history has occasionally been witness to a creative osmosis between the everyday and more specialized knowledges (both Heller and Mikhail Bakhtin mention the Renaissance in this context). However, modernity is generally characterized as a form of social organization wherein human needs and actions become increasingly subordinated to the technical requirements of a rapidly expanding and centralized apparatus of commodity production, distribution and consumption, instead of being rooted in the more 'organic' rhythms and textures of daily life in the premodern world. Within 'learned' discourse, everyday knowledges became the target of ridicule and vilification. Descartes, for instance, argued that the paradigm of certain knowledge lay not in the evidence of the embodied senses, but in the abstract and timeless propositions of mathematics. These axioms were located within a purely mental space surveilled by the imperious, rational Mind, the (in)famous *cogito*. As Lefebvre has argued, this Cartesian mind-body dualism, like similar idealist philosophies, represented a systemic denigration of everyday knowledges and the aforementioned 'intersubjective constitution of the social world'. Evoking Marx, for Lefebvre such an outlook had a distinct sociohistorical origin: it was an expression of *alienation*, a loss of control over elemental human capacities and powers, which are banished to a nebulous fantasy world of rarified ideas instead of being rooted in the lived, intersubjective experience of time, space and the body. Everyday knowledges 'came to be thematized from the standpoint of a "truth" which then defined this life as void of truth' (Heller, 1985: 80).

It is therefore not surprising that everyday

knowledges have only rarely been considered worthy objects of study during the last two and a half thousand years of Western thought. One exception was the emergence of such social philosophies as hermeneutics, existential phenomenology, and *Verstehen* sociology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Max Weber, Wilhelm Dilthey, Schütz and other sociologists sought to develop the necessary conceptual and methodological tools for a systematic analysis of the everyday *Lebenswelt* or 'lifeworld'. (There were parallel developments in philosophy, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein's attempt to conceptualize pragmatic usages of language within specific 'forms of life', helping to spawn an entire genre of Anglo-American 'ordinary language philosophy'.) Heller argues that these intellectual developments were premised on two key assumptions. First, the everyday was perceived as separate and distinguishable from specialized knowledges and practices; and, second, everyday life was thought to be *problematic*, mainly because it is widely felt that modernity represented a distinct *threat* to the integrity of the everyday, insofar as daily existence was subjected to an extensive process of economic and bureaucratic restructuring, rationalization and commodification. As Mike Featherstone (1992: 162) puts it,

science, art, philosophy and other forms of theoretical knowledge originally embedded within everyday life become progressively separated and subjected to specialist development, followed by a further phase whereby this knowledge is fed back in order to rationalize, colonize and homogenize everyday life.

Viewing the everyday and its requisite knowledges as both distinct and 'problematic' has compelled particular strains of modern social and philosophical thought to be aware of the existence of 'everyday life' as a central ontological component of the social world. For example, theories such as Schützian phenomenology or ethnomethodology celebrate the ongoing accomplishments and practices of everyday life, but they do so in an uncritical and essentially descriptive fashion. In part, this is because they tend to conceptualize the underlying structures of the lifeworld as essentially 'taken-for-granted', and therefore an unchanging and immutable stratum of human existence. These theories therefore reproduce, rather than subvert, the pervasive hierarchy between specialized and non-specialized knowledges, thereby bolstering what André Gorz (1993) has called the 'expertocracy'.

There is, however, another significant approach to the understanding of everyday knowledges, which, arguably, does not fall prey to the

descriptively ethnographic, empiricist and covertly positivist orientation of various phenomenologies and micro-sociologies. This refers to a group of theorists, which would include the likes of Bakhtin, Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, Heller, Lefebvre, Michel Maffesoli and others, who view the everyday in more complex and nuanced terms. Rather than interpret everyday practices and knowledges as either trivial or merely 'problematic', these theorists set out to actively *problematize* everyday life, to expose its myriad contradictions, effects, determinations and hidden potentialities. This is accomplished through various techniques of estrangement or 'defamiliarization' that aim to disrupt the state of habitualized 'dreaming' or distraction that constitutes the everyday life of modernity, and jolt it into a state of (relative) wakefulness (see Highmore, 2002). So whereas for mainstream sociological approaches the everyday is the realm of the ordinary, the alternative sketched out by Lefebvre et al. is to treat it as incipiently *extraordinary*. The ordinary can become extraordinary not by eclipsing the everyday, or imagining we can arbitrarily leap beyond it to some 'higher' level of cognition, knowledge or action, but by fully appropriating and activating the possibilities that lie hidden, and typically repressed, within it. Such an enriched experience can then be re-directed back to daily life in order to transform it. The goal here is to elevate 'lived experience to the status of a critical concept – not merely in order to describe lived experience, but in order to change it' (Kaplan and Ross, 1987: 1).

Although everyday life does display routinized, static and unreflexive characteristics, as Schütz and others have argued, the work of Lefebvre and others has led us to realize that it is also capable of a surprising dynamism and moments of penetrating insight and unbridled creativity. And insofar as everyday lives and knowledges evince an irreducibly imaginative and dynamic quality, they cannot simply be written off as the realm of the trivial, inconsequential and habit-bound (see John O'Neill, 1995). Many aspects of daily life remain hidden and obscure, beyond the understanding of the fully legible 'Cartesian space' that scientific rationalism strives to construct and enforce. It is the very 'messiness' of daily life, its unsystematized and unpredictable quality, that helps it at least partially escape the reifying grip of nomothetic social science and technocratic planning (see de Certeau, 1984). In the minutiae of everyday life, therefore, we find a polysemy of gestures and symbols the very 'banality' of which is worth savouring; for, as Maurice Blanchot (1987: 13)

suggests, the everyday constitutes 'a utopia, and an Idea, without which one would not know how to get at either the hidden present, or the discoverable future of manifest beings'. If this is so, then the task of the critical theorist of everyday life conforms to what Rob Shields (1999: 188) has usefully termed a 'utopian humanism': it celebrates the intrinsic but oft-hidden promises and possibilities of ordinary human beings and the inherent value of commonsensical forms of knowledge, but recognizes shortcomings in the mundane world as it is currently constituted, and is attuned to the transgressive, sensual and incandescent qualities of everyday existence, whereby the entire fabric of the daily social world can take on a festive hue and be considered akin to a 'work of art'.

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Tacit Knowledge

Rod Watson

Keywords ethnomethodology, knowledge, phenomenology

A dominant tendency in the analysis of tacit knowledge originates in the work of Edmund Husserl (1962). In writing of ‘the natural standpoint’, i.e. the inter-subjective, constitutive sphere we inhabit, Husserl subjected to examination the mundane frame of reference within which ordinary persons routinely apperceive our phenomenal world. Within this frame of reference, which is experientially paramount, we take it for granted that we encounter things ‘as they are’, as self-given. In ordinary circumstances, any doubt about this is routinely suspended.

This taken-for-grantedness involves ‘active’ apperception, e.g. in facing the front of a house we tacitly assume, from our perspectival standpoint, that the house has side and rear elevations too, even though we cannot actually see them: we simply ‘know’ what houses are like – they have figured in our past experience, and so on.

Husserl devised what he termed ‘phenomenological reductions’ whereby the essential features of such taken-for-grantedness might temporarily be subjected to explicitation. Through such operations, we could turn our apprehension of the house into an explicit object of enquiry, i.e. how – through what intersubjective, experiential procedures – the house figures in the temporal course of my experience. The reductions strip away the tacit nature of our apprehensions in the natural standpoint (or attitude).

Alfred Schütz (1967) applied and extended Husserl’s approach, both to the social world and to social-scientific theorizations of that world. He conceived of society members as apprehending and acting in their lived world as a phenomenal domain constituted through an intersubjectively held framework of ordinary commonsense knowledge as built into lay members’ practical actions. Such knowledge included a set of typifications of persons, actions and settings, and of predicates such as motives. This framework is taken-for-granted and its constituents were incorporated into the production of sensible actions in an unstated, unquestioned way. This corpus of mundane knowledge also comprised tacit provisions for its own deployment, e.g. ego’s taking

it for granted that were alter to occupy her position, then her apperception of a given object would be just the same. Similarly, it is tacitly accepted both by ego and alter that they apperceive the same object in the same way irrespective of each actor’s biographical experience; for a series of views on how such phenomenology bears on sociology, see Hinkle et al. (1977).

This taken-for-grantedness is, typically, morally compelling though not invariably so. Special circumstances may emerge where it may be – strictly temporarily – suspended, and what is normally understood and presupposed by members is subjected by them to explicit attention. This fact helps distinguish the notion of the ‘tacit’, the ‘unstated’ or the ‘taken-for-granted’ from psychologistic conceptions such as the ‘subconscious’ where explicitations might well not be amenable to such contextual explicitation. Instead, the tacit might better be conceived in terms of an ‘agreement’ akin to Durkheim’s ‘non-contractual elements of the contract’, whereby the formal terms of a contract might only be deemed feasible if there exists a ‘background scheme’ of understood moral agreements concerning proper adherence and the like.

An example of such a background scheme may be drawn from D.L. Wieder’s (1974) ethnomethodological (EM) study of inmates’ agreed ‘convict code’ in a parole institution. The maxims of the code – ‘don’t co-operate with staff’, etc. – were seldom if ever explicitly stated, and certainly not as a ‘complete’ set, but they still routinely informed people’s actions in the institution. Thus, when an inmate said to staff, ‘You know I can’t organize a baseball team’, this is heard as indexing the code of non-cooperation, as a ‘telling’ of the code. The tacitly known-in-common code thereby furnishes a set of ‘hearing rules’ for particular tellings, and Wieder specifies the laic experiential procedures whereby hearers tie a telling to the code – procedures he glosses as ‘the documentary method of interpretation’ (DMI – a concept now rescinded by EM). The DMI involves the back-and-forth determination and redetermination of apprehended particulars and gestalt-like pattern. These reflexive procedures are transformed by Wieder into a topic for analysis in their own right, whereas for the institution’s personnel, they are left tacit, as, essentially, of no practical interest. Consequently, it was not just the set of maxims that was left unstated but also the

procedures for their practical relevancing in particular instances. This is a classic case of (tacit) knowledge-in-action.

The DMI brings us to a crucial distinction concerning any corpus of knowledge – propositional/‘substantive’ as opposed to procedural/methodic knowledge. The distinction is one made by Gilbert Ryle, between ‘knowing that (something is the case)’ and ‘knowing how’, i.e. how to make sense of a given situation and how therefore to act competently within it. It is most typically procedural knowledge that is tacit. Even when some item of substantive knowledge is explicitly avowed or ascribed by members, the procedural vehicle for its competent avowal or ascription is deployed in a tacit way. The significance of this is encapsulated by Garfinkel’s observation that the sense of *what* is said depends on *how* it is said. Such knowledgeable ‘production procedures’ or ‘laic techniques’ are typically left unremarked – ‘seen but unnoticed’, as Garfinkel puts it – both by members and (therefore) by normative or mainstream sociologists themselves. The technique and skill that ‘go into’ mundane practices normally remain unstated and unexplicated.

However, propositional knowledge can, of course, also be tacitly assumed or presupposed, not only by lay society members but also by professional sociologists of the ‘mainstream’ varieties. As Rose (1960) and Garfinkel (1984, 2002) have amply demonstrated, these sociologies are built upon a tacit, unexplicated commonsense-based ‘natural sociology’. They are reliant upon a primordial natural language descriptibility that involves both ‘knowledge that’ and ‘knowledge how’. The aim of EM and other phenomenologically based sociologies is to transform these tacit resources into topics to be explicated in their own right. In this view, the notion of tacit knowledge takes us to the heart of mainstream sociologies and reveals their most debilitating vulnerability, namely their deep confusion of explicit topic and unexplicated resource.

For those sociologies such as EM that wish to avoid such incoherence, the question remains: ‘how does one analytically explicate such a tacit knowledge-base?’ Those mainstream sociologies which are methodologically ironic (i.e. which set themselves up in competition with lay members’ knowledge) characteristically employ some variant of what Kenneth Burke termed a ‘perspective by incongruity’: that is, they use a variety of redemptive tropes such as metonymy to ‘force tacit knowledge into visibility’, to ‘raise it into the foreground’ and ‘afford it a fresh view’. However, in effectuating such redemptive descriptions such a project risks falsifying the intrinsic phenomenal integrity of the very knowledge it seeks to reveal. It must

also be said that many professional sociologies simply do not notice the stratum of tacit knowledge in the first place.

Instead, phenomenologically based approaches such as EM have sought to exhibit the tacit in non-ironic ways somewhat akin to phenomenological reduction. This was, in part, brought about by the taking of a praxiological turn, to treating of knowledge-in-action. However, since the knowledge-based production procedures for particular actions are themselves highly likely to be tacit, both buried from view and disattended (though nonetheless, of course, utterly relied upon), devices are still required to bring them to the explicit attention of the analyst. Such devices included Garfinkel’s well-known, though rapidly rescinded ‘breach’ interventions (Garfinkel, 1963), and the study of naturally occurring practices such as ‘explicative transactions’ and of interactions with those conceived as ‘mentally ill’ (Pollner, 1987), or the study of naturally occurring ‘anomalies’ in the attitude of everyday life such as the case of an intersexed person (Garfinkel, 1967): this last study had a profoundly methodological intent.

The tacit is often conceived according to a spatial metaphor: ‘background’ versus ‘foreground’. This metaphor derives from gestalt approaches and locates the tacit in a kind of ecology of mind. This metaphor has its pitfalls, however, and more recent studies have attempted to recast the conception of the tacit, e.g. Jalbert’s exemplary study of the procedural work of tacit presupposition, elision, passivisation and agent-deletion in televised US news reports on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon: again, such praxiological approaches can show us the active work that the unstated can do.

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Gendering Knowledge

Ann Brooks

Keywords epistemology, gender, modernity, reflexivity

Introduction

The intersection of gender analysis and global knowledge by social, gender and feminist theorists has given rise to new epistemological frameworks. A number of conceptual and theoretical problems central to these new epistemologies are raised in the process. These include: relationships of intimacy in late modernity; reflexivity and gender identity; relationships between sex, gender and embodiment; and masculinities and sexualities.

Reflexivity, Modernity and Specific Gender Practices

Gender was always framed within a collectivist set of epistemological paradigms along with class, race, ethnicity and nationality. However, as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995: 5–6) observe, ‘as people are released from roles, especially gender roles, that modern capitalist society prescribed, they are encouraged more and more to build up a life of their own’. Within what Beck defines as a ‘new modernity’ is a fragmentation and differentiation of life patterns and an erosion of conventionalized life careers and relationships.

The conceptualization of this ‘new modernity’ in socio-cultural and gender terms as understood by Beck and others is a highly Westernized notion of modernity. Beck (2000) distinguishes between a ‘first modernity’, signalled by collective full employment and the existence of both nation-states and welfare states, and a ‘second modernity’, in which increased individualization, gender revolution and globalization come about.

In this Western conceptualization of the ‘new modernity’ traditionally conceived notions of gender, of feminine and masculine, are breaking down, which poses additional challenges to relationships of intimacy. There are now multiple masculinities (Connell, 1996) and femininities and new epistemological frameworks to accompany them. Plummer (2003) formulates a sociology of intimacy based on an understanding of choices about gender and a reconceptualization of traditional gender categories such as masculinity and femininity. Far from a positive representation

of relationships of intimacy as suggested by Beck and Giddens, Plummer shows how gender relationships have very negative connotations including:

‘gender wars’ as men and women seem increasingly incapable of living with each other . . . side by side with this, newer concerns over bisexuality and polyamory [described by Plummer as relationships where there is multiple love], gender benders and gender blenders, queers, lesbian daddies, dykes . . . and transgender warriors. (Plummer, 2003: 6)

Conceptualizing modernity in non-Western contexts produces a very different understanding of reflexivity and gender identity. As I have noted elsewhere (Brooks, 2003), in Southeast Asia, the intersection of gender, family values and multiculturalism is a pervasive phenomenon impacting on reflexivity and identity. Religion and ethnicity give a further inflection to the debate. The underlying issues around religion, ethnicity and class intersect with gender and impact on the debate around both ‘Asian’ family values and gender identity. The rhetoric emerging from many of the governments in Southeast Asia has deliberately tied issues of gender identity to debates around ‘Asian family values’, nation building and questions of national identity. Whether the particular inflection is Confucian or Islamist, modernity, reflexivity and gender identity has a different frame of reference.

Thus modernity within non-Western contexts lends itself to a very different conceptualization of gender and a very different framing of gender identity. Within non-Western contexts a more appropriate model to understand gender may be that of ‘divergent modernities’ or ‘multiple modernities’. Within an Asian context, Asian women are creating non-Western conceptualizations of modernity. As Roces and Edwards (2000: 4–5) note, in doing so ‘it reaffirms the distinctiveness of a particular national subjectivity from a putative hegemonic Westernising identity’. An expression of this can be seen in Malaysia where the use of the veil has been seen as an attempt to embrace modernity in non-Western terms (Stivens, 1998).

Problematizing the relationship between modernity, reflexivity and gender, Gole (2002: 174) considers: ‘The public visibility of Islam and the specific gender, corporeal and spatial practices underpinning it’, through the practice of veiling. In

writing about the contemporary veiling practices of Muslim women, Gole highlights the significance of gender in the public visibility of Islam and shows how women become important religious and political agents through the emergence of the veil as the symbol of politicized Islam. Gole (2002: 181) shows that:

The Islamic headscarf is deliberately appropriated not passively carried and handed down from generation to generation. It is claimed by a new generation of women who have had access to higher education . . . Instead of assimilating to the secular regime of women's emancipation, they press for their embodied difference (e.g. Islamic dress) and their public visibility.

As Gole points out, Muslim women find themselves a visible representation of 'difference' from both a sometimes hostile West and a confused and divided Islam. Gole (2002: 183) maintains that the practice of veiling does not reflect a subjugation of Muslim women to traditional religious practices: 'On the contrary, it bears a new form, the outcome of a selective and reflexive attitude that amplifies and dramatizes the performative signs of "difference" . . . the new covering suggests a more rather than less potent Islam.' Traditionally denied any visible presence in the public sphere, Muslim women's representation of contemporary Islam has redefined both gender roles and representations of women. The relationship between gender, Islamization and religious practice has had a strong impact on reflexivity and gender identity. In countries in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, modernist versus traditional Islamist positions can be seen to be played out around issues of marriage, polygamy and embodiment. As Stevens (1998: 113) notes, 'the subtext of these contests is that women have been deployed as bearers of correct religious dress and behaviour and as keepers of a revived private sphere, "the family"'. Such reconceptualizations of gender and identity have posed serious challenges to conventional epistemological frameworks and to contemporary theorizing around reflexivity and identity.

Deconstructing Sex, Gender and Embodiment

Reconceptualizing sex and gender has been a relatively recent development among gender and feminist theorists and activists, characterized by significant epistemological shifts. These reconceptualizations of the relationship between sex, gender and embodiment have problematized conventional understanding of such relationships. In fact it was not until gender had become more

established as a category that sexuality became more amenable to investigation. In addition, sexuality itself came to be seen as another axis of inequality. The relationship between sex and gender became increasingly seen as a sphere of epistemological conflict, particularly within feminist and gender theorizing. Debates raged initially over sex and sexuality (see below); however, the emphasis shifted to the interrogation of both sex and gender. Some argued that questioning sex as well as gender facilitates a more complete social understanding of the distinction between women and men. Other theorists maintain that the sex/gender distinction is no longer useful and that if both sex and gender are social constructions, we should return to using the term 'sex' (Grosz, 1995).

In *Volatile Bodies* (1994), Grosz argued for a re-examining of notions of female corporeality and for interrogating the body within sexuality and ethics. Grosz (1994: 58, 187) holds a view of the materially sexed body, maintaining that 'the body is constrained by its biological limits', and also notes that 'the kind of body inscribed' makes a difference to the meaning and functioning of gender that emerges. However, she also observes that social norms structure our perception and understanding of male and female identities. As Shilling (2005: 68) notes: 'We are left with a body that is positioned by, and unalterably tied to, the sexual norms of society.' Shilling correctly acknowledges that Grosz does not overstate the significance of the 'body's "malleability" (as with Giddens's focus on individual reflexivity) or its determination (as with Bourdieu's notion of the habitus)' (Shilling, 2005: 67). However the problematic inherent in Grosz's model is her failure to establish criteria on which to judge between the two positions. Regardless of Grosz's emphasis on an autonomous 'sexed corporeality', Shilling observes that she shares with Bourdieu a perspective on the body's positioning in society which ties into the dominant structures of social class or sexuality, and hence to a substantially modernist view of gender identity. Elsewhere, Grosz (1995) argues for an explicit 'sexualization of knowledges' in order to explicate the impact that 'sexed corporeality' may have on how we understand knowledge, as well as how governing knowledges are codified and understood. Thus, for Grosz, sex, as well as gender, is an important dimension in the problematics of epistemological frameworks.

The construction of gender identity, gendered subjectivity and the gendered body is a major area of interest for gender knowledge. Judith Butler's (1990) deconstruction of sex and gender is the most influential epistemological contribution to the debates. Butler shows that once sex and gender

are treated as separate categories there is no reason to argue for a gender binary. Butler maintains that bodies become gendered through the continual performance of gender; in other words gender is 'performative'. However, the concept of the 'performative' as understood by Butler does not imply a performance. Performativity as developed by Butler has a different etymology. Butler draws on a notion of 'performativity' deriving from linguistics which draws on a process of 'citations' or repetitive practices based on normative structures. As used by Butler, linguistic performatives are forms of speech, which by their utterances bring what they name into being. In other words, sex is materialized, according to Butler, through a complex of citational practices. Butler's work among others has made a significant contribution to the development of new epistemological frameworks which explore the intersection of gender and sexuality and which attract gender, feminist and queer theorists challenging binary models of gender and sexuality.

Gender and feminist theorists have also problematized forms of global knowledge which legitimate dominant forms of sexuality, including heterosexuality and 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1996). In Connell's critique of hegemonic masculinity, he shows how there is no single clearly articulated masculinity or femininity in Western societies – just culturally prescribed forms which may take a different form at different points in time. In addition, the dominant hegemonic form is embedded in institutional ideology, e.g. religious doctrines, mass media, education, wage structures, welfare policy, etc. Connell shows that hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to women and to subordinate masculinities. It is pivotal to the dominance of heterosexual hegemony and marriage. Not only is hegemonic masculinity important ideologically, it also has significant epistemological implications for gender.

Dominant models of sexuality and masculinity clearly have implications for what kind of knowledge is constituted, reproduced, circulated and legitimated. Gender and feminist theorists have sought to problematize the epistemological frameworks within which such dominant paradigms exist. This does not, however, assume consensus around what counts as knowledge within gender and feminist theory, and 'paradigm wars' have constantly surfaced around gender epistemologies. As Oakley (2004: 192) notes, '[p]aradigm wars – in which one can unfortunately find oneself caught . . . are one example of the gendered social tensions produced within a patriarchal social structure'.

Epistemological schisms have characterized the gender/sex relationship, particularly around sexual

practices, pornography and reproductive technologies. Internal schisms characterized the relationships between feminist theorists and activists, including lesbian feminists, sex radicals and queer theorists. 'Sex wars' developed between feminists themselves and between lesbian and gay theorists and activists. Schisms have also characterized lesbian and gay movements, particularly around 'normal' and queer theory. As Plummer (2003: 44) comments: 'Linked to these epistemological conflicts is the argument over "queer family values". Such decision about rights and choices is as fundamental to the gay community as it is to the heterosexual community.'

New Epistemological Directions

Plummer, in *Intimate Citizenship*, observes that 'we are probably living simultaneously in traditional, modern and postmodern worlds' (2003: 8). The 'paradigm wars' around gender epistemology are certainly still operating on all three levels. Feminist theorists still debate the relevance of feminist knowledge production within dominant hegemonic structures such as global knowledges. However, in the postmodern world the questions posed are which groups are these models relevant to: which women? or which genders? For many gender groups, as Plummer (2003: 54) notes, gender is not a fixed identity and thus cannot have any citizenship rights. This highlights the fundamental epistemological dilemma in relation to gender (or any other category): the classic problem of universals and differences. As Plummer (2003: 59) observes in framing his new conception of multiple citizenships, 'the women's movement, the lesbian and gay movement, the ethnic and post-colonial movements have raised a host of potential new identities that demand recognition and lay claim to rights and obligations'.

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Performative Knowledge

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Keywords Butler, Foucault, gender, language, power, subjectivity, subjectification

'Performativity' could no doubt be given various introductions and genealogies. Understood as part of a movement against Descartes' *cogito*, the notion of performativity names an approach that refuses to tie the fact that 'there is thinking' to identity or ontology. In place of the certainty that I am – the *cogito* – is an argument for 'co-extensivity'. 'Thinking' is only confirmation that an individual exists within a discursive world; 'the subject', in this rendering, is co-extensive with his or her outside in the sense that they are produced by historically varying conditions that are in turn sustained by their produced elements. From Nietzsche's fiery 'there is no doer behind the deed' to Foucault's image of the Panopticon by which he sought to present diagrammatically the exercise of productive power/knowledge relations, to Judith Butler's feminist rendering of the argument, this co-extensivity is a radical critique of any originary notion of interiority. The sense of an interiority – what Butler calls the 'trope' of interiority – into which the subject him or herself can 'look' and thereby enact a conscience, a self, is an *effect*, it is argued, of the configurations in which the subject is 'caught'.

To consider the process of subjectification one has therefore to attend to the lines of light and enunciation that literally incorporate the subject and sustain the subject as it both indicates and sustains the wider matrix of power. To speak of 'performativity' in relation to the subject or subjectivity is to focus on the practices of this conditioned element within the various matrices by which it is sustained. In particular, performativity has become, via Judith Butler's thesis, a tool of analysis by which to interrogate differentiated subject formation within practices that sustain lines of power and power effects. Thus, while the term comes from the study of linguistics, was coined by J.L. Austin (1962) and was further elaborated by Searle's *Speech Acts* (1969), its implications and its critical challenges now extend beyond a theory of language. A performative utterance, for Austin, was one in which 'the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action' (1962: 163), such that the saying of the utterance – his classic examples were 'I do [take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife]' and 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*' – is not to describe my doing but 'to do it'. 'When I say, before the registrar or altar, &c., "I do", I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it' (1962: 163). These utterances are oftentimes taken, erroneously in his view, to be the outward description, true or false, of 'the occurrence of the inward performance'

(1962: 164). It is his challenge to the idea that there needs to be an inward, even spiritual, act to accompany these performative utterances that foreshadows Butler's use of his thesis. For while Austin's ultimate concern was to explicate the requisite conditions for the smooth or 'happy' functioning of a performative, it is crucial to his argument that performatives – even the 'awe-inspiring' 'I promise to . . .' (1962: 164) – cannot be considered within the terms of truth and falsehood. Even one who promises in bad faith, still, in uttering the words, makes the promise. A promise has been made; something has been done, and something is set in motion. It is the non-necessity of an 'inward' performance to accompany the 'outer' performative that enables Austin's thesis to be tied to the tradition of critical thought indicated above, which is what Judith Butler achieved so brilliantly in her text *Gender Trouble*. For her, the fiction that there are two discrete genders is a fabrication, a performative achievement that is sustained through the production and repetition of 'corporeal signs' (1990: 136). The gendered subject is the outward performance, in other words, sustained without the necessity of any 'inward act': the idea that there is such an interiority – one that 'causes' the subject's gender – is the 'cultural fiction' that 'discrete and polar genders' flow from the seemingly simple duality of anatomical sex (1990: 140).

The power/knowledge relations that produce the subject require that subject – as their conditioned element – to respond in ways that in turn sustain those power/knowledge relations. The disciplined body is one that has to co-ordinate its movements in the most minute detail. Not only are the disciplined bodies Foucault describes in *Discipline and Punish* (1977[1975]) required to follow timetables that co-ordinate them in space and time – eating, sleeping, praying, exercise, reading, and so on – but they must also co-ordinate each limb, each glance, each gesture. The schoolboy Foucault describes has to pay attention to the placement of his feet, the extension of his spine, the grip of his pencil, the formation his letters. These movements are a training because they become habits, sustaining the attentions of power without passing through consciousness. The inmates in Foucault's description of the Panopticon come to act as if they believe they are being watched, whether they are being watched or not *and* whether they truly believe it or not *and* whether they even consider their surveillance as a question. In Foucault's power/knowledge regimes, the knowledge is taken in, folded into the subject's very being.

'In all his work', wrote Deleuze, 'Foucault seems haunted by this theme of an inside which is merely the fold of the outside, as if the ship were

a folding of the sea' (Deleuze, 1988: 97). If the seeming integrity of the object is a product of the workings of the *dispositif*, of the lines of light and enunciation that have that object as their mobile, incomplete product, and if difference – such as ethnic or gender difference – is understood as indicative of the implicit or explicit power, even violence, of the regime within which it appears, then what is readable on the body is only ever the embodiment, momentary if seamlessly reiterated, of forces that emanate from without. The sustenance of the element in question by this external process is what allows for the achievement of difference. Deleuze explains: 'a line of subjectification is a process, a production of subjectivity in a social apparatus [*dispositif*]: it has to be made, inasmuch as the apparatus allows it to come into being or makes it possible' (1992: 161).

As Deleuze reads Foucault's oeuvre, he finds this recurrent theme of the fold. From *Madness and Civilisation* through to the later volumes of the *History of Sexuality*, he reads from one book to another, gradually building his own reading. He follows the 'games of repetition' (1988: 98) whereby Foucault 'is always concerned with showing how the Other, the Distant, is also the Near and the Same', as Foucault put it in *Madness and Civilisation*, which in Deleuze's words becomes figured as the fold: 'it resembles exactly the invagination of a tissue in embryology, or the act of doubling in sewing: twist, fold, stop and so on' (1988: 98). This theme can be traced throughout Foucault, from his interest in Raymond Roussel and the notion of the 'snag' – 'no longer the accident of tissue but the new rule on the basis of which the external tissue is twisted, invaginated and doubled' (1988: 98) – to his final works where, for example, the notion of *enkrateia* – a sort of self-mastery, a mastery over the inside which becomes 'hollowed out' as a relation with the self is allowed to emerge – can be understood as the Greek version of the snag and the doubling.

To interrogate the performative nature of these productions is to lay emphasis on the detail of power's operations, as well as its fragility. Subjectification is always incomplete and always threatened therefore by the sense in which its accomplishment is also its ability to be undone. It is threatened by its melancholic structure as Butler describes it in *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997) by which something has to be foreclosed to enable the subject's survival where certain possibilities are forbidden or disallowed. More generally put, it is threatened by the principle fact of co-extensivity. As Butler puts it in more recent work: 'I am outside myself from the outset, and must be, in order to survive, and in order to enter into the realm of the possible' (2004: 32). It is the

temporal nature that makes the productions fragile; they need to be reiterated and *sustained* across time in order to support the lines of the *dispositif*. Movement within those lines – as highlighted in accounts of passing and changing gender both historical and contemporary – is not impossible but is potentially dangerous.

For Butler, the fragility of gender production does not mean that its deployment is easily interrupted or broken. Partaking in the cultural fiction is also the securing of one's own 'cultural survival' in a world where genders are distinct, hierarchically related and heteronormatively organized. To exist outside the contemporary terms of intelligibility is to risk sanction. The ethical questions at stake here – that is, the ethical requirement to demonstrate the foreclosures of a variety of regimes of different orders – are always the primary issue for Butler. That is, how to articulate a response to those regimes while cognizant of the contradictions in positing an escape via an 'undisciplined' route to a place free from disciplinary regimes. Not only are psychoanalytic terminologies disallowed within a Foucauldian paradigm, so too are any claims that flirt with an authentic or natural subject and community. Belongings, even those given via the most genealogical of routes, require (or are required to entail) a performative dimension (Boyarin and Boyarin, 1993).

One strong theme in the post-Panoptican literature is the emphasis on the use of embodied performance to explore a tension between the one who appears and the one who performs; that is, there is no need to revert to a notion of a true subjectivity or interiority in order to comprehend how differently disciplined bodies can co-exist. More than one disciplined body can share the same co-ordinates in space, and insofar as bodies move through different institutions, and operate in different capacities, this is necessarily the case. In a fascinating exploration of this thought, Hamera (2005) tells the story of a couple – Ben and May – from Cambodia, Khmer survivors living in Los Angeles, who were trained in classic Khmer dance. Through their performance of this highly stylized dance form, Ben and May perform an embodied 'answer' to past trauma. Their interviews with Hamera suggest that they understand their skill in embodying this 'ur-text' of Khmer culture (2005: 97) as allowing that culture to survive. Moreover, they sense that their embodied knowledge of it comes to account for their own survival. May Sem says:

I hear my teachers who did not get out. I hear them sometimes in the day. I don't see, just hear. I am scared but they tell me the steps [movements generally] to the dance. I am like a child, a baby. I listen to them tell me the step. At first I am so scared, I don't listen. Maybe

go crazy like my neighbour I tell you. But I listen to them tell me the step, then I do. I do. Sometimes I do better, I think so, because they tell me. (2005: 97)

This accountability is a complex one in which, as Vivian Patraka suggests, the doing/performance is always accountable to the 'thing gone' (1999: 7). Hamera understands this accountability in Bakhtinian terms such that, for the Sems, dance becomes the vehicle through which Ben and May perform *answers* for their individual survival, and that of Khmer culture.

There are several 'bodies' engaging in performative knowledge here. The dancing body exhibits its rigorous training in technique, while the dancer engaged in the performance is understood to become the embodiment of 'Apsaras', the celestial dancers who guard the heavens and mediate between the sacred and the secular through their dances. Then there is the refugee-survivor body who in his or her performance offers an ambiguous, non-spoken answer to the past as well as exhibiting the fragile possibility of potential survival.

According to Deleuze's reading, in *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 2: *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault suggested that the folding does have the possibility of establishing a subjectivity which, while of course derived from power and knowledge, is not dependent upon them (Deleuze, 1988: 101): '[The line of subjectivation] is a line of escape. It escapes preceding lines and *escapes from itself*' (1992: 161, emphasis added). In other words, subjectivity, as Foucault comes to regard it through the texts studied in *The Use of Pleasure*, breaks off from the lines of force which brought it into being and establishes its relation to self; in the practice of the relation to the self, there is what Deleuze would call a line of escape or flight by which one establishes one's subjectivity (1988: 102). At this point in his account, Deleuze's writing also breaks away from Foucault's, as he moves beyond admiration to emphasize a certain reading, circling Foucault's thematic in order to produce something which amounts to his own argument.

This notion of the line of escape which may continue preceding lines but then loops and forms new shapes and spaces such that it breaks from them, is a reading of Foucault that belongs very much to a Deleuzian reading. Indeed, Deleuze's reading of the *dispositif* or apparatus draws it close to his own notion of the assemblage. To return to Deleuze's 'What is a Dispositif?', the 'lines' encircle and seem to give rise to objects and subjects; but for Deleuze co-extensivity does not mean an imposition of an interiority from outside, as a more Nietzschean reading of Foucault might offer. Rather co-extensivity would be another term

to describe the rhizomatic nature of the lines of Foucault's *dispositif*:

These apparatuses, then, are composed of the following elements: lines of visibility and enunciation, lines of force, lines of subjectification, lines of splitting, breakage, fracture, all of which criss-cross and mingle together, some lines reproducing and giving rise to others, by means of variations or even changes in the way they are grouped. (1992: 162)

As he puts it elsewhere, the analytic task is to follow the tangle of the assemblage. 'We have as many tangled lines as a hand ... What we [Deleuze and Guattari] call by different names – schizo-analysis, micro-politics, pragmatics, diagrammatism, rhizomatics, cartography – has no other object than the study of these lines, in groups or as individuals' (2002[1977]: 125). Amidst these paths will be those of the 'line of flight ... of the greatest gradient': 'this line appears to arise [*surgir*] afterwards, to become detached from the two others, if indeed it succeeds in detaching itself' (2002[1977]: 125). This line of flight is a movement of creativity within the tangle of lines of the *dispositif*.

What is at stake here is how one understands this creativity. For this creativity does not seemingly replace or contradict co-extensivity in Deleuze's understanding. There are still lines of light, knowledge, power and subjectification that encircle and produce the effect of interiorities. These must remain in the analysis. But it certainly means that for Deleuze and Guattari following movements of becoming – or, to use the Bergson-inflected language, attempting to trace the path by which a differing, a specific becoming, is actualized – is also to trace the path of a creative relationship to self which, insofar as it is posited as a relationship of the thing to itself, implies a version of interiority and a critique of the mantra 'no interiority, only co-extensivity'. What has

been, if not denied, then bracketed, namely the creativity of things, their self-activity, indeed the very insistence of *life*, is put back into the frame.

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Matrixial Trans-subjectivity

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Keywords aesthetics, borderspace, co-emergence, ethics, m/Other, pregnancy, prenatal, psychoanalysis, transmissive transformational potentiality

Psychoanalytic theory has struggled to overcome the limitations imposed on the understanding of the formation of subjectivity because of the reliance on the Freudian theory of the unconscious which privileges the phallus as signifier of the dynamic between lack and desire, and which supports the model of repression based on the castration complex and its male perspective. In the relational intersubjective perspective, after Klein, Winnicott and Kohut many contemporary psychoanalysts with object-relations, intersubjective, and self tendencies are increasingly developing our understanding of the intersubjective field that is opened in the relations between the caring adult (mother) and the baby and revealed between analyst and analysand. In my work, I have tried to think about a model that breaks with both the Freudian-Lacanian paradigm and the intersubjective as a field of communication, rethinking desire and the unconscious by reference instead to the transgressive encounter between I and non-I grounded in the maternal womb/intra-uterine complex and a notion of affective economy that avoids phallogentrism. The point is to understand the passage into the symbolic kingdom outside the paradigm of castration and the role of the symbolic phallus in it, particularly the way in which it has theorized the pre-Oedipal impulses linked to the archaic Other/mother, and to the *objet a* as signifier of desire based upon primordial loss. A different affective economy then emerges by which one is able to think of an-other kind of loss or separation which is not attributed to rejection, 'castration' or abjection. This perspective opens up a non-psychotic connection between the feminine and creation, and thus points to an artistic practice that reconnects with an enlarged symbolic in which the feminine (neither male nor female) is fully active and informing knowledge and the ethical realm.

In order to postulate another kind of *objet a* we must elaborate a psychic layer from which it may emerge. I have called such a layer the matrixial stratum of subjectivization and proposed that one can regard the matrixial subjectivity-as-encounter

as a beyond-the-phallus feminine field (in both men and women) related to the female real, which has an imaginary and a symbolic impact. I have named *matrixial borderspace* the psychic sphere which is trans-subjective and sub-subjective even if and when it arises in the field of the separate individual self and even if and when it operates in the intersubjective relational field. It is a 'feminine' dimension based on pregnancy pattern. Subjectivity here is an encounter between I and unrecognized yet intimate non-I neither rejected nor assimilated. If we conceive of traces of links, trans-individual transmissions and transformational reattunments, rather than of relations to and communication with objects and subjects, in terms of a transgressive psychic position in which the co-emergence and co-fading is prior to the I versus others, a different passageway to others and to knowledge arises – suitable for transformative links that are not frozen into objects. This passage, that I have called *metramorphosis*, is a non-psychotic yet beyond-the-phallus web of links. The matrixial draws a special connection between analytical practice as an ethical working-through and artistic practice as an aesthetical working-through.

As a feminine sexual difference, the matrixial designates 'woman' not as the Other but as co-emerging self with m/Other, and *link a* rather than *object a* not as lack or a figure of rhythmic scansion of absence/presence but as a *borderlinking* figure of *differentiation in co-emergence*. Relations-without-relating and distance-in-proximity preserve the co-emerging Other as both a subject and an object without turning the Other into an object only. They also preserve the 'woman' as both subject and Other, and not as Other or object; not as an entirely phallic subject yet not as embodiment of the price of culture and absent to her-self (Lacan).

Trans-subjective unconscious transmission, resonance and co-production of knowledge are recognized according to specific parameters. The key concepts of this theoretical complex – matrixial borderspace, metramorphosis, m/Other, transformational potentiality, borderlinking, copoiesis, differentiating-in-co-emergence and co-fading, wit(h)nessing, relations-without-relating, distance-in-proximity, potential shareability, severality, trans-scriptions, cross-imprinting, matrixial time, trans-subjective transference, screen and gaze, fascinancy, com-passionate hospitality – serve to describe and explain the trans-subjective unconscious web that, though usually foreclosed,

precedes and sometimes overrides unconscious traces of the separate subject in self identity and is always working-through under intersubjective relationality and communication. By severality (and not multiplicity) I intend an ensemble of subjective instances arising in different individuals by way of traces spread in a web composed of several participants that are transformed and transforming one another in a shareable eventing, whose traces are inscribed both directly and in a crossed manner in the one and in the other and over to other webs. Thus, the matrixial psychic space concerns shareability yet evades collective community and organized society. The several is a specific configuration. Not 'one'. Not 'two' in symbiosis or intersubjective relations, not Oedipalizing 'three' and not 'collective unconscious'.

We discover here particular mechanisms of bonding and a particular mode of difference – an originary feminine difference that evades the dichotomy between masculinity and femininity. *Jointness-in-differentiating* is originary. The matrixial difference is a swerving differentiating between several partial-subjects where, for each two, differentiation is not awaiting the third. Contrary to descriptions of the prenatal psychic space as non-differentiation, difference occurs in originary borderlinking. Thus, the matrixial-feminine difference emerges neither as 'essential' or biological nor as a social construct or gender. In the feminine, a trans-subjective figure is interlaced. Its psyche is not confined to one body. It transgresses individual boundaries and is spread in the several; it is a weaving of affective and mental strings.

With the matrixial apparatus I put the question of same-sex difference as the first and most persistent sexual difference for women. Men too are tremendously preoccupied matrixially with the question of same-sex difference, though for a man the questions of son/father, boy/man difference develop after questioning the son/mother difference. The sexual difference of any human being (female or male) is first of all staged with and against a female m/Other-woman figure and in matrixial parameters. The matrixial woman-to-woman difference labours before the formation of separate subjects, whole objects and personal identity; this difference is not a question of gender identification and has to be dealt with in terms of the primary impressions at the earliest psychic phase and position. Matrixial potentiality, however, does inform gender on a secondary level.

The matrixial borderlinking and desire apply to both women and men even though they are based upon the archaic resonating with a feminine-maternal body-psyche. Therefore, a matrixial transference that co-arises beyond transferential repetitiveness is forever bound to the mystery of

the invisible inside of the female body. Prenatality and pregnancy as virtual or real, as process, as image and as symbol inform an unconscious borderspace woven from affective and mental strings that are reattunable. Matrixial co-transformation-in-difference is asymmetrical. Matrix supplies the symbol and an image by which we can access and recognize the moves of the transgressive subjectivity beyond the moves of the differentiated subject and draw the activity of a specific Eros with aesthetical and ethical consequences. *Metramorphosis* is the ensemble of transmission and reattunement by which I and non-I co-emerge, co-change and co-fade within a shareable web. Copoiesis (departing from Varela's notion of autopoiesis) is the aesthetical and ethical creative potentiality of a metramorphic weaving in subjectivizing matrixial moments.

The matrixial borderspace is a sphere of encounter-events where intensities and vibrations as well as their imprints and 'memory' traces are exchanged and experienced by fragmented and assembled experiencing partial-subjects who are reattuning their affective frequencies. I and non-I are linked in trans-subjectivity on a sub-subjective level in a mental resonance 'camera obscura'. The psychic cross-imprinting of events and the exchange of traces of mutually (but not symmetrically) subjectivizing agencies, occurring via/in a borderspace where two or several becoming-subjectivities meet, create singular trans-subjective webs of copoiesis composed of transformations along psychic strings stretched between the participants of each encounter-event. Thus, a matrixial borderspace is a mutating copoietic net. Matrixial co-emergence has a healing power, but because of the transgression of individual boundaries that it initiates and entails, and because of the self-relinquishment and fragilization it appeals to, it is also potentially traumatizing. Therefore, to become creative, the aesthetical transgression of individual borderlines, which occurs in any case with or without our awareness or intention, calls for the awakening of a specific ethical attention, responsibility and extension. In artworking it calls for generous self-relinquishment. In art, the aesthetical working-through bends towards the ethical with matrixial co-response-ability and wit(h)nessing; in psychoanalysis the ethical working-through bends toward the aesthetical realm.

The matrixial borderspace is modelled upon a particular conception of feminine/prebirth intimate sharing. The womb/matrix is conceived of here not primarily as an organ of receptivity or 'origin' but as the human potentiality for differentiation-in-co-emergence. Its space is not a maternal 'container', its time is not the inaccessible chronological past. It is the space and time of

subjectivization in co-emergence. Before birth, the co-emergence potentiality arises and operates alongside potentialities for a fusing symbiosis. After birth, the co-emergence potentiality arises and evolves alongside potentialities for a fusing symbiosis and rejection. Matrixial potentiality does not replace the phallus; it operates along a different unconscious track. Composite partial subjectivities produce, share and transmit assembled, hybrid and diffracted psychic objects, links and traces, via originary psychic conductible strings. In the prenatal co-emergence with-in a female body-and-psyche, distance-in-proximity is continuously reattuned. A mental path for inscriptions of traces of such reattunements in new encounters where separating-in-jointness reoccurs is opened. The pre-subject that thus emerges in jointness develops primal trans-subjectivity before being a 'separate', 'whole' subject. Later on, alongside one's identity as a whole subject, I(s) and non-I(s) continue to interlace their borderlinks in metamorphosis on the matrixial resonance field.

Matrixial trans-subjectivity hosts moments of co-emergence-in-differentiation that organize their own time zone – a matrixial bordertime. The metamorphic psychic net is created by, and is further creating – together with, and induced by matrixial affects – relations-without-relating on the borders of presence and absence, among partial-subjects, and between them and their trans-subjective-objects (subjective-objects in the sense of Winnicott) and selfobjects (in the sense of Kohut). I therefore view the feeling of oceanic immersion in the world (Freud) not as fusion or undifferentiation but as borderlinking-in-differentiation in a compassionate resonance chamber. When, with growth, we arrive at a subject's position, underneath this position where each subject confines its psyche to the boundaries of her individual being, shareable psychic strings continue to emerge, and metamorphic clusters continue to weave relations-without-relating between me and the stranger that unknowingly affect me and are attached to me beyond intention or communication.

Memory traces circulate in the trans-subjective zone by matrixial affects, frequencies and intensities – which I have named the erotic antennae of the psyche – that disperse different aspects of jouissance and of traumatic events between me and the other who thus becomes 'my' intimate anonymous partner, and inscribe them along psychic matrixial paths and strings that have been opened by each particular borderlinking between 'I' as partial-subject and 'non-I' as its archaic m/Other that, encountered in the Real of the archaic ongoing encounter-event, will become the always-already forgotten yet forever unforgettable

and looked-for originary aesthetic environment. This environment is transformative, but since it is evolving within prematernal hospitality, its aesthetics is always also bound to ethics of hospitality (in a Levinasian sense). The matrixial is therefore an aesthetical and ethical compassionate environment which is, for each becoming-subject (in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari), the Cosmos. Primary modes of sense-giving depend on this resonant environment, modes in which the very psychic emergence of the I depends on the particular quality of the capacity I have named *wit(h)nessing*: witnessing while resonating with an-Other in a trans-subjective encounter-event.

Copioetic transformational potentialities evolve along matrixial aesthetic and ethical paths all throughout life. As during infancy, all throughout life, when I cannot fully handle events that concern me profoundly, since they have been a part of some co-emerging metamorphosis, they would transform or fade during a new transformation with-in the matrixial dimension, with an other that would become, by that very process or operation and through her compassionate hospitality, the non-I who can m/Otherly wit(h)ness the I. If because of a highly traumatic value of an event, I cannot even contain 'my' own wounds at all, since in the matrixial psychic sphere 'my' imprints are trans-scribed and cross-imprinted as traces in the other, 'my' matrixial others might process for me traces of 'my' traumatic events. Such is the co-response-ability of artworking and of a durable psychoanalytical healing. Such a meaning-donation through the other occurs not only in ways similar to those described by Bion by the maternal 'alpha' function (which depends on relational preverbal postnatal communication) but also in trans-subjective attunement, similar to that by which the pregnant m/Other metabolizes archaic encounter-events and a whole spectrum of intensities, frequencies and vibrations for the premature and fragile presubject, who precisely through this shareability with-in a m/Othernal psyche is becoming a partial-subject in jointness-in-difference with-in her. Similar reattunement continues in the postnatal relational sphere, and with other m/Others. During co-emergence and co-fading, both the presubject (I) and the m/Other (partial-subject, non-I) are transformed, in different but related ways. Mechanisms of sense-giving that are fit to describe postnatal exchange and communication (first with maternal and paternal figures) are not sufficient to describe primary and prenatal processes. The matrixial processes continue to form, inform, 'exform' and transform us throughout life, though the matrixial space-time is usually foreclosed or infolded inside more phallic dimensions and ignored. We can

understand the matrixial borderspace and its mechanisms as both the earlier psychological stage and an evolving originary position.

Thus, we are dealing with the mark of the m/Other or archaic feminine-other in the body-psyche and with an immense invisible transmissivity that is foreclosed from the phallic domain (Lacan) but that also evades the field of 'schizophrenic' endless multiplicity (Deleuze and Guattari) and the symbiotic or autistic Oneness. The body-real doesn't stand only for the irreducibility of instincts, impulses and drives. It indicates the appeal of the body-psyche for closeness ('attachment'). Like for Bowlby, Winnicott, Ogden, Tustin, Kohut and others ('intersubjective' and 'self' theoreticians), the desire to draw near is recognized on its own merit and not as subsidiarily leaning on other needs (such as for nourishment) and drives (such as the oral drive), but there are three major differences: first, matrixial borderlinking in differentiation occurs inside an already trans-subjective sphere that does not follow and does not depend on autistic or symbiotic positions (though these positions might result from unbearable pain); second, the first psychic traces are considered as prenatal and as inscribed by psychic mechanisms that are different from those designed for understanding post-natal attachment; and, third, psychic transmissions (noticed by Freud) transgress intersubjective relations and form a creative potentiality of resistance to repetition. The feminine-matrixial difference treasures a particular Eros of compassionate alliance with otherness on the borderlines between non-life and life. When this Eros goes astray, the psychic damage caused by the matrixial potentiality is enormous, since it is in this sphere that the Other is a trauma to the subject (Levinas).

The separate self has a vague affective knowledge of the matrixial, yet one might, under certain aesthetical circumstances and ethical occasions (and by surrendering in a floating attentiveness, like Bion's maternal 'reverie' and Freud's 'floating attention'), access its forces at work, by joining them. The concept of metamorphosis calls for rethinking empathy, intuition, inspiration, telepathy and even initiation – this invisible unconscious trans-subjective aspect that is not yet recognized as a part of the psychoanalytic process. Initiation occurs when in a way similar to that by which my mind translates intensities, wavelengths, frequencies, vibrations and all kinds of resonance and signals arriving from my own 'internal' sources and perceptions, into feelings, images and thoughts, my mind also con-cepts and reattunes itself to elaborate and translate similar waves that arise in the mind of the matrixial other into affective preconceptual knowledge, images and thoughts.

Matrixial responsibility creates knowledge without domination of and in the Other. Becoming responsible for traces of the other as if they were mine is a matrixial ethical move. Working them through when compassionate hospitality meets with fascination is an aesthetical gesture. I have called the transformational subjectivizing potentiality of a matrixial *link a* or *object a* (gaze and voice (Lacan), and also touch, movement, and mental objects/links that do not depend on the five senses or on bodily orifices): fascination. Fascination is an aesthetic affect that operates in a prolongation and delaying of the duration of an encounter-event, which allows matrixial transference and copoiesis. The artist who is working through the cross-inscribed traces works her art that is an aesthetic-in-action as a healing that is an ethics-in-action.

The same-sex difference operates in asymmetrical reciprocity by the matrixial transformational potentiality. While an 'immature' or fragmented I emerges towards being in aesthetical modes, a 'mature' non-I (m/Othernal figure) evolves in an ethical as well as aesthetical sense, as she enlarges her capacity for fragilization, compassionate hospitality and wit(h)nessing. In differentiating-in-jointness she makes room for the other not only with-in herself but with-in larger subjective clusters and other matrixial webs of which she is a part, though the principle of severality, and not infinite multiplicity, is kept, and each supplementary I is borderlinking only when the matrixial subjectivizing potentiality opens up. Copoietic knowledge is created by artworking and is transmitted as initiation by the spiralic matrixial transmissive transference beyond the analytical repetition-transference relations.

Metamorphosis as an originary human potentiality for reciprocal yet asymmetrical crossing of borderlines between I and non-I and between virtuality phantasm, jouissance and trauma, induces instances of co-emergence and co-fading as knowledge. In the realm of art, trans-scription and cross-imprinting are means for thinking the enigma of the imprints of the world and the cosmos on the artist, of the artist's potentiality to join traumatically and by joy the consciousness of things and to artwork through them and transform the world's hieroglyphs into knowledge. The viewer's capacity to join in the aesthetic effects of such transformative events is also aroused by metamorphic threads. Metamorphosis is a co-naissance – a transformational knowledge of being born together with the other whereby each individual becomes sub-subject in subjectivity that surpasses her personal limits, and whereby an other might become for me not only a sign of my archaic m/Other but also an occasion for

transformation. The knowledge of transformation-by-borderlinking is not cognitive; it is accessed by aesthetic and ethical joining-in-differentiating and working-through. Matrixial differentiating creates an invisible aesthetic 'screen' on the border of the ethical, a screen which by art and in the psychoanalytical ongoing continual encounter becomes accessible. It becomes that which is woven and touches me behind the visible and the audible on the borders of the thinkable, a knowledge with the other and in the other, and the other's knowledge with-in me, which can only be reached by some kind of non-defensive self-relinquishment and by creating or participating in a subjectivizing occasion by compassionate hospitality or generosity on the one pole and by fascination on the other. Affects are transferred across the entire psychic border-space of severality; traces are emitted, transmitted and redistributed, opening new affective passageways for reception and transmission, shareable by resonance.

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Body

Bryan S. Turner

Abstract Contemporary academic interest in the human body is a response to fundamental changes in the relationship between body, economy, technology and society. Scientific advances, particularly new reproductive technologies and therapeutic cloning techniques, have given the human body a problematic status. Ageing, disease and death no longer appear to be immutable facts about the human condition. The emergence of the body as a topic of research in the humanities and social sciences is also a response to the women's and gay liberation movements, and environmentalism, animal rights, anti-globalism, religious fundamentalism and conservative politics. Further, the human body is now central to economic growth in various biotechnology industries, in which disease itself has become a productive factor in the global economy and the body a code or system of information from which profits can be extracted through patents. In modern social theory, the body has been studied in the contexts of advertising and consumerism, in ethical debates about cloning, in research on HIV/AIDS, in postmodern reflections on cybernetics, cyberbodies and cyberpunk, and in the analysis of the global trade in human organs. The body is a central feature of contemporary politics, because its ambiguities, vulnerability and plasticity have been amplified by new genetic technologies.

Keywords bio-economics, bio-politics, bio-tourism, genomics, post-human future

The Body and Embodiment

There are two distinctive and possibly separate traditions in the anthropology and sociological study of the body. There is either the cultural analysis of the *body* as a system of meaning that has a definite structure existing separately from the consciousness and intentions of individuals, or there is the phenomenological study of *embodiment* that attempts to understand human practices or the performativity of the body. These two perspectives are distinct, but not necessarily incompatible. The study of dance and dancing provides a useful illustration of these two positions. We can clearly study dance as a cultural system, indeed as a language that has a structure and form by which we can interpret the social world. The meaning of the contrast between, for example, ballroom dancing and the classical ballet body is produced by differences between concepts in the discourse of dancing, but the meaning and significance of dancing as a set of practices and performances can only be grasped by understanding embodiment in motion. This is the difference between choreography as a text and the actions of a body in motion.

Social anthropologists have contributed significantly to the analysis of the body as a method of classification. The human body has been a potent and persistent metaphor for social and political relations throughout human history. Different parts of the body have historically represented different social functions. For example, we can refer to the 'head of state' without really recognizing the metaphor, while the heart has been a rich source of ideas about life, imagination and emotions. It is the house of the soul and the book of life, and the 'tables of the heart' provided a perspective into the whole of Nature. Similarly, the hand occupies an

important position in shaping the imagination with respect to things that are beautiful (handsome) or useful (handy) or damaged and incomplete (handicap).

The dominant political concerns and anxieties of society tend to be translated into disrupted and disturbed images of the body, and hence we can talk about the 'somatic society' (Turner, 1992). The *danse macabre* gave gruesome expression to the devastation of the medieval social order that had been brought about by the ravages of the Black Death, and in modern society the scourge of cancer and AIDS has often been imagined in military metaphors of invading armies. Social disturbances are grasped in the metaphors by which we understand mental and physical health. Body metaphors have been important in moral debate about these social disruptions. The division between good and evil has drawn heavily on bodily metaphors; what is sinister is related to left-handedness, the illegitimate side, the awkward side. Our sense of social order is spoken of in terms of the balance or imbalance of the body. In the 18th century, when doctors turned to mathematics to produce a Newtonian map of the body, the metaphor of hydraulic pumps was used to express human digestion and blood circulation. The therapeutic bleeding of patients by knife or leech was to assist this hydraulic mechanism, and to relieve morbid pressures on the mind. Severe disturbances in society were often imagined as poor social digestion. These assumptions about social unrest producing disorder in the gut are reflected in the basic idea of the need for a government of the body. Dietary management of the body was translated into fiscal constraint, reduction in government expenditure and downsizing of public functions. In the language of modern management, a lean and mean corporation requires a healthy management team. In neo-liberal ideology, central government is an excess – a sort of political obesity. The modern idea of government is taken from these diverse meanings of diet that stands for a political regime, a regimentation of society and a government of the body. Regulating the body, disciplining the soul and governing society were merged in political theories of social contract and the state.

Bodily fluids are potent, and they can have both negative and positive effects. Fluids exist in a transient world, and disrupt the stability of categories. The secretions of saintly bodies were collected by the faithful, and their healing properties were used by mothers to protect their children. The Sufi saints of North Africa offered protection from the evil eye through the fluids that flowed from their bodies during religious festivals. In Christianity, Mary's milk was a symbol of wealth and health, and the blood of Christ was a means of salvation. But blood and milk can also contaminate and disrupt social relations. Red symbolized danger; white, as in Mary's milk, brought comfort and sustenance. There has been a universal fear among men of female menstruation, because the leaking bodies of women are sources of pollution. In early colonial times, speculation about the reproductive processes of native peoples conjured up strange women who could avoid menstruation by having their bodies sliced from the armpit to the knee. The Puritan Cotton Mather, in his sermons on Uncleaness, located filth with sexual functions and the lower parts of the body, while the soul and the mind were in the upper sections. Moral pollution has been generally measured by physical uncleaness, which is wet and fluid. There was an important correlation between Gandhi's preoccupation with sex, diet and health reform, which illustrates the connections between the body politic and the individual organism and its management (Alter, 2000).

Bodily fluids that flow from the inside to the outside are dangerous, fearful and contaminating, because external fluids challenge our sense of order and orderliness. When internal liquids appear on the outside, they are certain portents of death, disease or change. Leaking things are a warning of an alien annunciation. The inside/outside and upper/lower divisions combine with wet/dry and red/white dichotomies to demarcate borders of social pollution. For example, the anatomy lesson was long condemned by the Church Fathers as anathema, because it exposed to the human eye what God as creator had chosen not to disclose visibly but to enclose bodily. Where such diabolical anatomical operations took place, they were inflicted on the bodies of criminals as a juridical and political punishment. The criminal body had a double death – first at the hands of the public executioner and, second, under the knife of the investigative surgeon.

Religious Paradigms of the Body

Religious institutions bind a people by their rituals and customs, and as a consequence religions constitute societies. Just as the swaddling bands of a child bind his or her body to the family, so religion binds the individual to society. The Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) were inextricably based on notions of generation and reproduction that occupy their core theologies and cosmologies. These religions were deeply patriarchal, and the contemporary secularization of family life, sexuality and the sexual division of labour have had profound, and largely corrosive, consequences for orthodox religious world-views. In modern secular societies, gay liberation and women's movements have articulated a range of claims for social equality and access to alternative sexual, familial or coupling arrangements, such as gay and lesbian marriage. These legal and scientific changes create the conditions for experiments in reproductive relationships that constitute a radical challenge to both traditional religion and conventional forms of the family. The rise of fundamentalism can be partly explained as a response to these changes, and it is for this reason that fundamentalists appear to be obsessed with sexual topics – homosexual practice, the role of women in society, the status of women in the family and adolescent sexual behaviour.

There have been, in the history of human societies, a number of important, more or less permanent, connections between religion, the body and sexual reproduction (Coakley, 1997). The core of these cosmological connections is the principle of generation and regeneration of the body. Social struggles over human reproduction have been reflected in controversies between matriarchy and patriarchy as forms of authority over the body, and these political controversies can be discerned even in the historical origins of the tradition of a 'high God'. There is much academic disagreement, obviously, about the origins of human mythologies. One view is that, with the development of agriculture, the symbolism and cults of Mother Earth and human fertility became socially dominant (Eliade, 1961). An alternative interpretation is that with the growth of agriculture, the plough breaks up the earth and makes it fertile. The plough is a phallic symbol that points to men taking gardening away from women and in ancient Sumerian mythology Enki, the male god of water (semen), became the Great Father. However, the development of the concept of a high god challenged many of these local fertility cults and occurred simultaneously in a number of regions of the world. This creative religious period from approximately 800 to 200 BC was an axial age, because it was the crucial turning point in the formation of civilizational complexes. Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Zoroaster and Isaiah, whose cosmological views had important common features, shaped the axial age in the emerging agrarian civilizations, where city life began to emerge. It was the cultural basis from which sprang the ethical, prophetic leaders of monotheism, which resulted eventually in the so-called 'religions of the book' in which divine revelation was recorded (Weber, 1952). The prophets of the axial age addressed human beings in the name of a divine moral being who could not be represented by an image and who could not be easily constrained or cajoled by ritual or magic. Jahweh, the God of the tribes of Israel, was a jealous God whose Name could not be named. Jahweh was opposed to idols and idolatry, and demanded unswerving commitment through a contractual relationship or covenant.

There is an important mythical role for a generative Father who is the patriarch of nations. In the Old Testament 'Jacob' and 'Israel' are interchangeable. With the evolution of the idea of sacred fatherhood, a range of problems about the body erupted. How are bodies produced and reproduced? If they fragment and decay, then redemption is a problem (Bynum, 1991). How can bodies be resurrected if they are incomplete? There have been (and continue to be) major political and social issues over the ownership and the authorship of bodies. Who owns bodies? Is there self-ownership (the principal doctrine of liberalism), does God own them (through a divine Fatherhood) or does the state own them (in benevolent despotism)? Matriarchy and patriarchy can be regarded as traditional principles for deciding the legitimacy and ownership of bodies, especially parental ownership and control of children. In these cosmological schemes, there were common homologies between the reproductive work of a creator God, the creative force of nature and reproduction with human bodies in family groups (Eliade,

1965). Mythologies have been constructed upon these generative homologies to form systems of dichotomous classification between red menstrual blood as a symbol of transmission between generations, and white semen and milk as symbols of food, sustenance and reproduction.

Jewish tradition held diverse views about women, marriage and sexuality (Biale, 1992). While the early Judeo-Christian teaching about women was not uniform, its legacy included a deeply negative understanding of women and sexuality. In the Genesis story, the original cooperative and companionate relationship between man and woman was replaced after the Fall by a relationship of domination. The Mosaic Law was addressed to a society in which women were household property and could not take decisions for themselves. Women thus appeared alongside domestic animals and children as chattels of the household. A wife who did not produce children was not fulfilling her duty and infertility was a religio-juridical ground for divorce. Barrenness in the Old Testament was a sign of divine disapproval, and polygyny, concubinage and prostitution were tolerated as concessions to male sexual energy. Because menstruation and childbirth were ritually unclean, women were frequently precluded from participating in cultic activities. Israelite marriage was a contract between separate families, and thus wives were dangerous to men, not only because they could manipulate men with their sexual charms, but also because they were recruited from outside the husband's family. These negative images of women and female bodies in the Old Testament have proved to be remarkably resilient historically.

The underlying principles of Christianity were patriarchal in the sense that the structure of Christian theology required the concept of Jesus as the Son of God in order to make sense of 'salvation history' as a redemptive act. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that human beings could be saved from sin. Because Christianity is fundamentally patriarchal, the Virgin Mary has an ambiguous status (Warner, 1983). In theological terms, the virginity of Mary was necessary in order for Christ to be without sin, but Christ also had to be of woman born in order to achieve human status, and thus to experience our world. Over time, Mary herself was removed from the possibility of any connection with sin, and became detached from an association with the Fall of Adam and Eve. The doctrine of Immaculate Conception was declared in 1854, and Mary was exempt from original sin.

Mary was ambiguous in other ways. She became, in a patriarchal world, the great medieval symbol of motherhood. In the 14th century, the visions of St Bridget of Sweden pictured the Virgin, following the birth of Christ, on her knees in worshipful adoration of the Child, and by the 15th century paintings of the adoration of the mother were common. The Virgin was also a vehicle in her own right of worship and adoration. The more she was exempt from sin, the more her status approximated that of Christ. In oppositional theology, she was often regarded as equal to Christ in the concept of co-redemption. Because she was spared from sin, she was also exempt from the physical experiences of the typical female – sexual intercourse, labour and childbirth. She was removed from basic physical activities except for one – the suckling of the infant Jesus. As a result, a cult emerged around the breast of the Virgin and the milk that flowed from her teat. The theme of the nursing Virgin or *Maria Lactans* became an important part of medieval cultic belief and practice. In the absence of a powerful female figure in the Gospels, medieval Christianity elevated the spiritual status of Mary, who became the great champion of procreation.

Globalization: The Diseased Body and Bio-economics

The implications of cloning and artificial reproduction for human rights are far reaching, and they have been addressed in academic debates about rights to reproduce. However, there is an emerging issue for the body and society that concerns the social consequences of medical science for ageing. In traditional societies, the relationship between resources (especially land and the food supply) and life expectancy was, more or less, regulated by a Malthusian logic. The possibility of extending the expectation of life in the rich societies of the North has clear Malthusian implications for the world as a whole. Because there is a very close relationship

between poverty and injustice, we should take this Malthusian question seriously, if we are to understand the relationship between bodies, rights and poverty. In conventional gerontology, the question about living forever might in practice mean living a full life in terms of achieving the average expectation of life. More recently, however, there has been considerable speculation as to whether medical science could reverse the ageing process. Between the 1960s and 1980s the conventional view of mainstream biology was that normal cells had a ‘replicative senescence’, that is normal tissues can only divide a finite number of times before entering a stage of quiescence. Cells were observed *in vitro* in a process of natural senescence, and eventually experiments *in vivo* produced a distinction between normal and pathological cells in terms of division. Paradoxically, pathological cells appeared to have no necessary limitation on replication, and ‘immortalization’ was the distinctive feature of a pathological cell line. Biologists concluded by extrapolation that finite cell division meant the ageing of the whole organism was inevitable. These findings confirmed that human life had an intrinsic and predetermined limit, and that it was pathology that described how certain cells might out-survive the inescapable senescence of cellular life.

This framework of ageing was eventually overturned by scientists who isolated human embryonic cells that were capable of continuous division in culture and showed no sign of the replicative crisis. Certain non-pathological cells (or stem cells) were capable of indefinite division, and hence were ‘immortalized’. The cultivation of these cells as an experimental form of life has challenged existing assumptions about the boundaries between the normal and the pathological, and between life and death. Stem cell research begins to define the arena within the body that has reserves of renewable tissue, and suggests that the limits of biological growth are not fixed or inflexible. The body has a surplus of stem cells capable of survival beyond the death of the organism. With these developments in bio-gerontology, the capacity of regenerative medicine to extend the limits of life becomes a plausible aspect of medicine. This interpretation of replication locates ageing as a shifting threshold between surplus and waste, between obsolescence and renewal.

Because the World Bank sees the ageing populations of the developed world as a threat to economic growth, there is considerable interest in the possibilities of stem cell research as an aspect of regenerative medicine. Companies operating in the Caribbean are already offering regenerative medicine as part of a holiday package, designed to alleviate the negative consequences of degenerative diseases such as multiple sclerosis or diabetes. The idea of bio-tourism might become an addendum to sexual tourism in the world of advanced bio-capitalism. One sign of the times was an academic event hosted by the Cambridge University Life Extension and Rejuvenation Society in October 2004 at which Dr Aubrey de Grey attempted to demonstrate that human beings could live forever, by which he meant that, within 25 years, medical science will possess the capacity to repair all known effects of ageing. The average age at death of people born thereafter would exceed 5000 years! In fact expectations of significant breakthroughs in the treatment of disease and significant profits by the large pharmaceutical companies after the decoding of the human genome in 2001 were disappointing. The pharmaceutical industry was also hesitant to invest in new products that were designed for conditions that affected small numbers of people. The fears associated with ‘personalized medicine’ have begun to disappear, because it is obvious that there are generic processes from which the ‘genomics’ companies can profit. Genetics-based medicine is poised to find better diagnostic tests for, and generic solutions to, such conditions as diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, heart problems and breast cancer. These advances will certainly radically enhance life expectancy.

The human consequences of these changes will be rapid and radical, but little thought has been given to the long-term social and political consequences of extended longevity. Although it is mere speculation, it can be proposed that the social outcomes of a new pattern of ageing would include: growing world inequality between the rejuvenated North and the naturally ageing South, which would further inflame frustration and resentment of deprived social groups; the inability of the labour market to cope with the increasing number of ‘survivors’ and similar crises in housing markets; the inability of the food supply to keep up with

population expansion, which would require increasing use of genetically modified food, increasing the dependency of the developing world on the rich, geriatric North; there would be intergenerational conflicts over resources, in which existing economic crises around pensions and housing would increase; and, finally, if we assume that genomic sciences could reduce mortality, this would, at least in the short term, increase morbidity as chronic illness and geriatric diseases increased.

The burden of dependency would have negative consequences for health care systems and economic growth. The prospect of indefinite life would thus raise an acute Malthusian crisis. These changes imply an interesting change from early to late modernity. In the early stages of capitalism, the role of medical science was to improve health care to make the working class healthy in order to have an efficient labour force. Late capitalism does not need a large labour force at full employment and working full time, because technology has made labour more efficient. In the new biotechnological environment, disease is no longer a negative force in the economy but, on the contrary, an aspect of the factors of production.

It is inconceivable that we could live 'forever'. More realistically, if life expectancy in the advanced economies increased by, for example, ten years over the next five years by the application of genetic science through the medium of regenerative medicine, then the global consequences could be very damaging. The unintended consequences might include a major depletion of natural resources and an increase in the speed of environmental decline through increased industrialization, which would be necessary to support a rapid increase in the world's population. The negative consequences would be experienced primarily by people living in the developing world. This economic and social crisis would result from our inability to find renewable energy. A pessimistic interpretation of this Malthusian crisis would suggest that the exhaustion of the earth's resources can never be finally overcome, because waste is unavoidable. *Our* enjoyment of longevity (the right to life) would be at the expense of *their* social and economic security (given a Malthusian assumption about scarcity, relatively fixed resources and the entropy law). It follows that vulnerability and precariousness are inescapable features of human life, for which we need human rights as the basis of personal security. However, it also follows that, for example, there must be limits to the right to life. It cannot be the case that I have a right to live indefinitely at your expense. This limitation points to the importance of the social dimension of rights, that the exercise of rights must be to our collective advantage.

Conclusion: Bio-politics

In contemporary society, the body is in one sense disappearing; it is being converted into an information system whose genetic code can be manipulated and sold as a commercial product in the new biotech economy. In global terms, the disorders and diseases of the human body have become productive in a post-industrial economy. In terms of media debate, the new reproductive technologies, cloning and genetic screening are important illustrations of public concern about the social consequences of the new genetics. Improvements in scientific understanding of genetics have already had major consequences for the circumstances under which people reproduce, and genetic surveillance and forensic genetics may also transform criminal investigation and the policing of societies. The code of the body becomes a major tool of criminal investigations.

These changes in biomedicine illustrate Foucault's perspective in terms of a division between the study of the individual body and the study of populations (Foucault, 1979). In the first distinction he referred to 'an anatomic-politics of the human body', consisting of disciplines of the body. In the second distinction, he discussed 'a bio-politics of the population', which are the regulatory controls over populations. Anatomic-politics constitute the micro-politics of identity. The clinical examination of individuals is part of the anatomic-politics of society. The bio-politics of populations used demography, epidemiology and public health sciences to examine and manage whole populations. The anatomic-politics of medicine involves the discipline of individuals; the bio-politics of society achieves a surveillance and regulation

of populations. Foucault's study of the body was thus organized around the notions of discipline and regulatory controls or 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1991). The new genetics provide enhanced opportunities for governmentality as a strategy of political surveillance and economic production. The government of the body, as a consequence, remains a critical issue in the management and regulation of individuals and populations in contemporary society.

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Embodied Habitus

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Keywords communication, local knowledge, martial art, practical sense, tacit knowing

In 1924 the German philosopher Eugen Herrigel (1884–1955) arrived in Japan to teach at the Tohoku University in Sendai. While lecturing on philosophy and the classics, he became a student of the famous *kyudo* (Japanese archery) master Kenzō Awa (1880–1939). The reason why Herrigel chose *kyudo* was that he thought, erroneously as it turned out, that his experience in target shooting with rifles would be useful. Later, in 1936, he looked back on his *kyudo* training under the guidance of Awa in one of his lectures in Berlin (Herrigel, 1936).

The training began by learning the proper posture and motion of drawing the bow. In this practice, the master advised Herrigel not to exert

himself physically. Herrigel didn't understand what the master meant. How can one draw the bow without exerting oneself? The master replied: 'You must not draw the bow with your physical strength; you must do it with your mind.' It took about a year for Herrigel to learn the proper way of drawing the bow with proper posture and breathing, keeping his arm and shoulder muscles thoroughly relaxed.

The next step was to shoot an arrow. Herrigel had trouble with the timing of discharging the arrow and the master advised him not to think of the timing: 'Your intention of getting the timing right causes your trouble. Don't make any conscious effort of shooting. You must abandon your intentions and just wait for the time when the arrow leaves by itself.' Being baffled, Herrigel asked: 'Who on earth shoots the arrow, then?' The master's answer was: 'Once you have understood that, you will have no further need of me.'

The final step was to hit the target at a distance of 60 meters. The master warned Herrigel not to take aim at the target. Again he was baffled: 'How can I hit the target without aiming at it?' The master replied:

It is not very important to hit the target. What is essential is to shoot in the proper way, that is to say, with the proper posture and in a state of mind free from all ideas and thoughts. Since an arrow shot in the proper way naturally hits the target, you need not, or rather should not, aim at the target.

Herrigel was still not convinced, and so the master demonstrated what he meant by hitting an unseen target in the dark.

In this way they came to trust each other, and Herrigel made great progress. While often baffled by the master's words, through their practice together, which served as a nonverbal channel of communication, Herrigel gradually came to understand what Awa meant, and in the long run they could construct a deeper mutual understanding (presumably accompanied by some happy misunderstandings). When he left Japan in 1929, Herrigel was granted the fifth *dan* (grade), to recognize his achievement.

Herrigel's lecture in 1936 is, in a sense, a story of the grave difficulties in communication between the neo-Kantian philosopher from Germany and the master of a traditional Japanese martial art, and the overcoming of those difficulties. It is clear that the difficulty is based partly on their cultural backgrounds. The teachings of Awa are not necessarily peculiar to him, but rather are rooted in the culture of martial arts in Japan. We can trace this cultural tradition back to such famous texts as *The Book of Five Rings* (*Gorin no Sho*, 1643) by Musashi Miyamoto and *The Book of Family Traditions on the Art of War* (*Heihō Kaden Sho*, 1632) by Munenori Yagyu, both of which emphasize the importance of practicing 'an attitude of not dwelling on anything' or 'an empty and free-flowing mind'. Only in this state of mind does one's body act freely without any conscious effort and 'one strikes spontaneously and naturally scores'. All the learning and practice are 'for the purpose of reaching this state. Once you have learned this successfully, learning disappears' (Miyamoto, 1993).

The difficulty of communication between Awa and Herrigel, however, is not solely attributed to their cultural backgrounds. It is not easy for any culture to explain verbally its embodied habitus, or what Marcel Mauss (1950) termed 'techniques of the body'. Awa tried to convey 'the practical sense' of *kyudo* to Herrigel. As Pierre Bourdieu states:

... the practical sense, or, if you prefer, what sports players call a feel for the game, as the

practical mastery of the logic or of the immanent necessity of a game [is] a mastery acquired by experience of the game, and one which works outside conscious control and discourse (in the way that, for instance, techniques of the body do). (1990: 61)

It is natural that Awa should often murmur at Herrigel's questions: 'How should I explain what you can understand only through your experience?'

The embodied habitus and practical sense can be viewed as forms of knowledge. Noting that 'we can know more than we can tell', Michael Polanyi refers to 'tacit knowledge', which is difficult to put into words and often takes the form of 'practical knowledge' as seen in 'the performance of skills, whether artistic, athletic, or technical' (1966: 4–7).

When we try to explain this kind of tacit, practical knowledge, we tend to seek help from some field of verbally constructed 'theoretical' knowledge. As Herrigel noted, Awa often relied on vocabularies of Zen Buddhism, as was often the case in the teachings of the traditional Japanese martial arts. And Herrigel himself tried, in his later book *Zen in the Art of Archery* (1953), to explain his practical knowledge of *kyudo* by using the theoretical knowledge of Zen Buddhism. To give another example, in his book *Ways of the Hand* (1978), David Sudnow used phenomenology and ethnomethodology to describe how his hands came to learn the practical sense of playing jazz piano. He could just as well have referenced Zen Buddhism.

Each field of practical knowledge, ranging from cooking, weaving and pottery to martial arts training, piano playing and so on, has been verbalized and transmitted in many different ways. Not only differences in culture and language but also various sociological factors like social class, gender, generation, education and microsociological networks bring forth a wide variety of 'local knowledges'. Any optimistic attempt to systematize or 'centralize' this bewildering diversity will result in sacrificing the 'rich localities' of knowledge in the name of 'global knowledge'. The plurality and incommensurability of 'knowledges', especially of the embodied, practical ones, should be recognized and respected. At the same time, however, we must not ignore the possibility of interchange and interconnection among them, as is demonstrated by the story of Herrigel's training.

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Transgender

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Keywords queer theory, transgender, transsexuality

The shifting fortunes of the term transgender since the early 1990s testify to the faultlines and methodological impasses in the theorization of gender across numerous disciplines. At the same time transgender marks the forging and transformation of alliances and collectivities in political activism. Transgender is one of the latest in a series of terms which, in the social sciences, have sought to name counter-normative materializations of gender on individual bodies, through practices of gender-crossing either in matters of dress and presentation, and/or in terms of body modification. Transgender is an umbrella term, which emerged partly in contestation to the hegemonic uses of the term 'transsexuality' in both medical and social science discourse.

Since the work of Harold Garfinkel, the study of transsexual experiences has become a kind of royal road for the theorization of gender as performance by sociologists espousing a version of what would gradually become identifiable as social constructionism. Garfinkel's study of 'Agnes', a young male-to-female transsexual whom he believed to have been intersexual, was at the centre of his work on gender as a 'doing', a skilled choreography of micro-interactions (Garfinkel, 1967). Since Garfinkel, the observation of transsexuals' 'doings of gender' has allowed social scientists a privileged insight into the constructedness of normative gender performances. Feminist sociologists Kessler and McKenna used transsexuality to clinch the argument on the social enforcement of gender norms: for Kessler and McKenna, the diagnosis of transsexuality helps stabilize the social construction of gender and essentially

licenses the surgical manipulation of bodies so that their unruly materialities can be aligned with the transsexual's gender performance (Kessler and McKenna, 1978). A number of essays and book-length studies on transsexuality followed from there, arguing that transsexuality is a medicalization and pathologization of gender deviance. In these arguments, transsexuals were seen to collude with a hetero-normative medical establishment insofar as they were only able to obtain sex reassignment surgery if they could pass successfully through stereotyped gender performances, thus reinforcing the gender binary.

In a celebrated 1991 article, transsexual activist academic Sandy Stone called for a resistance to the medicalized normalization of transsexuals and particularly for a refusal to erase their pre-op histories (Stone, 1991). On a similar note others clamoured for a rendering visible of discordant and uneasy histories of gendered embodiment as a retort to the normativity of gender scripts. 'Transgender activism' became a site for the making visible of such discordant embodiments. The term 'transgender' is usually traced to Virginia Prince, the head of Tri-Ess (a North American cross-dressers' association): in the 1970s Prince coined the word 'transgenderist' in order to differentiate between cross-dressing practices and the then emergent medicalized identity of the transsexual. In its 1990s' activist reincarnation, transgender came to function as an umbrella term signifying gender non-conformity, so making possible a broad alliance among different gender-variant people, including cross-dressers and transsexuals (see Feinberg, 1992). In the context of postmodern critiques of identity, transgender activism forged a challenge to hegemonic gender binaries and their naturalizing force and invoked the possibility of fluid mobile and provisional enactments of gender. Known for her work on

'female masculinities', queer theorist Judith (Jack) Halberstam claimed that 'the transgender body emerges . . . as futurity itself, a kind of heroic fulfillment of postmodern promises of gender flexibility' (Halberstam, 2005: 18). Ironically, a lot of the emphasis on transgender practices as exemplifying the pluralization of gender comes from a very particular reading of the work of feminist philosopher Judith Butler, herself a foundational reference in queer theory. As Kessler and McKenna had done, Butler argued that gender is performative, but she then also deconstructed the distinction between gender and the sexed body by suggesting that bodies are produced through uneven repetitions of gender discourses (Butler, 1990). However, in the circulation of her texts for trans activism, the compulsive and compulsory nature of such performances of gender was often dropped in favour of a vision of precisely those 'postmodern promises of gender flexibility' of which Halberstam talks.

Transgender studies have found particularly fertile ground in anthropology: here Anglo-American anthropologists have scoured non-western cultures for the opportunities they allegedly provide for roles outside the gender binary. The best-studied examples are the berdache (or two-spirit people) in Native American cultures, the hijra in India, the kathoe in Thailand, the xanith of Oman, and the mahu in the Pacific islands (Herdt, 1996). References to such 'third-gender' figures have found their way into popular literature where they frequently become decontextualized talismans for Anglo-American transgender activists. Accordingly, while such anthropological research relativizes western hegemonic gender systems and challenges the innateness of gender categories, it has been critiqued for facilitating the appropriation of rich local cultural plots and doing violence to their lived reality, so that they may fit western agendas and preconceptions concerning 'third genders'.

While queer and postmodern theory is credited with the initiation of transgender activism and studies, a new generation of trans activists and academics are distancing themselves from the queer theoretical emphasis on the mobility and deconstruction of gender, claiming that such perspectives elide the materiality of trans bodies and the practices of embodiment which constitute trans experiences in their specificity. For Jay Prosser in particular, such theorizations of the transgender experience as a challenge to normative gendering ignore the strength and intransigence of what many transsexuals see as their 'true' gender identity (Prosser, 1998). Indeed a flourishing ethnographic scholarship is currently beginning to

chart the modalities of transgender embodiments (e.g. Ekins and King, 1999).

Additionally, scholars across the humanities and social sciences are being drawn into the gravitational pull of neuroscience for ways of making sense of the materiality of gender. While neuroscience is generating new paradigms for our comprehension of embodied materiality, media coverage of neurobiological findings often works to reinforce a hetero-normative understanding of gender. Thus, the provisional findings of small-scale studies suggesting that gender is hormonally hard-wired in the structuration of the brain have gained enormous publicity and have been used to discredit the scholarship on the social construction of gender. The popularity of such findings notwithstanding, a turn to biology, as the work of Anne Fausto-Sterling has amply demonstrated, need not work as an essentializing gesture: rather than using biology as a bedrock which shores up sex dimorphism, Fausto-Sterling deploys developmental systems theory to argue that brain maps and behaviours are not inborn but emergent qualities, which develop relationally, as part of social systems (Fausto-Sterling, 2000).

It remains to be seen how the emerging empirical work on trans experiences will respond to queer theory's earlier lionization of practices of transgendering. While queer theorists tended to see trans bodies as manifesting a pluralization of genders, Toril Moi has recently proposed that we eschew the term gender altogether for a phenomenological reading of embodiment as a series of situations in which we relate to the world in 'the concrete historical and experiencing body' (Moi, 1999: 75). Some recent work on transgendered embodiment attempts to embrace both a phenomenological and a post-structuralist framework in order to do justice to trans lives. Henry Rubin's study of female-to-male transsexuals, for example, attempts this difficult negotiation: in part of his study he discusses his subjects' identities as an effect of hegemonic discourses around gender, while in the other part he listens to the ways in which they inhabit maleness as distinct from gender roles (Rubin, 2003).

While new research on trans embodiment focuses on the materiality of embodiment either through neurobiology or through phenomenology, it is important too to reflect upon the psychological processes through which we invest our bodies with meaning. Psychoanalytic readings of transgender experiences have been roundly denounced by transgender activists as productive of pathologizing discourse, but this is perhaps too hasty a dismissal. While psychoanalysis has often been used to shore up hetero-normativity, psychoanalytic readings of transgendered subjectivity remind

us of the unconscious phantasies which participate in our embodiment (see Dean, 2000). In so doing, they propose that embodiment, whether transgendered or not, is a process that no singular language (be it that of neurobiology, phenomenology, or indeed psychoanalysis itself) can fully translate.

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Body Image/Body without Image

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Keywords consumer culture, identity, movement, proprioception, reflexivity

The double character of the human body has often been noted – we are a body and we have a body; we see and are seen: our body is the platform from which we see the world and also an object in that world which is seen by others. This simple insight can be taken in a number of directions. On the one hand, this division of the seeing/seen can be used to retain a strong division between body and mind with the assumption that the body can be known and governed by the mind as in the metaphor of the body as a platform for seeing. It is assumed that the mind can actively marshal the body to facilitate the construction of a satisfactory body image which will enhance self-worth and self-identity.

Against this sense of a docile body which can be reflexively monitored, disciplined and altered by the mind, there are those who advocate the investigation of the ways that the mind itself is embodied and delimited by the 'horizons of the flesh'. Here our basic analytical conceptual knowledge of the world is seen as relying on metaphors which derive from bodily experience and which become embedded in language, suggesting the need to be aware of 'the body in the mind' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Yet if we think of the body as generative, the emphasis can shift to the body's potential to vary, to be inventive, to be always in motion: as something that moves and feels (Massumi, 2002).

This suggests that it is insufficient to see the body as merely a surface to be inscribed, as a carrier of social signs. The body is clearly a potential, in process and movement, something which goes beyond itself. Yet it is also understood as an

image – something that is a resemblance or likeness, a mirroring. Indeed it has been argued following Paul Shilder that ‘the body image is *essential* to the body, which cannot even become a body without this reduplication of itself’ (Ferguson, 1997a: 6). At the same time, the body image is more than a picture of how we look, a mental construct of our appearance. It is not a fixed projection – rather a variety of images that have accumulated from the past. Indeed if we examine the ‘labyrinth of unfinished cultures’, it is possible to detect in history a range of body images. It has been suggested that more recently there has been a move from the classic bourgeois ego with its closed and singular body image, to an emptying of the body image, the body as a shifting surface on which enigmatic traces are recorded (Ferguson, 1997b). A more ambiguous and open body image is related to a more ambiguous and open sense of self.

This contrasts with influential sociological theories of the body such as that of Anthony Giddens (1991), in which the body, formerly seen as a fixed part of nature, is now in ‘late modernity’ open to ‘colonization’ and reconstitution through a range of technologies and body projects such as plastic surgery, body maintenance, health fitness and diet regimes. Giddens’s assumptions about the reflexivity of actors investing in body projects in order to enhance their self-identity clearly chimes with many of the ways which consumer culture advertising and self-help transformational literature and advice columns present the body (Featherstone, 1982), especially the way the body is objectified and seen as governable by the self within consumer culture. Yet the fact that we are surrounded by images of youth, fitness and beauty within magazines, advertising, television and the urban landscape does not mean that people necessarily believe or follow the naive cause and effect self-improvement logic with its ‘if you look good you feel good’ rationale.

The assumption is that people reflexively evaluate their bodies and appearance and operate with a relatively accurate and coherent body image – in effect the body has been objectified and assessed as ready for transformation. This is akin to the classic bourgeois ego with its closed body image: able to take charge and transform its body and identity, a position central to the narratives of individualism, rational choice and market behaviour. It is interesting here to note that one of the main theorists of identity Giddens draws on is Erik H. Erikson, a strong proponent of ego identity and advocate of our capacity to assess, direct and control the direction of identity development through life.

Yet it would seem that appearance and body

image are not always so easily objectified and subjected to the direction of the self. Shelly Budgeon (2003), for example, in research on young women in Britain, mentions that attitudes to cosmetic surgery suggest that altering the body was more about transforming the way the body was lived, not how it looked. There was a greater sense of the lived body as a process, with surgery enhancing the sense of agency, with the emphasis on ‘doing’ rather than ‘looking’. This goes beyond the sense of ‘me the subject’ directing ‘the body as object’ (or project), or calculatingly adopting disciplinary technologies to enhance appearance; a more ambivalent, less coherent sense of embodied self.

It is possible to suggest that there are two main types of body image operating within contemporary consumer culture. Firstly, we have the body image as the physical appearance of the body, based upon the body as object: a static image, in which the movement and unfolding of the body are captured as in a photographic image – a still snapshot. This well-formed image is akin to the photographic proof of one’s body image and correlated self-identity that is made available within consumer culture advertising and publicity of the success of ‘make-overs’ and ‘shape-overs’. This objectively achieved effect is very much in line with the emphasis upon vision to the exclusion of other senses: we are what we look, and physical appearance is everything.

This first type can be related to Massumi’s (2002) discussion of *mirror-vision* which relates to seeing oneself as others see one and entails seeing various frozen poses of oneself. Massumi contrasts this with a second type, *movement-vision*. Here there is not a generalizing subject, a self-identical observer who recognizes the object as the same. Rather the subject-object symmetry of mirror-vision is broken and there is the space of movement, of dislocated perspectives and transformation. Massumi sees this accumulation of relative perspectives as involving the transformation of subject–object relations, giving rise to *the body without an image*. This is not just a nonlinear form of vision, but something which enlists other bodily senses and sensibilities.

Important here is *proprioception* – not tactile or visceral sensibility, but the sensibility which relates to muscles and ligaments, which register conditions of movement and translate the body’s encounters with objects into a muscular memory of relationality, a cumulative memory of skill, habit and posture. Proprioceptive memory operates within the dimensions of the flesh: we feel the tenseness of muscles, the pull of joints, the pressure resistance from an accelerating vehicle. In contrast to the eyes, which operate within the

space of *mirror-vision*, and tend not to register movement, but rather interrupt movement to produce formed images, Massumi (2002: 59) argues that 'movement-vision is sight turned proprioceptive, the eyes reabsorbed into the flesh through a black hole in the geometry of empirical space'. Here vision is far from the 'all-seeing eye', but rather acts as a mixed mode of perception which registers both form and movement; for it to enter into the realm of pure movement it must discard form for the flesh, with movement-vision entailing the flexing of the 'retinal-muscle' along with other proprioceptive sensations.

Furthermore, if we turn from considering the spatial dimension of proprioception to its operation in time, the body without image entails the eclipse of the subject in emotion as we encounter an interruption, an event. Here the body without image registers via an additional sensibility to that of proprioception: the visceral sensibility (interoception) registers excitations from the five 'exeroceptive' senses before they can be fully processed by the brain. We think here of the immediacy of a 'gut feeling', which precedes our sense of sight or sound. As Massumi (2002: 61) puts it, 'movement-vision as proprioception subtracts qualified form from movement; viscosity subtracts quality as such from excitation. It registers *intensity*.' Viscerality is seen as the perception of suspense, which jolts the body into a 'space of passion', to register degrees of intensity. The 'unit of passion' resulting from this coupling together of the visceral and proprioceptive sensibilities, Massumi tells us, 'can be called an *affect*: the ability to affect and openness to be affected'. He adds:

An *emotion* or *feeling* is a recognized affect, an identified intensity as reinjected into stimulus-response paths, into action-reaction circuits of infolding and externalization – in short, into subject–object relations. Emotion is a contamination of empirical space by affect, which belongs to the body without an image. (Massumi, 2002: 61)

The capacity to move between different registers, between the mirror-image and the movement-image, between affect and emotion, between the subject–object and the sensation of visceral and proprioceptive intensities, then, suggests we need more work to understand the unmediated participation of the flesh in the image. It points to the ways in which body image and the body without image are linked and the inability to recover or salvage the latter into the former. Those who write on embodied habitus such as Pierre Bourdieu, when he talks about the movement of the body in sport; or Inoue Shun (this issue), when he analyses the struggles of the German philoso-

pher Eugen Herrigel in trying to learn and make sense of the embodied habitus needed for the art of *kyudo* (Japanese archery); or Michael Taussig (1991), when he extends Benjamin's account of the *flâneur* to discuss the 'tactile eye', have the sense of the body without image and its role in habitus formation and deformation.

If, as Massumi argues, affect is central to the understanding of our information and image-based contemporary culture, then we also need to address the question of new media. It has been contended by Hansen (2004) that the new digital technologies, far from heralding the elimination of the body to produce a world of disembodied information in which human beings become obsolete, will actually enhance the role of affectivity and the role of the body as the crucial creative filter of images. Hansen draws on Bergson's discussion of the affective pre-discursive body as the active source of meaning which creatively selects from the external universal flux of images. The importance of the body as a framer of information becomes more central with digitalized media. The new media enhance the capacity for the displacement of vision as the primary sense: in effect vision becomes 'haptic', or proprioceptive in the sense mentioned in the above discussion of Massumi. This points to 'a shift from a dominant occularcentric aesthetic to a haptic aesthetic rooted in embodied affectivity', as we find in contemporary media art, to the centrality of the body in the framing or 'forging' of the digital image (Hansen, 2004: 11). This is a long way from the visual bias and representational mode we find in the concept of body image in the approach generated by Paul Schiller and also the popular psychology of self-help consumer culture reflexive body projects and body image work. It points to the need to conceptualize the body without image and the movement from ocular perception to affectivity and sensory complexity in the formation of our embodied knowledge. The theorization of this process is even more important in a global context in which more people will invariably rely on and use new media, not just as a mode of entertainment, but in the context of their education, work and generation of their means of orientation.

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The Aesthetic

Richard Shusterman

Abstract First coined in modernity, the aesthetic is a vague, polysemic and contested concept whose complexities arise from the variety of the ways it has been defined in the history of its theorization, but also in its formative prehistory in theories of art and beauty that preceded its modern coinage. After noting key points of that prehistory, the article traces three major modern tendencies in construing the aesthetic: as a special mode of sensory perception or experience that is relevant to life in general; as a special faculty or exercise of taste focused on judgments of beauty and related qualities such as the sublime; and as a theory (or essential quality) of fine art. The idea of aesthetic disinterestedness is critically examined, and contrasts between the concept of art in Western modernity and in pre-modern and Asian culture are also considered.

Keywords aesthetic, art, beauty, disinterestedness, function, sensory perception, taste

I

Aesthetics is conventionally identified in academia with the philosophy of art and beauty. But despite the considerable consensus on such definition, the concept of the aesthetic remains deeply ambiguous, complex and essentially contested. This is partly because the notions of art and beauty themselves involve such ambiguity, complexity and contestation, but also because the notion of the aesthetic has an especially complicated, heterogeneous, conflicted and disordered genealogy. Though the term was coined by Alexander Baumgarten (1998) in the middle of the 18th century to define his project of a science of sensory perception (*aesthesis*), the theoretical roots and topics of aesthetics can be traced back to ancient philosophy where they receive their first substantive formulation in Plato's seminal theories of beauty and of art.

There is already a very strong tension in Plato's accounts of beauty and art. Beauty plays an extremely positive role in Plato, serving as an exemplar of the very highest level of the ideal Forms and associated with truth and the good. Moreover, beauty is seen as the inspiration and goal of philosophy itself. In the *Phaedrus* it is characterized as the clearest, most understandable Form, and in the *Symposium*, Plato describes the philosopher as a master of erotics who ascends from the love of beautiful bodies to the love of beautiful deeds and discourses, and finally to a vision of Beauty itself from which he himself can give birth to the beautiful.

In contrast, art – in our modern sense of the fine arts – fares miserably. Defining such arts as *mimesis* (typically translated as imitation though sometimes also as representation), Plato (1998) denounces them as an imperfect imitation of the forms of the phenomenal world, which for him are themselves but a distorted imitation of the ideal rational Forms that constitute true reality. Art is thus condemned both ontologically and epistemologically as an imitation of an imitation that distorts the truth it pretends to present. Plato further condemns mimetic art on psychological, ethical and political grounds. By appealing to the lower, emotional part of the soul and inciting it with passions, art disrupts the rational psychological order that should prevail and thus corrupts character and leads to improper behavior. Since political order and justice are intimately interdependent with the order of proper moral

psychology, mimetic art (at least of the typical kinds criticized by Plato) represents a political danger; art's vivid depiction of war's horrors and love's delights could, for example, sway soldiers from their duties.

Plato never really considers art on aesthetic grounds for to do so would mean introducing criteria that might give it more autonomy, and art's autonomy and social prestige were exactly what Plato wanted to undermine in order to establish the hegemony of philosophy. For art, in the form of poetry, held sway as the highest cultural authority for purveying wisdom, a position that philosophy wished to assume. Philosophy, with Plato, defined art in negative terms to make itself look superior and relegate art to the status of a dangerous frivolity that needed to be kept apart from the serious order of life, even to the point of banishment from Plato's ideal Republic. Defining art as an imperfect imitation not only helped to demean art but also to conceal the fact that Plato's philosophy itself imitated many aspects of art – the concern for rational form and coherence, the satisfactions of imagination and specularly (that generated a 'spectator theory of knowledge'), and the interpretation of the meaning of experience and events. In ancient neo-Platonism, notably that of Plotinus, beauty retained its extreme superiority to art, since artworks always involved materiality, which involved a falling off from the higher realm of ideal Forms, and thus to some extent always marred or distorted the ideal beauty that art sought to express.

Aristotle (1968) admirably defended art from Plato's extreme attack by showing the cognitive value of *mimesis* (in terms of its being a natural, primary means of learning), by arguing that art imitated the essential and not mere superficialities, and by introducing the doctrine of *catharsis* to show how art's arousal of the passions could be a good thing since they are expurgated within the protected context of art's experience. Just as significant, however, was Aristotle's explicit introduction of principles for formalistic analysis and evaluation of artworks, most notably works of tragedy. These principles, which refer to the various elements involved in the object represented, the means of representation, and the manner of representation (i.e. respectively plot, character, thought; diction and melody; and spectacle) demonstrated the usefulness of independent, compositional criteria for evaluating art that were not reducible to ontology, epistemology, psychology, morality or politics. The belief in such criteria – significantly linked to properties of form, expression and quality – played an important role in modern theories of the aesthetic.

Despite Aristotle's theoretical measures to rehabilitate art and *mimesis*, he continued the Platonic strategy of subordinating art to philosophy, regarding the former as providing only a shallower version of the latter's truth and insisting on art's isolation from the serious business of life. As Aristotle's theory of catharsis emphasized that art should arouse passions only to ensure that they be purged, without harming character or society, so his definition of art as *poiesis* (ποίησις) as contrasted with *praxis* (πραχίς) further isolated art from the sphere of ethics and social and political practice. For Aristotle, art as *poiesis* meant external making, the creation of objects outside the self (whose end and value were in the objects made), while *praxis* or ethical action (which has its end and value in itself and in its agent) both derives from the agent's character and reciprocally helps shape it (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, 1140a1–1140b25).

In speaking of ancient theories of art in terms of *mimesis* and *poiesis*, we need to recall that the Greek word for art, in its most general sense, was *techne* (τεχνη), which Latin rendered as *ars*. Both terms go well beyond our modern notion of fine art but instead signified any systematic skill or discipline of knowledge, and this general meaning is still present in English as when we speak of the liberal arts or the martial arts. This same wider meaning is also still present in the German term for art, *Kunst* (which derives from *können*, to know), though the term is now, like 'art', most often used to designate more narrowly the *schöne Künste* or fine arts. The same general notion of art as skill or knowledge can be found in ancient East Asian culture, as in the Confucian notion of the six arts (yi 藝) which includes arts such as mathematics, archery and charioteering (see Ames and Rosemount, 1998). The identification of art with the narrower conception of fine art is the product of Western modernity, which has subsequently been

imported also into modern Japanese and Chinese culture, just as these cultures have imported the Western idea of the aesthetic for which they have had to invent new words.

II

Historically, one of the major theoretical forces that pushed the concept of art to evolve towards its current identification with fine art was the idea of the aesthetic and the theories and ideologies it engendered. The notion of the aesthetic emerged from a combination of currents in early modern philosophy (in both the rationalist and empiricist traditions), as well as from dissatisfaction with the inadequacies of the traditional discipline of rhetoric and of metaphysically realist accounts of beauty for treating questions relating to the evolving cultural fields of art and taste. While ancient and scholastic philosophy regarded beauty as a real property of things in the world, Descartes' definition of real material properties in terms of extension and mathematical measurement, coupled with the empiricist insistence on the subjective dimension of our sensory perception, initiated what could be called a *subjectivization* of beauty.

The notion of beauty came to be primarily explored under the more subject-centered categories of theories of sensory (aesthetic) perception (Baumgarten) and theories of taste (Shaftesbury, Hume, Alison, Kant, etc.) 'The end of aesthetics', writes Baumgarten, 'is the perfection of sensory cognition as such, this implying beauty' (1998: §14). Moreover, interest in perceived qualities of value other than beauty – such as the sublime (as highlighted especially by Burke, 1998, and Kant, 1952) and the picturesque – and growing worries about whether there existed a special faculty of taste, eventually led to the primacy of the aesthetic as a special mode of perception. Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (1952), widely regarded as the most pivotal and influential work of modern aesthetics, centrally deploys and intimately identifies the notions of taste and the aesthetic. 'The judgement of taste is aesthetic' and its 'determining ground [of pleasure or displeasure] *cannot be anything other than subjective*', though the disinterested and nonconceptual nature of this pleasure and judgment should, Kant argued, make them universally shared (1952: 41–2). Later, however, the idealist and intellectualist trends of 19th-century philosophy established the clear primacy of the aesthetic over taste as the umbrella concept for explaining our appreciation of art and nature, just as it elevated art above nature as the privileged focus for aesthetic judgment and inquiry. Hegel (1993: 3, 5, 9), who identified aesthetics narrowly as the 'Philosophy of Fine Art' (thus excluding natural beauty), was especially important in this privileging of fine art. His idealist, intellectualist ambition could not accept aesthetics as a realm of mere taste but instead conceived it as a 'scientific' discipline that addressed the high truths expressed in art. Natural beauty, he argued, did not have the deep meaning and truth that art had, and was also 'too open to *vagueness* and too destitute of a *criterion*'. Fine art, in contrast, along with religion and philosophy, conveys 'the most comprehensive truths of the mind' and the 'profoundest intuitions and ideas'.

In the evolution of aesthetics from Baumgarten to Hegel, we can see three distinct axes for understanding the aesthetic. Baumgarten's epistemological-scientific approach construed aesthetics as a general science of sensory perception that was involved in discerning and producing beauty. Though beauty was important to the field, the emphasis of the aesthetic (as reflected in its etymological root) was more on its mode of perception or consciousness, and the scope of aesthetics was much wider than art, including not only natural beauty but also our daily practices. Baumgarten thus advocated improved aesthetic perception (achieved through various forms of training) not simply for fine arts but as a way of improving our general, including practical, functioning. In Kant, we find aesthetics as a theory of taste that emphasizes beauty and the sublime in nature (with respect to which judgments of taste were alleged to be purer) and in art (where their purity was marred by representational, conceptual meanings). But Kant sharply distinguished the aesthetic from the realm of truth and from practical or ethical matters. In Hegel, aesthetics is defined as the philosophy of fine art. He notes the perceptual etymology of the term 'aesthetic' only to brand this meaning as irrelevant, just as he rejects the term 'kallistic' (from the Greek word for beauty, κάλλος) as

too general for designating the aesthetic field, because he claims the science of aesthetics should deal only with ‘artistic beauty’, while making its prime focus ‘the highest ideas’ that art presents through its beautiful ‘sensuous forms’ (1993: 3, 9).

The genealogy of aesthetics thus provides at least three different (though sometimes overlapping) defining themes for this discipline: sensory perception, beauty and similar concepts of taste such as the sublime, and art. The first of these themes has been the least influential in modern aesthetics, and the final topic – art – has, since Hegel, been the most dominant, especially when the 20th century began to display a positive disregard for, or rejection of, beauty. Thus many contemporary aestheticians who have little regard for Hegel nonetheless prefer to identify their field as philosophy of art rather than aesthetics, since the latter still conveys a residual sense of concern for beauty and its manifestations beyond the art world.

However, both the concept of beauty and the idea of the aesthetic as a distinctive mode of perception or dimension of experience are currently experiencing a strong revival in aesthetic theory. Part of this revival reflects contemporary trends that affirm the art of living, the idea of ‘living beauty’ or, in Michel Foucault’s term, ‘aesthetics of existence’ (Foucault, 1984; Shusterman, 1992). These trends are often explained as functions of postmodernism’s aestheticization of life and of its challenging of modernity’s notion of aesthetic autonomy, a notion that sought both to compartmentalize art and the aesthetic from ethics, politics and scientific thought, and to see art narrowly in terms of the allegedly autonomous fine art of elite culture (that was often touted as being pure of practical, economic or political interests). But philosophers as different as John Dewey and Foucault remind us that the ancient Greeks were keen to affirm the art of living and the blurring of ethics and aesthetics, and we can see the same insertion of art and its aesthetic stylization into the core of practical, ethical and political life in ancient Chinese (especially Confucian) culture and in other East-Asian traditions that it helped shape.

These ancient cultures, however, did not employ the technical concept of the aesthetic as used in Western modernity. So when occidental philosophy was imported into East Asia in the latter half of the 19th century (initially in Japan through the great Meiji reform), the modern Western notion of aesthetics had to be introduced and given a Japanese translation. Ultimately, the Japanese term chosen was ‘*bigaku*’ which means the science of beauty (*bi*); and the Chinese, whose young intellectuals first imported modern Western ideas through Japan, similarly adopted this strategy in translating aesthetics as *meixue* (*mei* being the word for beauty). Some Japanese aestheticians, however, who are aware of Baumgarten’s original meaning of aesthetics, and sensitive to the fact that aesthetics is much more than the study of beauty and that much contemporary art has little to do with beauty, have recently proposed that aesthetics be translated as *ganseigaku* – the science of sensory perception. Several Japanese scholars are also critical of the way that the dominant occidental ideology of the aesthetic and fine art has tended to declass traditional Japanese arts (such as the art of tea and calligraphy) and relegate them to the realm of *geidoh* (ways of culture) while reserving the status of art for Western-style art forms (Aoki, 1998; Shusterman, 2004). Although the concept of the aesthetic has historically served as an ideological instrument of occidental cultural hegemony, it does not follow that the aesthetic dimension itself is inherently oppressive and parochially Western. Moreover, the concept of the aesthetic is open and contested, and some of its currently contesting interpretations seem congenial to Asian practices and also to popular Western expressive forms that fall outside the realm of fine art but are nonetheless appreciated for their aesthetic properties and expressive power.

Among the historically key features of the aesthetic as a special mode or attitude of perception is the idea of disinterestedness, that aesthetic perception examines and appreciates its object not in terms of some ulterior motive or function – a desire for possession, power, material or political advantage, or instrumental use – but instead for the intrinsic value or pleasure of the appreciative experience itself. This notion, introduced by Shaftesbury (1999) but reinterpreted and radicalized in different ways by Kant and others, was used to distinguish

aesthetic pleasure from mere sensory pleasure and appetite for possession. It thus aimed to justify aesthetic value (and the works of art and nature seen as constituting its domain) by making the aesthetic more intellectual rather than sensual; more refined (hence more aristocratic) than vulgar.

The idea of disinterestedness (partly by being sufficiently vague and polysemic) also served other functions for aesthetics and art in modernity. The idea of freedom from practical interest provided a theoretical justification to help secure a greater measure of autonomy for art from the domination of church and state that had long set the essential agenda for, and limits of, artistic production and consumption. The notion of aesthetic disinterestedness was defined by Kant primarily in terms of lack of desire for the real existence (hence also the real-life practical use) of the contemplated appearance, but it was also understood in the sense that aesthetic contemplation involved the free play of our perceptual and intellectual faculties without subordinating them to a specific determinate concept or practical function. The sense of aesthetic disinterestedness as freedom from practical purpose was carried over into Hegel (1993: 9), who thus defined fine art (as distinct from entertainment and applied arts) as ‘art which is *free*’. What Hegel really meant by this is freedom from serving mundane practical functions, since he clearly assigns art the function of purveying truth.

The nonpractical nature of disinterestedness paradoxically had some practical advantages for the arts. The notion of disinterestedness as a distanced contemplation of appearances that was not concerned with their reality or real-world functions (and thus not burdened with the desires or concerns that such reality would evoke) helped make it possible for artists to use almost anything as a subject for artistic rendering, thus extending the scope of fine art’s topics. Anything could be made into art or even be an object of beauty in itself, just so long as the disinterested aesthetic attitude was shaping our point of view in regarding that object. Describing this attitude as ‘will-less’, Schopenhauer (1966) argued that when we say a thing is beautiful, we thereby assert that it is an object of our aesthetic contemplation as pure will-less subjects.

Along with disinterestedness and in some ways clearly connected with it, Kant (1952: 80) argued that purposively organized but functionless form (or what he called ‘the form of *finality . . . apart from the representation of an end*’) was a distinctive feature of the aesthetic. This emphasis on form rather than on sensation, content or function strengthens the intellectual profile of the aesthetic, since appreciation of pure form requires abstracting it from the sensory and semantic contexts and real-world practical purposes in which it is usually embedded. If formalism’s intellectual aspect helps to legitimate the aesthetic among philosophers, the view of the aesthetic as functionless form rather than practical action or truthful content contributes to the notion of aesthetic autonomy – the aesthetic as a world apart, a world of pure appearance. Building on Kant, Schiller (1967) described the realm of art as that of mere appearance (*Schein*), and argued that the educative function of art and the aesthetic depended paradoxically precisely on their nonfunctional status as play and image, which gives them freedom from the constraints of reality and practical action.

The ideology of the art for art’s sake movement at the turn of the 20th century helped establish the modernist notion of artistic autonomy, reinforcing the aestheticist idea that art serves society best by devoting itself to art’s own ends and freeing itself from any external function. This dialectical argument resurfaces in many contemporary thinkers who care passionately about social and political issues. Adorno, for instance, argues that art’s true and vital function is to be functionless, thus defying our capitalist culture’s overwhelming concerns with utility. ‘If any social function can be ascribed to art at all, it is the function to have no function’ (Adorno, 1984: 322). Other philosophers have also argued that resolute non-instrumentality is necessary to preserve the autonomy of art and the aesthetic, which is in turn necessary to avoid their corruption by real-world politics. Walter Benjamin (1969) famously equated fascism with the mixing of aesthetics and politics, while Hannah Arendt (1961: 215–16) insists that artworks are pure disinterested ends of ‘intrinsic, independent worth’, ‘things which exist independently of all utilitarian and functional references’.

III

History, however, reveals the anomaly of art for art's sake; art has had very important social, political and religious functions in pre-modern and non-Western cultures; and these roles have greatly contributed to art's meaning and aesthetic power. Not surprisingly, there is significant dissent to the Kantian orthodoxy of aesthetic disinterestedness and functionlessness. Nietzsche (1956: 238–40) mordantly mocks the dogma of disinterestedness as an expression of philosophers' prudishness, innocence and second-hand, spectator's view of art – contrasting it to the creative, hands-on view of the artist. The power of art and beauty, he argues, derives not from disinterest but rather from 'the excitement of the will, of "interest"' [*die Errgeung des Willes ("des Interesses")*].

When our estheticians tirelessly rehearse, in support of Kant's view, that the spell of beauty enables us to view even *nude* female statues 'disinterestedly' we may be allowed to laugh a little at their expense. The experiences of artists in this delicate matter are rather more 'interesting'; certainly Pygmalion was not entirely devoid of esthetic feeling.

From the apparent absence in aesthetic matters of our common practical interests, the Kantian tradition wrongly concludes that aesthetic experience is entirely disinterested. This fails to recognize that there also may be special interests that are distinctively artistic and aesthetic, such as the desire for beauty, or the intensity and harmony of sensory experience, and that such interests are deeply connected to other, more practical life-serving interests and ends.

John Dewey's pragmatist aesthetics makes a related point about function. Though art's aesthetic experience cannot be reduced to a specific, narrow and mundane instrumentality, it does not follow that art has no significant functionality that adds to its value and indeed enriches its intrinsic appreciation in aesthetic experience. Dewey instead maintains that art is distinguished not by any single use but by its wide-ranging functionality, which includes the life-enhancing pleasures of aesthetic experience. 'The work of esthetic art satisfies many ends. . . . It serves life rather than prescribing a defined and limited mode of living' (1987: 140).

The idea that aesthetic consciousness can and should be autonomously compartmentalized from the rest of life as a pure and functionless island of delight is also challenged by other important theorists of various persuasions. Though T.S. Eliot initially earned fame for his formalist practice and theory of poetry, he came to realize that the appreciation of poetry and art in general were inextricably entwined in the real world and its social and practical contexts, which in fact also impacted on the very shaping of the forms of art (Eliot, 1964; Shusterman, 1988). Hans-Georg Gadamer (1965) similarly argues against the compartmentalizing ideology of what he calls 'pure aesthetic consciousness' [*reine ästhetische Bewusstsein*] by showing how it cannot do justice to art's meaning, claims to truth, and lasting impact on our lives and world. Pierre Bourdieu (1979) offers a complex critique of the ideology of the aesthetic, showing how its Kantian notion of disinterested and functionless contemplation actually serves undeniable social interests of affirming hierarchical distinction. Not everyone can afford to take the sort of disinterested, nonfunctional, formalist perspective recommended by the Kantian aesthetic; only classes of people who enjoy enough wealth and leisure not to worry about their material needs and interests can afford to acquire and exercise it. So the adoption and display of this disinterested disposition is an assertion of one's membership in this sociocultural elite. Bourdieu does not deny a relative degree of autonomy to the aesthetic field (just as he accords a kind of autonomy to the field of science). But he shows that the aesthetic field is shot through with interests, functions and social struggles that are embedded in larger social contexts and struggles.

Finally, analytic philosophy has also been critical of the idea of a special aesthetic attitude that is wholly disinterested (Dickie, 1974). One reason is the lack of clarity about what disinterested contemplation of an artwork really means. Is this a distinct mode of perception or does disinterestedness merely refer to a lack of motive for our perception? If it seems hard to identify (introspectively or physiologically or conceptually) a special disinterested mode of perceiving, it is equally hard to argue that the mere fact of having different motives

necessitates a categorical difference in what or how we perceive. Moreover, artist and critic obviously have important interests in regarding artworks; the artist typically views her work with the aim of creatively improving it, while the critic is concerned with producing an interpretive or evaluative appraisal. Is their perception, because of its motivating interests, then excluded from the realm of aesthetic perception? But isn't the artist's and critic's perception paradigmatic of the aesthetic? If so, something seems wrong with the characterization of the aesthetic as wholly disinterested. Another problem found with the aesthetic is that it does not seem to deal adequately with much contemporary art that is blatantly political (hence not disinterested) and shuns the goal of beauty, one of the central concepts with which the aesthetic has been traditionally identified.

The aesthetic is obviously a vague, polysemic, contested and shifting signifier. But vague terms still signify, and the aesthetic is by now far too deeply embedded in both theoretical and everyday language to recommend that it be expelled from our cultural discourse. Besides, its historically nested rich complexities of meaning harbor the promise of generating new rewarding directions of use. The future of this concept depends on the ways that theorists, artists, critics and consumers will appropriate the various meanings it has already acquired in its rich history, and adjust them to address and reshape our contemporary cultural world.

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The Aesthetic in Colonial India

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Keywords aura, disinterest, exhibition-value, icon, Raj, realism, taste

Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790) continues to be read widely as the most compelling articulation of the modern discourse of the aesthetic; this supplemental entry addresses only those aspects of Kant's text that have been aligned with the question of good and bad taste in art. While it has been construed as a misinterpretation, this reading of Kant has remained influential since the turn of the 18th century. So, historian Martha Woodmansee (1994) has shown how the authority of the third *Critique* was deployed in public debates about art and culture in Germany, France and Britain in the late 18th century, in disputes over standards of artistic creativity and the status of authorial property rights. As a supplement, this entry traces the after-life of Kant's text, as it passed from its contested European origins into the British colonial administration of India; it makes no attempt to establish the authenticity of readings attributed to Kant in this period.

Kant's dichotomous distinction between a 'taste of sense' and a 'taste of reflection', in this version, marks the distinction between high and low culture; and between upper and lower orders of society (Bourdieu, 1984: 41–4, 481–91). Kant's text appears to devalue the former, which is associated with immediate, 'interested' or deeply private satisfactions associated with bodily desires. On the other hand, the taste of reflection assumes a 'disinterested' perspective, an attitude of distance from both the art-object as well as from one's own demands. Kant himself argued that such exercises of taste had a place in public life. These judgments were 'valid', as much for oneself as for others; as was the pleasure, a cerebral kind, afforded by the object (Kant, 1987: 57–8).

Within the terms of the European debate, the aesthetic's distinction between 'sense' and 'reflection' was deployed in a cultural context where religion was, purportedly, a private affair. Since the exercise of taste involved publicly valid judgments, a *properly* aesthetic engagement with an object would presumably transcend religious, that is to say private, passions. Echoing this assumption, theorist of 20th-century European mass culture Walter

Benjamin drew a distinction – widely deployed by recent scholarship – between the 'exhibition value' of a publicly accessible, mobile work of art and the 'cult value' of a ritual object, veiled from view and fixed to its consecrated place. In this tradition, a post-sacred appreciation of art-works is fundamental to the exercise of good judgment.

In the mid-19th century, the shade of this Kantian imperative passed from Europe, through England to India, into the programmatic attempts of colonial educators to inculcate taste in their native students. 'Taste' was itself construed within the parameters of disinterest, that is, as a denial of the religious or cultic function of images. Consequently, it was thought that a properly aesthetic education would suppress the native's concern with the work's proximity to divine power; and would reform a putatively 'primitive' interest in the object's usefulness as a fetish or icon.

This pedagogical preoccupation with taste came to provide a broader, ideological justification for the foundation of Government Art Schools. Institutionalized dissemination of the visual and cognitive precepts of good judgment would advance the 'scientific progress' of a culture – so argued the eminent art-educator and amateur painter, Sir Richard Temple, in 1883:

[Art schools] will teach them one thing, which through all the preceding ages they have never learnt, namely drawing objects correctly, whether figures, landscape or architecture. Such drawing tends to *rectify* some of their mental faults, to intensify their *powers of observation*, and to make them *understand analytically* those glories of nature which they love so well. (from Temple's *Oriental Experience*, cited by Mitter, 1994: 32, emphasis added)

From 1798 onwards, individuals as well as organizations had founded numerous art schools that were perceived as pioneering in their attempt to systematically import artistic techniques of the 'West'. However, it was during the 1850s that schools in the urban centres of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Lahore were placed under the direct control of the Department of Public Instruction (Guha-Thakurta, 1992; Mitter, 1994). The centralization of academic art in this period was justified in terms of larger imperial policy, as the impetus for a sweeping 'analytic' transformation of Indian culture. The

Government Art Schools would inculcate public taste, or, what was the same, *secularize* the basis of aesthetic judgment. Based on the disciplined ‘observation’ of nature and the practice of its accurate reproduction, the art school curriculum was supposed to fragment the fictive world of the ‘Hindu’, whose idolatrous artistic traditions, as understood by Victorian art historians, had remained incapable of distinguishing between the natural and the supra-natural. By the 1880s, the education of colonial subjects in urban art academies was aligned with the imperial mission of cultural and societal modernization (Mitter, 1994: 123).

The technical component of academic art training focused on one particular visual convention of Western European salon art, derived from the Italian Renaissance, that of single-point perspective. For those who argued that a regime of visual instruction was of fundamental import to the British administration of India, an intractable anti-naturalism was a source of recurring concern. Training in the uses of perspective, according to Temple, provided a conclusive solution to such recalcitrance. Perspective was fundamental to ‘practices most approved in European Art’ but also ‘embodi[ed] principles applicable to art *in all climes*’, insofar as it imparted the ability to draw objects from nature ‘correctly’, that is, with a fidelity to empirical detail, anywhere. It was argued that the use of perspective awakened an appreciation of *realism* in the arts; that the practice of drawing objects true-to-life instilled respect for the actual proportions of the subject-matter, training attention to changes in its appearance that were relative to the position of the beholder. In the commentaries of art school educators, perspective is treated as the proverbial silver bullet that would fracture, once and for all, the contact between the eyes of the beholder and those of the deity. Art school instruction articulated a comprehensive rejection of symmetry and frontality – visual norms that had hitherto framed traditional representations of deities (Mitter, 1994: 35; Pinney, 2003: 115).

In the late 19th century, colonial perspectivalism became the *sine qua non* of good taste. Ethnographer Christopher Pinney has argued that the denial of eye contact between the picture’s subject and beholder evolved into a classical aesthetic of ‘absorption’, where the composition is dominated by an internalized gaze. So, the aristocratic sitter of *Maratha Lady* (1920s) by Abalal Rahiman of the Bombay school averts her eyes from the viewer’s, remaining absorbed in the minute task of threading a needle; in the mass-produced colour lithographs of the Calcutta Art Studio (1880s), even the god Shiv, ubiquitous within popular imagination, now ‘turned his vision towards the “Oriental Cupid” [within the image], not to the

devotee gazing at the image’ (2003: 115). From the 1880s until the 1920s, this principled denial of the beholder’s presence became the consummate expression of disinterested art. The image’s self-absorption, its elliptical acknowledgement of a distanced viewer, the genres of portrait and history painting adopted from European salon art of which these characteristics were typical – all this was disseminated by the British Raj through Government Art Schools (Mitter, 1994). The perspective of the ‘absent-beholder’ came to represent the very antithesis of cultic art, whose single purpose lay in enabling a direct address of the deity. For a colonial urban elite, perspectivalism became the signature of Western ‘distinction’, a token of their distance from the obsolete world of Hindu icons (Jain, 2003; Pinney, 2003: 116).

Yet even during the decades of its ideological ascendancy, in the years between the 1880s and the 1920s, this strand of aesthetic discourse retained a fragile authority over the arts in the subcontinent. For if the standards of ‘taste’ had been imparted through the institutional frameworks of Government Schools, the British were themselves divided over the purpose of art teaching. In the imperial metropolis, art instruction was concerned either with ‘fine arts’ as taught at the Royal Academy, or with vocational training in the industrial or ‘applied arts’ as at the Department of Science and Art at South Kensington (Mitter, 1994: 32). The Government Schools did turn out a class of ‘gentleman painters’ and collectors in colonial centres, urban English-literate gentry who had (restricted) access to the fine arts curriculum at the schools. However, there was still an unbroken exchange between academic art and the mass market via the prolific popular image industry. Indeed, one of the earliest lithographic presses, the Calcutta Art Studio, set up in 1878 in Bengal, was established by five graduates of the Calcutta school. Still, not all trained artists had had an education in the fine arts, for many were vocationally trained as skilled craftsmen for the service of the British administration. This was due in large part to the British ambivalence over the definition of ‘the arts’; an uncertainty that was exacerbated in the colonial context by a racialized distinction between the ‘decorative arts’ (at which traditional Indian artisans were purported to excel) and the ‘fine arts’ (that were apparently non-existent within Indian civilization).

In tandem with the institutionalization of Victorian taste – rather than in spite of its imperatives – the decades between the 1880s and the 1900s witnessed an exponential increase in the production and sale of popular, mechanically reproducible prints. These were dominated by chromolithography, and the Calcutta Art Studio was one of the most successful in the market. The

Studio owed its popularity to a mass demand for images composed according to the traditional iconic norms of frontality, and a corporeal acknowledgement of the viewer. However, the proprietors owed their commercial dominance within a pan-Indian market in no small measure to their own mastery of Victorian perspectivalism. The naturalistic rendering of human figures and of landscape had taken on an appeal that cut across class and geographical lines. Indeed, indigenous entrepreneurs had to respond with aesthetic and technical innovations to competition from global capital: German printers, for example, were attracted by enormous profits and had begun to flood an eager market with reproductions of European subjects (that included erotic art) (Neumayer and Schelberger, 2003). While the Calcutta Art Studio produced mainly religious icons, their prints consistently deployed the devices of European naturalism – often displaying a carnal three-dimensionality, Hindu gods acquired a musculature that was borrowed directly from Greek divinities, becoming ‘object lessons in artistic anatomy acquired at art school’ (Mitter, 2003: 17). In Kantian terms, these images were decidedly the product of a ‘taste of sense’. Divinities now acquired a sensuous immanence even as they directly satisfied the beholder’s demand for visual reciprocity. Even so, Hindu iconography was disseminated through a thoroughly hybrid, illusionistic idiom that had incorporated the technical conventions of Victorian taste.

Another aspect of this hybrid aesthetic was the imbrication of religious images within the economy of the market. Indeed, the iconic status of 19th-century lithographs – their ‘aura’ of religiosity – was constituted by their profane, spectacular ‘exhibition value’. Mass-produced commodities, icons acquired an unprecedented mobility through railways that transported them across the subcontinent, to devotees who could acquire them locally. Moreover, lithography exploited the significance of religious themes (e.g. from the Hindu epics of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, or the stories of the Puranas) and rendered these realistically, through the genre of history painting. Lithographers (including those contracted by international firms) reproduced these thoroughly recognizable, carnally specified figures of myth, for branding and advertising purposes. But their sensual charge was used also to exhume a national history. Icons addressed nationalist politics through the Hindu-inflected vocabulary of religion. As a mode of mass communication, and by virtue of their sheer excess, printed images of gods were difficult to monitor, to categorize as politically inflammatory, and therefore to censor: sacralizing politics, they became integral to nationalist agitation in the 1920s and after (Pinney, 1997,

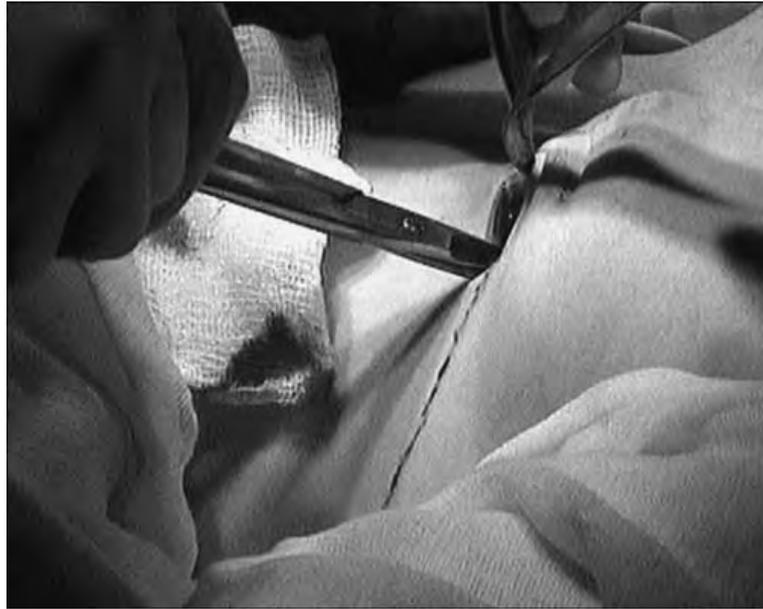
2003, 2004). Significantly, the two commercially successful centres of chromolithographic production, Bengal and Maharashtra, were witness to volatile mass mobilization in this period.

Painted Indian icons did incorporate the lessons of Victorian taste; paradoxically, its authority was rapidly overwhelmed by painting’s prolific after-life, in print.

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Body Skin
Photo by Leora Farber

Skin Aesthetics

Leora Farber

Keywords aestheticization, appearance, body-image, body-modification, cosmetic surgery, women's bodies

Far from being a neutral point of transition between inner and outer body, skin is inscribed with layers of politicized associations. A primary signifier of racial identity, it is also a visible marker of hybridity and cross-cultural/racial mix. It may thus be the site of masquerade when passing for a privileged racial group. Given the historical legacy of skin as determinant of privilege/inferiority within body politics, skin colour forms a fulcrum around which identities are constructed. As such, it has been/is a site upon which racial power is commonly enacted. The skin surface bears traces of racially based punishment: a history of whipping, branding or rubber bullet wounds might be inscribed on the skin as scars or welts.

Skin forms a screen on which the body's ability to heal itself is revealed, while simultaneously registering its inevitable demise. As a site of visible deterioration, skin holds particular currency for westernized women, and (increasingly) men, as

this signifies the nemesis of the western ideals of slimness and youth. This article will explore how, particularly for westernized women, skin might be a site onto which dualities such as submission and resistance, excess and control are played out in relation to these ideals. This text will touch on how skin, as a register of the body's margins, could be considered as a site of cultural, political and personal control, agency and contestation for westernized women. Selected artworks from the exhibition *Skin: Surface, Substance and Design* (2002) curated by Ellen Lupton at the Cooper Hewitt Design Museum, New York City, will be referenced in order to explore ways in which contemporary artists have articulated these concerns.

Several artists/designers featured in the *Skin* exhibition propose skin as being akin to an external fabric, which might be crafted in ways that mimic the fabrication of femininity according to the dictates of the heterosexual, white male gaze. For many westernized women, skin becomes akin to an external/internal garment that might be materially (through cosmetic surgery procedures such as liposuction) or metaphorically fashioned, altered, perfected and possibly discarded. Tissue-engineered skin, currently intended as a means by which to manufacture living replacement parts for

the body, allows for future imaginings of how, subject to the dictates of fashion, skin might actually be purchased, worn and replaced like a garment. This idea is articulated in Carla Murray and Peter Allen's *Skinthetic* series (2001; see Lupton, 2002: 92–3), in which these designers propose futuristic digital designs for consumer branding, which are implanted into the skin. Their *Chanel* series (2001) shows the quilted pattern derived from Chanel's brand identity as implanted into a female torso. The skin of the garment becomes continuous with the skin of the body; brand label and skin become one, suggesting how skin (and the wearer's body) might be branded to carry associations of a particular lifestyle or image. As a by-product of postmodernity, skin could thus become the ultimate medium for self-expression and consumer choice. With current cosmetic surgical procedures and cosmeceuticals, skin (and by extension, the body) is already a commodity item which '... can be ... reshaped, restyled and reconstructed to meet prevailing fashions and cultural values' (Davis, 1995: 17).

The means by which such material and metaphorical skin-crafting is exercised may be through arguably self-imposed practices of bodily control, including control over quantity and/or quality of food intake, exercise regimes, eating disorders and/or through biotechnological aid in the form of cosmetic surgery. Although cosmetic surgery is the only one enacted directly upon the skin, all these practices affect the body's margins, which are determined by its skin contour and muscle tone. In a culture governed by repression and release, the greater the subcutaneous layer of fat, the greater the loss of control is signified. Gain of fat alters the skin's margins; age produces sagging and wrinkling, both of which affect the definition of a taut, contained bodily outline. In the war against nature to prevent the loss of slimness and youth, skin becomes a site of constriction, containment and control. Naomi Wolf (1990: 177) sums up this idea with her observation that for contemporary westernized women, skin is the equivalent of the 1950s girdle – a girdle which is 'made of their own flesh. They can't take it off at night.'

This analogy between skin and fabric is chillingly articulated in Margi Geerlinks' photographic series, *Gepetto 1* and *2* (1999). Geerlinks' images show a grey-haired man in a white lab-coat behind a sewing machine, under the needle of which is the flesh of a young woman's body. Naked, she lies draped, like a swathe of fabric on the table before him, her skin ready to be stitched up. The two cotton reels in the machine are in Caucasian flesh-tone colours. The images imply that, as dress-fabric may be cut and sewn according to a

predetermined pattern, so skin might be crafted in ways that mimic predetermined masculine constructions of femininity. With their overtones of a surgeon in the operating theatre, evoked through the predominance of clinical, white surfaces, the images suggest further parallels between the craft of tailoring a garment to fit a stereotypical body size and cosmetic surgical procedures that re-fashion appearances to conform to idealized measurements.

The surgeon's craft approximates two historically gendered creative professions: the seamstress (female) and the sculptor (male), whose medium is not fabric or marble but skin. Many surgeons promote themselves as sculptors who fashion human flesh to create a body, which mimics the so-called perfect human form. This image of perfection may be traced back to high art, particularly classical and neoclassical canons of beauty, which emphasize proportion, harmony, symmetry and balance and privilege associated values such as unity, autonomy, closure, singularity and totality. These values of presence have particular currency in gendered terms. As Lynda Nead (1992) argues, if the female body has historically been regarded as base, unformed, undifferentiated matter, then the conventions of high art are a means of controlling this unruly body by placing it within the secure boundaries of aesthetic discourse. These fix the dangerous boundaries of female sexuality, transforming the female body into a symbol of containment. Skin becomes the containing outer boundary, which defines the body's contours.

Conception of the surgeon as seamstress and sculptor is explored in my video, titled *Four Minor Renovations (revamp, refurbish, retouch, refine)* (2000), which shows an edited version of four live cosmetic surgeries: breast-augmentation, bat-ear pinback, eyelift and facelift. Tightly cropped and set in slow motion, the documentary-style footage shows the surgeon's gloved hands cutting, stretching and stitching flesh. In an attempt to expose the invasiveness of these normally hidden procedures, this work allows viewers access into the private inner sanctum of the operating theatre. They thus, as Allara (2001) suggests, 'become ... privileged witness[es] in the studio of the Artist-God molding woman/earth out of formless matter ... In a triumph of technology, form is divorced from matter, and body becomes image.'

The footage also shows how the techniques employed in the seamstress's craft of tailoring a garment to fit a particular body size are closely aligned to the surgeons' technological craft of body-modification. Sequentially, the surgeon's actions mimic garment-making techniques: the ideal pattern is drawn onto the skin in dotted lines, the skin is cut, excess is removed and skin is

secured into its new shape with a series of sutures. As a new garment is ironed once sewing is completed, so the skin is now creaseless from having been stretched into shape. Explaining why she requests her patients to stand up while she administers liposuction, New York dermatologist Pat Wexler (cited in Dominus, 2002: 50) notes that she feels 'like a seamstress draping fabric – you can't do it on someone lying down'. Through isolation of parts to be re-fashioned, cosmetic surgery physically transforms the material body into a sign of visual culture; a literal and material reproduction of westernized ideals of beauty.

Control may also be exerted in non-invasive ways such as the injection of Botox (botulinum toxin) and through use of fillers such as Restalene, Collagen, Artecoll and Micro-fat. Injections of Mico-fat and Collagen are used to smooth out shallow lines, rendering the skin smooth and supposedly dewrinkled. Reinforcing the parallels between garment and skin, Wexler (cited in Dominus, 2002: 51) compares women who wear wrinkled skin in public to the social inappropriateness of 'wearing a wrinkled suit to an interview'. Botox is a toxic substance, which paralyzes the facial muscles to prevent the inscription of lines on the skin, resulting in facial rigidity that denies any register of human emotion. Allara (2003: 2) observes that such freezing of women's faces might produce either a 'grotesque or . . . a new, unabashedly anti-natural ideal of beauty'. Recalling media images of mechanized cyborgs, she asserts that these frigid faces represent a type of beauty that dissolves any remaining opposition between the supposedly natural and human-made. No longer confined to the classical western ideal of high art, or even to the sculptural mediums of marble or clay, beauty is redefined; faces and bodies become artworks and media images manufactured by and for mechanical reproduction.

While the image reproduced might reference a range of media options, underpinning each is precisely this repetitiveness of assembly line production. Thus, in spite of the potential that cosmetic surgery offers for technological reconstruction of bodies and identities, in actuality, its products tend to be traditionally gendered and racialized. According to contemporary definitions of creative production, art is concerned with innovation, and craft with the perpetuation of traditional norms. It thus seems fitting to consider the surgeon's handiwork as craft: rather than a recreation of personalized identity which enables women to be all they can be, appearances produced invariably conform to cultural and ideological standards of normality and beauty, which are based on western media ideals. Although still a marker of racial difference in terms of colour,

skin signifies homogeneity, as the surgeon's scalpel remakes difference into sameness.

Feminist critiques often position the recipients of cosmetic surgery as victims of cultural exploitation – women are viewed as colluding with and reinforcing patriarchal patterns of power and authority. However, it is also important to acknowledge Kathy Davis' (1995) assertion that cosmetic surgery might empower women to assert or negotiate their feminine identity from within the cultural and structural constraints of a gendered social order. Cosmetic surgery is an example of tensions between women's objectification and their attempts to negotiate their identities from within a broader context of western visual culture. These tensions shift between the female body as object and the embodied feminine subject, as women attempt to negotiate a sense of bodily agency in relation to controlling cultural discourses. Thus, rather than overt condemnation of cosmetic surgery and its impact on the female body, it seems more useful to address the unequal relations of power that underpin the drive to fashion the body in such a way that it meets westernized standards of normality and beauty. Allara's (2001) observation that ' . . . the problem is one's relative position of power and powerlessness within a technological regime' sums up this ambiguity between resistance and complicity. Thus, in its complex relation to various controlling political trajectories and regimes, skin is materially and metaphorically contested terrain: a site wherein agency, freedom of choice and individual empowerment conflate with the pressures of cultural power and tensions of social/personalized control.

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Analogue and Digital

Sean Cubitt

Keywords aesthetics, analogue, digital

In the brief 50 years of its history, computer arts have given rise to a number of schools. Early practitioners like Jordan Belson were interested in machinic contributions to the spiritual aspects of abstraction noted in the early 20th century by Malevich, Kandinsky and Mondrian. Certain artists insist that only engineering in software and hardware constitutes digital art, while the use of existing programs and machines is dilletantism. Other schools have focused on interactivity, immersion or networking as constitutive factors of a distinctively digital art. And some artists (Young Hae Cheung, Vuk Cosic) renounce all high-level programming and interaction. While some commentators, especially in the 1990s, sought to distinguish the digital aesthetic from all previous aesthetic modes, increasingly scholars and critics have come round to a disputed and various but common belief in continuities between digital and previous arts.

The distinction when stated technically is minor. Analogue media like photography create an analogy with the world observed by establishing a one-to-one correspondence between, in this example, light falling on a surface, and the light-responsive chemicals applied to it. Such correspondences underpinned late 19th and early 20th century theories of realism and technologies of fidelity in fields like recorded music and cinematography. Digital media use a different system. Instead of tracking the real in the manner of a phonograph needle agitated by the vibrations of the air, digital devices sample ambient sound in discrete packages. Though the sampling rate is extremely fast, and gives therefore a more accurate rendering of the realia recorded, there is inevitably a minute gap between samples which the digital recording can never fill, unlike analogue, whose relatively sluggish response is nonetheless continuous rather than sampled.

The apparent simplicity of the distinction

masks a more significant property of digital storage. Data held in a computer is stored as an array of digits encoded as electrical impulses, magnetic orientation or optical arrays. From the standpoint of the computer, any input will always appear as mathematical, and any data can be output in any format. Effectively, an audio input can be output as a video image, as text, as a 3D model, as an instruction set for a manufacturing process, or any other digital format that can be attached to the computer. The manipulability of the data once stored, though not unprecedented, is easily accessible to ordinary computer users, and proliferates in montage and in the alteration of photographs, texts and digital recordings. Several authors have attempted to use such effects as distinguishing factors in describing a single, universal digital aesthetic. However, in the early years of the 21st century, it became apparent not only that older aesthetic principles still hold good in such areas as digitally animated films and digitally generated dance music, but that many modes of software have evolved their own specific aesthetic properties and practices. In visual media, the distinction between bitmap ('raster') graphics, based on a grid, and vector graphics based on algorithms, has become the basis of discrete analyses of the aesthetics of specific programs and software interfaces (for example Munster, 2003), while computer games (Aarseth, 1997), 'post-cinema' (Shaw and Weibel, 2003) and various modes of digital music (Miller, 2004) have increasingly been distinguished from any unitary aesthetic. The proliferation of digital media across professional disciplines, and the increasing embedding of digital media invisibly within architecture, artefacts and human beings indicates both that the unification of digital aesthetics around any core group of properties is decreasingly likely, and that the specificity of the digital may decline as digital media are more and more embedded in the landscapes of everyday work, transport, housework and education. Alternatively, this embedding process may herald the end of aesthetics as a preserve of leisure ('disinterested') activities.

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Persian Poesis

Michael M.J. Fischer

Keywords cultural politics, ethical dilemmas, hieroglyphic imagery, Iranian cinema, new media circuits

In the 1990s, Iranian film became the most celebrated of national film traditions because of a poetics, a poesis, that speaks to the contemporary condition. It is a poesis that is deeply informed both by modernist traditions (many leading Iranian filmmakers attended film schools in Europe and the United States) and by Iran's own cosmopolitan traditions – a double play paralleling those of French New Wave films in the 1950s and 1960s, of Italian neorealist films in the 1940s and 1950s, Eastern European films in the 1960s and 1970s, and Chinese Fifth Generation films in the 1980s and 1990s. French New Wave films played a part both in remaking postwar France through images of 'fast cars, clean bodies, decolonization and the reordering of French culture', as Kristin Ross titled her 1995 book, and, reciprocally, in providing international images for rethinking Hollywood and the images of American modernity. So too, films from Iran in the 1990s and early 21st century speak to their own domestic cultural politics and at the same time to more general ethical dilemmas in a world torn apart and pushed together. There is something about the minimalism, deliberate pacing and subjectivities of these films that speaks to a world caught in the aftermath of religious tensors (stoicisms, purity logics, disciplinary moralists) and in the aftermath of wars received no longer stoically but through the recog-

inition of post-traumatic stress syndrome and the increasing use of trauma as a metaphor of and for the current human condition.

This double function can be seen in the image of plastic and wooden prostheses dropping from the sky on parachutes to one-legged Afghans running on their crutches to catch these international relief offerings (in Mohsen Makhmalbaf's 2001 film *Journey to Kandahar*, *Safar-e Qandahar*). Images of mine-devastated bodies and countries are global ones, not particularly Iranian ones. Yet this image joins a series of strong hieroglyphic images in recent Iranian films. The titles already are visual: *Shrapnels in Peace* being recycled as scrap metal, *Blackboards* doubling as protection against helicopter gunships, *Rain* filling footprints, *Red Ribbons* marking off mined land, *The Time of the Drunken Horses* (mules) being used to cross borders by subsistence smugglers, cameras functioning as the inability to forget trauma and poverty (*Marriage of the Blessed*) and as alternative courts of appeal (*Close Up*), recycled antennae to determine when the Americans will invade Iraq (*Turtles Also Can Fly*). For American and Western audiences, this emergent visual idiom provides both counter-discourse (what war does in the name of 'collateral damage') and a profound commonality (we are all invested in the ideals of justice, cooperation, dealing with each life as precious, freedom and ethical choice).

The uptake of Persian imagery into cosmopolitan circuits goes back to at least the Gathas of Zoroaster, acknowledged in classical Greek texts, absorbed into the eschatological imagery of the monotheisms, and paralleled in the Vedas of India.

The Persian Empire, with its Zoroastrian liturgical forms of legitimation, was the conceptual organizational alternative to the network of small Greek city-states. The dialectic between the two generated much thought about political forms, mercantile systems, iconic versus non-iconic religiosities, postal systems, epic poetry and forms of knowledge and wisdom.

In the 20th century a new set of modernist initiatives wove Iranian creativity into world consciousness through new media, reaching new audiences. Folklore, new forms of poetry, new forms of short story, novels and theater were, for reasons of language, addressed mainly to domestic audiences. But posters and film, by taking advantage of visual languages, were addressed also to international, diasporic and transnational audiences. Posters of the 1977–79 revolution, for instance, fused the artistic traditions of Islam with those of third-world revolutions, intermixing their distinctive palettes and icons, and disseminated them via photography and television.

The diaspora, after the Revolution, began to have a profound feedback effect, beginning with television in Los Angeles beamed back to Iran, and then exploding with the Internet in the early 21st century, when Persian became the fourth language of bloggers after English, Spanish and Portuguese, providing a new space of contestation not only over freedom of speech and politics, but also over informal and formal modalities of writing. Persian rock, and other music fusions of traditional and contemporary forms, began to rework the soundscape, e.g. the group O-Ham, or the film music of Mohammad Reza Darvishi who draws on his skills as an ethnomusicologist as well as composer. The calligraphic photography and video of Shirin Neshat (in which black-and-white figures of chadored women expose dense calligraphic script on face, feet and hands); the powerful vocals of Susan Dehlim (both mystical and modernist visceral); the production of stylized taziye passion plays at New York's Lincoln Center with performers from Isfahan and with animal handlers from Chechnya; and in

Fukuoka, Japan, the seven Iranian teams of high school and college computer science and engineering students, male and female, competing in the sixth international RoboCup (robotic soccer) competitions – all these problematize stereotypes of Iranian culture whether seen as corrupted by religious modernist-fundamentalists or as reactionary and backward by secular cosmopolitans inside Iran and abroad. Indeed, the film *Secret Ballot* delightfully satirizes both Tehran's efforts to introduce democracy to rural provinces of Iran, and implicitly American efforts to force democracy in the Middle East. And an older film, *The Suitor*, delightfully satirized the fundamentalism of Iranian immigrants in New York struggling against the fundamentalist imaginary of Christian apartment superintendents listening to their evangelical radio preachers as they call the police to complain about 'terrorists' in the apartment above, while in fact it is only hapless immigrants trying to figure out how to slaughter a sheep by Islamic rules in the bathtub.

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Technology

Scott McQuire

Abstract This essay traces the increased centrality of technology to social life across the period of modernity. It examines major shifts in thinking about technology which underpin the shift from industrial to post-industrial society, and the emergence of concepts such as ‘technoscience’ and ‘technoculture’. It argues that a critical analysis of technology must probe the way that histories of technological progress have been implicated in colonial hierarchies privileging the West. In examining the extension of technology from machines that make things to ‘machines that think’, including biotechnology and computerized ‘artificial life’, something implied in every historical iteration of technology is laid bare: defining the technological activates the border between nature and culture, and goes to the heart of what it means to be human.

Keywords cybernetics, new media technology, post-industrial society, technoculture, technology

I

The mechanical eye, the camera, rejecting the human eye as crib sheet, gropes its way through the chaos of visual events, letting itself be drawn or repelled by movement, probing, as it goes, the path of its own movement. It experiments, distending time, dissecting movement, or, in contrary fashion, absorbing time within itself, swallowing years, thus schematising processes of long duration inaccessible to the ordinary eye. (Vertov, 1984 [1923]: 18–19)

Dziga Vertov’s *Man with the Movie Camera* (1929) was arguably the last great work of the Constructivist avant-garde. It was Vertov’s most ambitious film, not only exploring the accelerated experiences of modern urban life, but also locating them in relation to the industrial structures supporting its emergence. The famous scenes of the female worker at the spinning machine in a textile factory – the sector which assumed paradigmatic status in Marx and Engels’ history of material production – are buttressed by investigations of coal mining and power generation. Annette Michelson argues that *Man with the Movie Camera* constitutes ‘the synthetic articulation of the Marxist project, concretized in every detail of an unprecedented complexity of cinematic design’ (in Vertov, 1984: xxxvii). This ‘unprecedented complexity’ is the elaborate montage which Vertov developed for his film. If its first aim was to analyse concrete events, such as the movements of a worker at a machine or the passage of a tram on a busy street, it also sought to locate cinema as a form of industrial production in itself. To this end, Vertov brings the entire process of making the film, from the collection of ‘film facts’ by the camera-man to the editing of the footage to its screening in front of an audience, into the orbit of the film’s formal reflexivity.

[W]e will sing of the nightly fervour of arsenals and shipyards blazing with violent electric moons; greedy railway stations that devour smoke-plumed serpents; factories hung on clouds by the crooked lines of their smoke; bridges that stride the rivers like giant gymnasts.
(Marinetti, 1909)

Vertov's rhetoric extolling the role of science, technology and the engineer in order to 'bring people into closer kinship with machines' (1984: 7–8) was shared with many other avant-gardists of European modernism. The bombast of Marinetti's 1909 Futurist manifesto, which begins with the memorable account of the technological birth of the 'new man' following a car crash, found echoes in numerous places, but especially in the revolutionary ferment of the new Soviet Union, where technological transformation was fetishized as the ingredient that might enable an industrially 'backward' country to make a historic leap forward. The Leninist slogan 'Soviets + Electricity = Communism' was symptomatic of the prevailing faith that the fusion of a vanguard form of political power with advanced technology was enough to conjure a new way of life.

[W]ith the development of the Internet, and with the increasing pervasiveness of communication between networked computers, we are in the middle of the most transforming technical event since the capture of fire. (Barlow, 1995: 36)

What can be learned from *Man with the Movie Camera* from a vantage point where so much has changed – not least the fact that the vanguard role of machine technology has been displaced by information technology? One point is that Vertov's *enthusiasm* – it was to be the title of his next film – for the machine is symptomatic of an ideology of technology-led progress which can be traced not only along the official highways of capitalism, but also in the works of its most influential critics, including Marx. While the utopianism of such attitudes has been subject to sustained critique at least since the 1940s, the cyberspace-dotcom episode of the 1990s proves they are eminently capable of resurfacing. If a level of boosterism can be expected for any new technology, the fact that otherwise sober analysts such as Lawrence Lessig (2001: xxii) could describe the Internet as 'the greatest technological revolution since the Industrial Revolution' should give us pause for thought.

The second point is the fact that cinema – at least, Vertov's cinema – is already 'a machine for thinking with'. (Hence Lev Manovich's adoption of *Man with a Movie Camera* as a template for his typology of 'new media' language.) This understanding complicates the current fashion for positing computer and information technologies as a decisive break from older industrial technologies, interrupting the linear narrative of technological change that is still too often a default position. Vertov's desire to use cinema as the means of analysing and revealing the new world produced by industrial technology poses a question that remains relevant: to what extent can the technological apparatus be used to make sense of the profound technological transformation of the world?

II

Technology, in the sense I have begun to use here, referring not only to a particular machine or practical method but also to a more general and interlocking system, is a relatively recent usage. The word derives from the Greek and Latin root *techne* meaning 'art' in the broad sense of 'skill' – an etymology brought to the fore by Heidegger, Winner and others. The modern distinction between science and art as separate bodies of knowledge distinguished by object and method, although emergent in European thought by the 17th century, was not fully consolidated until the mid-19th century. By this time the meaning of technology had narrowed to the 'practical arts', exemplified in the emergence of the split between knowledge (science) and its practical application in a selected field (technology).

The bioelectronic 'frontier' is an appropriate metaphor for what is happening in cyberspace, calling to mind as it does the spirit of invention and discovery that led ancient mariners to explore the world, generations of pioneers to tame the American continent and, more recently, to man's first exploration of outer space. (Dyson et al., 1994)

In modern times, technological thresholds have frequently been used to designate particular eras or historical periods. Archaeologists speak of the 'stone age' and the 'iron age', while the 19th century is often called the 'steam age' – a designation rapidly taken over in the 20th century by a succession of others, including the ages of electricity, the motor car, radio,

television, the space age, the information age, the knowledge age and so on. Embedded in these designations is an understanding of the distinctiveness of ‘modernity’ equated with the technological achievements of ‘the West’. While modern transport and communication technologies were fundamental to projects of colonial expansion and imperial administration in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and underpin the global market of the 21st, the presence or absence of specific technologies has often been read as a marker of cultural ‘backwardness’. Interrogations of Western ethnocentrism in relation to technology are recent and still limited. Most accounts of technology, whether critical or uncritical, focus on developments within the West, or the impact of those developments ‘on’ other cultures. Technology is something that *comes* from the West and does something *to* other people in other places, such as the ‘Third World’ – a framework which, even when well-intentioned, denies both agency and contemporaneity to the ‘other’. My account here is shaped by this history, even as it tries to sketch its historical limitations.

While it is easy to dismiss designations such as the ‘steam age’ or the ‘information age’ for their obvious failings, particularly their deterministic tendency to repress the constellation of forces – political, economic, cultural – underlying technological transformation, it is nevertheless important to recognize them as symptomatic of the increasing centrality of technology to modern life. Metaphor and rhetoric have long been conditioned by prevailing technologies. However, when Descartes characterized the universe as a clock and God as an Eternal Clockmaker, he was proposing a mechanistic ideal far removed from both the limited technological accomplishments and the collective experience of the 17th century. When contemporary proponents of artificial life, such as Langton, describe the universe as computational, or the human body is conceptualized as an information processing system, these references draw on technological forms which have already substantially reworked the lifeworld that many people experience.

The increased centrality of technology became evident in the post-Second World War discourse as concern shifted to what Habermas dubbed the ‘scientization’ of technology, what Latour called ‘technoscience’, or what others call ‘technoculture’. When technology no longer refers only to machines, but to media forms and ‘machines that think’, as well as to biotechnology, nanotechnology and ‘artificial life’, we have reached the threshold of what Scott Lash (2002) aptly calls ‘technological forms of life’. This threshold lays bare something that is implied in every historical iteration of technology: defining the technological not only activates the border between nature and culture, but goes to the heart of what it means to be human.

III

Writing in the mid- to late 19th century, Marx is characteristic in not using the term ‘technology’. Nevertheless, the advent of machine production is critical to his materialist conception of historical dynamism. While Marx argued that capitalism emerged at least a century prior to widespread industrialization, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) stresses the revolutionary impact of technological innovation in manufacturing, agriculture, transport and communication:

[T]he clock has been the foremost machine in modern technics; and at each period it remains in the lead: it marks a perfection towards which other machines aspire.
(Mumford, 1934: 15)

A person is not a head and arms and legs. That's trivial. A person is a very large microprocessor with a million ties, a million small parts, and these are arranged as a thousand computers.
(Minsky, 1999[1996]: 244)

I operate as a man-machine interface – that is, as a technological form of natural life – because I must necessarily navigate through technological forms of social life. . . . Because my forms of social life are so normally and chronically at-a-distance, I cannot navigate these distances, I cannot achieve sociality apart from my machine interface. (Lash, 2002: 15)

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground – what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour? (Marx and Engels, 1977: 48)

While *Capital* contains detailed descriptions of the deleterious social effects of machine production and the factory system on the worker, Marx's structural division between the forces of production and the relations of production favours a relatively neutral conception of technology in which the key issue is political control over surplus. Yet there is an ambiguity running through Marx's understanding of technology which is noteworthy insofar as it sets a pattern that recurs throughout the next century.

On the one hand, his early formulations at times seem deterministic, deriving complex social changes from technological thresholds. In *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847) he famously asserts:

In acquiring new productive forces men change their mode of production; and in changing their mode of production, in changing the way of earning their living, they change all their social relations. The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist. (Marx, 1976: 165)

Counteracting this 'mechanical materialism' are Marx's later insights into the way commodities – including technology as 'capital instruments' – assume an enigmatic appearance of autonomy from their producers. If 'all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour time' (1887: 46), this *social* relation is concealed by the fetishization of exchange value that characterizes commodity relations within mature capitalism. While subsequent critiques of the Marxist theory of labour value have often noted its failure to adequately theorize the productivity gains enabled by technological change, Marx's analysis of the manner in which modern technology appears as something external to human effort, and therefore outside social control, remains active.

'Neutral' understandings of technology, in which the central problem is not so much the 'essence' of technology but the need for its rational use according to new forms of political control, were dominant in the West at least up until the Second World War. Not surprisingly, this stance informs the 'scientific management' theories of Taylor, published in 1911, which sought to facilitate the adaptation of the inefficient worker to machine production. It also underpins the more critical views of those such as American political economist and sociologist Thorstein Veblen, for whom technological change necessitated the end of the market system and private property in favour of central planning by an engineering technocracy. Even Lewis Mumford's (1934) magisterial history of technics, written in the United States at the height of the great Depression and prior to the advent of the 'New Deal', treats technology in relatively neutral terms, opposing Veblen's engineering technocracy with the advocacy of rational planning informed by humanist values. While Mumford treats the 'paleotechnics' of the 19th-century factory system almost entirely as a regression in terms of the 'good life', he is still hopeful that better planning can alleviate the crisis. His conclusion forecasts a 'Neo-technic' era, based on long-distance transmission of electricity, allowing decentralization of production and the dispersion of the concentric industrial city into modern garden cities. A similar hope informs Siegfried Giedion's monumental *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948), which investigates the technological transformation of areas such as housing, furniture and food. However, for Mumford this potential was to remain unrealized; by the time of *The Myth of the Machine* (1967–70), he was far less sanguine about the technological future.

IV

In the post-war period, significant changes in the concept of technology accrue into a critical mass in two directions. One is marked out by Norbert Wiener's *Cybernetics*, which stands as a tutor text for a new paradigm in which, as he put it, scientists had 'become aware of the essential unity of the set of problems centering about communication, control and statistical mechanics, whether in the machine or in living tissue' (1948: 19). The cybernetic model depended on two related shifts: first, understanding information as a purely quantitative and probabilistic entity entirely divorced from semantics and, second, understanding human neural structures in terms of binary information flows. Wiener's radical move was to equate living systems and machines, displacing the classical paradigm of clockwork automata whose mechanical regularity exposed human fallibility in favour of information processing machines capable of modelling the complex behaviour of organic systems. Like many other technological developments, this shift had been vastly accelerated by the demands of total warfare: Wiener's work at MIT on anti-aircraft systems capable of predicting the evasive patterns of enemy pilots in the US was complemented by the code-breaking research of Turing and others in England.

From that time it became clear to us that the ultra-rapid computing machine, depending as it does on consecutive switching devices, must represent almost an ideal model of the problems arising in the nervous system. (Wiener, 1948: 22)

The cybernetic paradigm has exercised continuing influence over contemporary scientific understanding, notably in underwriting subsequent developments in biotechnology. The success of the Human Genome Project in garnering massive research funding, which led to the earlier than expected completion of its mapping phase in mid-2000, depends on a cybernetic understanding of the lived body as a computational system running on a genetic program in which DNA figures as 'the code of codes'. This conception of the body as a complex system made up of sub-systems that can, in principle, be taken apart and re-assembled effectively supports a 'montage' theory of human evolution, along the lines elaborated in Richard Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene* (1976), where genetic programs are assimilated to computer programs and 'selection' is presented as an algorithm. In fact, these models effectively reverse Wiener's earlier attempts to humanize the machine in favour of a mathematical concept of the human. They also largely ignore later developments in cybernetics, such as Maturana and Varela's (1980) autopoiesis, which theorized decentralized and distributed control and feedback systems, in favour of a model reinstating central control.

In this vein, Walter Gilbert, author of The Code of Codes (1992), looks forward to the day when 'Three billion bases of a sequence can be put on a single compact disc (CD), and one will be able to pull a CD out of one's pocket and say, "Here's a human being; it's me".' (Gilbert, 1992: 96)

V

If cybernetics, with its ambition of uniting diverse scientific fields including mathematics, neurophysiology and engineering, marks one major post-war paradigm for thinking technology, its opposite was the increasing scepticism towards the form of rationality manifested in modern technological life. A key text is Heidegger's 1955 essay 'The Question Concerning Technology' (1977), inspired by a communication from Ernst Jünger who once declared technology to be the metaphysics of the 20th century. In it, Heidegger develops ontological themes shared in some respects by others, including Marcuse (1964, 1998), who was Heidegger's student from 1928 to 1932, Ellul (1967) and Habermas (1971).

Heidegger (1977: 4) argues that regarding technology as neutral means 'we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way'. Famously asserting that the 'essence of technology is by no means anything technological', Heidegger (1977: 4, 13) treats technology as a stance towards the world – what others might call an ideology – insofar as it constitutes an instrumental 'mode of revealing'. Unlike the bringing-forth of classical *poiesis*, modern technology

is a *challenging forth* (*Herausforrden*, meaning to summon to action, to provoke). This challenging of nature transforms it into what Heidegger dubs a ‘standing-reserve’ (*Bestand*) in which every element is calculable, orderable and substitutable.

The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the soil as mineral deposit. . . . Air is now set upon to yield nitrogen, the earth to yield ore, ore to yield uranium, for example; uranium is set upon to yield atomic energy, which can be released either for destruction or peaceful use. (Heidegger, 1977: 14–15)

It is from this perspective that Heidegger can characterize the essence of technology as *Ge-stell* (enframing), and reverse the common-sense chronological relation between science and

Ellul's La Technique was published in 1954, while Marcuse's essay on 'Modern Technology' dates from 1941. However, Heidegger's essay deserves precedence insofar as he began exploring related themes in 1936–38, in the wake of his notorious 'commitment' to National Socialism.

writes of a ‘technological attitude’. It can also be felt in Ellul’s (1967: xxvi) all-embracing concept of ‘la technique’ defined in 1963 as ‘*the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency* (for a given stage of development) in *every* field of human activity’ (emphasis in original). But where Ellul deliberately subsumes all other social and political

Capitalism did not create our world; the machine did. . . . At the present time, technique has arrived at such a point in its evolution that it is being transformed and is progressing almost without decisive intervention by man. . . . There is but one method for its use, one possibility. Lacking this, it is not a technique. (Ellul, 1967: 5, 85, 97)

determinations into the efficient logic of technology, Marcuse retains a more dialectical account. The ‘technological attitude’ has transformed the function of individuality – which at its inception in the Enlightenment had a critical edge because the society into which it was born was ‘not yet rational’ – into a conformism destructive of individuality. Marcuse (1998: 46) gives the example of a car journey, organized by the logic of maps, signposts and travel guides: ‘Giant advertisements tell him when to stop and find the pause that refreshes. . . .

Business, technics, human needs and nature are welded together into one rational and expedient mechanism’. Foreshadowing his influential *One-dimensional Man* (1964), Marcuse stresses that the totalizing nature of the technological system means the individual cannot choose to ‘opt out’:

There is no personal escape from the apparatus which has mechanized and standardized the world. It is a rational apparatus, combining utmost expediency with utmost convenience, saving time and energy, removing waste, adapting all means to the end, anticipating consequences, sustaining calculability and security. (1941/1998: 46)

Rather than being the handmaiden of the established apparatus, beautifying its business and its misery, art would become a technique for destroying this business and this misery. (Marcuse, 1964: 239)

the bureaucratic domination analysed by Weber. Like Adorno, but also like Heidegger, Marcuse locates the potential critique of this limited rationality in art: recovering the richness of an older form of *techne* is positioned as the key to overcoming the narrowness of the technological attitude.

technology: modern physics is not modern because of its technological apparatus, such as the glass for test-tubes and lenses that Mumford (1934: 124–31) identified as crucial, but because it conceptualizes nature as ‘a coherence of forces calculable in advance’ (Heidegger, 1977: 21).

Heidegger’s transhistorical characterization of modern technology as the ‘destining’ of a tendency present since the inception of metaphysics can be felt in the work of Marcuse (1998: 48) when he

Marcuse’s analysis of the conversion of technology from means to end shares much with the image of a technologically homogenized ‘mass society’ proposed by other members of the Frankfurt School, including Habermas (1971) for whom technology formed a second strand of administration complementing

VI

Urban legend has it that Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media* (1964/1974) sold more books during the 1960s than any other English-language text except the Bible. Whatever its truth, such an assertion at least registers the extraordinary public impact of McLuhan's work, which rode the *zeitgeist* of television, coinciding with the Telstar satellite's (launched in 1962 and used for the first satellite link-up of all five continents for a live television broadcast in 1964) confirmation of the medium's global reach. Drawing heavily on Harold Innis's concept of the 'bias' of different communication technologies, according to which durable media such as clay tablets were time-biased and favoured small-scale, stable societies, while paper was space-biased, favouring administrative relations extending across large territories, McLuhan focused on the transformation of spatio-temporal experience, and thus on ways of knowing and experiencing the world:

During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing space and time as far as our planet is concerned. . . . As electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village. (McLuhan, 1974: 11, 12–13)

For the 'message' of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs. (1974: 16)

Like Innis, McLuhan extolled the importance of printing in laying the foundations for nationalism, an argument later influentially adapted by Benedict Anderson. McLuhan also followed Innis in fundamentally dividing 'oral' and 'literate' societies, according to a concept of writing as the 'technology' proper to civilization, which Derrida notes has long operated to authorize deeply racist and ethnocentric accounts of human development. Where McLuhan departed from Innis was in positing electronic communication as a third wave which promised to overcome the fragmenting effects of print media, producing a new type of consciousness.

Resentment towards McLuhan's showmanship and pop vocabulary, if not the more measured critique of his deterministic history by those such as Raymond Williams, accelerated the decline of his star, before he was resurrected as the patron saint of *Wired* in the 1990s. Unsurprisingly, this return occurred at a moment when the scale, pattern and pace of media was again in transition, as the rapid growth of networked computers helped to orchestrate a new phase of global society.

If the technological annihilation of space and time was something that Marx and others had flagged in the 19th century, its late 20th-century manifestation differed in the degree to which the intertwining of the global and the local now saturated everyday life. Since the mid-1970s, McLuhan's understanding of technology as sensory extension has been reprised by Paul Virilio, but this time as catastrophe. For Virilio, every new technology necessarily presumes a new 'accident'. Given that the communication technologies which succeeded the transportation technologies of the 19th century have now reached 'light-speed', the technological accident can no longer be localized; the generalized accident of ubiquitous 'real time' communication produces nothing less than the exhaustion of the spatio-temporal dimensions of the world. This abolition of the distance and perspective, which was once the frame for properly 'human' experience, erodes memory, urbanism and now, with what Virilio calls the 'third revolution' of nanotechnologies and transplants, results in an endo-colonization of the body. Animating Virilio's understanding of technology is its intimate connection to militarization: the *dromopolitics* inaugurated by the breakdown of feudal society analysed in *Speed and Politics* (1986) leads directly to the vision machine of *War and Cinema* (1989), which in turn spreads implacably to become *The Vision Machine*

The initially confined rise of the dynamic, at first mobile, then automotive, vehicle is suddenly followed by the generalised rise of pictures and sounds in the static vehicles of the audio-visual. . . . From now on everything will happen without us moving, without us even having to set out. (Virilio, 1989a: 112)

(1994) inhabiting modern culture. The atomic bomb begets the ‘information bomb’; in Ellulian manner, Virilio (1995) declares that ‘Totalitarianism is latent in technology.’

VII

One problem with proclaiming the technological ‘annihilation’ of time and space is that it inevitably positions the present as the apex of the historic process, and leaves little room for conceptualizing further change. In fact, as Schivelbusch (1986) has pointed out, similar

‘Annihilation of time and space’ was the topos which the early nineteenth century used to describe the new situation into which the railroad placed natural space after depriving it of its hitherto absolute powers. (Schivelbusch, 1986: 10)

rhetoric first emerged as long ago as the 1820s, when the invention of steam-powered trains radically transformed the way that people saw and experienced the landscape. If the emergence of the ‘global village’ threatened what Virilio (1986: 135) and many others saw as a ‘geostrategic homogenization of the globe’, beneath this current – and perhaps responding to the same forces – different conceptu-

alizations of technology began to emerge in the 1970s. In the context of this essay, four strands stand out.

The first is the emergence of variously named programmes for the social study of science and technology from the early 1970s. Of particular importance in this context was the pioneering empirical research conducted at the Salk Institute of Biological Studies in La Jolla, California by Latour and Woolgar and published as *Laboratory Life* in 1979. Where earlier approaches largely accepted a definition of technology in terms of instrumental rationality and efficiency – even critical accounts by those such as Marcuse and Habermas, which positioned this as a false rationality – Latour and Woolgar undermined this myth on its own terms by removing ‘laboratory life’ from its ‘black box’ to focus on the role of institutional politics and interpersonal relations in constructing scientific ‘fact’ and directing technological development.

The word black box is used by cyberneticians whenever a piece of machinery or a set of commands is too complex. In its place they draw a little box about which they need to know nothing but its input and output. (Latour, 1987: 2–3)

The second major shift was the emergence of feminist critiques of knowledge, science and technology by those such as Evelyn Fox Keller and Sandra Harding, as well as endeavours to reinscribe women into the history of scientific and technological innovation. An important shift in this context is marked out by Donna Haraway’s 1984 ‘Cyborg manifesto’, which explicitly sought to build a new political myth

by conceptualizing the relation between humans and technology as irretrievably hybridized without recourse to some prior unified or organic body. In this respect, Haraway occupied similar uncertain ground gestured to by Derrida when he argued, contra Heidegger’s privileging of language as the dwelling-place of Being, that ‘*tekhne* does not happen to language’, or evoked by Latour’s recasting of subject–object relations into actant–network morphisms. At

The machine is not an it to be animated, worshipped and dominated. The machine is us, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; they do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they. (Haraway, 1991: 180)

stake in all these moves is rejection of the separation of ‘the essence of technology’ from the human, but in a way that does not assimilate the human to the cybernetic-mathematic paradigm.

A third significant change was the emergence of critiques of the impact of Western technology on developing nations, particularly the techno-experimentation of the so-called ‘green revolution’, which fed into investigations of alternative and appropriate technology. Latour’s (1987) reinscription of science as ‘local knowledge’ alongside the indigenous knowledge systems it has always sought to marginalize by virtue of its claim to universality, also placed the issue of indigenous technology on an agenda that had long excluded it by definition. However, despite a few exceptions, such a shift toward thinking the contemporaneity of the indigenous and the modern has not entered the mainstream of science

technology and society studies. However, it has been more influential in fields such as art history, notably through the journal *Third Text* (1987–) and cultural studies.

A related shift was the fact that leadership in technological production no longer belonged so exclusively to the industrialized West. When US video artist Vito Acconci imperiously claimed in 1984: ‘Wherever it is located, theoretically, art video is grounded, practically, in America’ (1993: 29), he was ignoring the extent to which the hardware on which he depended, such as monitors and cameras, was in fact made in Japan. By the 1980s, Japanese rivalry in electronics and microelectronics, including leadership in new technologies such as computer games, as well as competitive advantage in automobiles and consumer white goods, underpinned the burgeoning ‘bubble economy’. As other so-called ‘Asian tigers’ followed suit, new anxieties became evident in the industrialized West, rivalling the Sputnik shock of 1957. However, on this occasion the challenge to the deeply entrenched assumption that technological leadership is a ‘natural’ right accruing to the West in general and the US in particular, was not so easily assuaged, as a more complex map of global technology emerged in the 1990s.

VIII

In 1993, Nicholas Negroponte (founding director of MIT’s Media Lab) wrote his first column for the inaugural *Wired* magazine, extolling, among other things, that ‘prime time is my time’. For Negroponte, who had been working on human–computer interfacing since the 1960s, the time was right to spread the word; in the columns later collected into *Being Digital* (1995), the key word is choice. Contradicting the suspicion towards technology underwriting Virilio’s image of latent totalitarianism, and largely ignoring the questions raised by feminism, postcolonialism and social studies of science, Negroponte casts the digital era as one of enhanced individual choice and personal freedom. The ‘old media’ such as the broadcast television networks, which have ‘all the dogma of the analog world’ (1995: 181), are unfavourably compared to the digital future in which universal access will be streamlined by computer management of information choices:

We will probably see a national information-computer-utility system, with tens of thousands of terminals in homes and offices ‘hooked’ into giant central computers providing library and information services, retail ordering and billing services and the like. (Bell, 1968: 4)

My VCR of the future will say to me when I come home, ‘Nicholas, I looked at five thousand hours of television while you were out and recorded six segments for you which total forty minutes’. . . . It will do this by looking at the headers. (1995: 179)

Beneath his conversational informality, Negroponte’s future-casting continually and revealingly slips into an imperative tone: ‘The change from atoms to bits is irrevocable and unstoppable’ (1995: 4). Negroponte’s work exemplifies the rebranding of technology during the 1990s, as miniaturized and mobile digital devices – from personal computers and hand-held games consoles to cell phones and MP3 players – were successfully marketed as icons of personal liberation. Dwarfing the actual commodities, at least in their early manifestations, was the overarching specular creation of cyberspace, the founding myth of the digital era passing seamlessly from the fiction of William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* (1984) to the ‘fact’ plied by those such as Howard Rheingold and Michael Benedikt a few years later. For the prophets of VR (virtual reality), the key question was also choice, only now the choice was not a democracy of consumption but the future of human being. Paralleling the rhetoric of biotechnology, Rheingold argued:

The methodical movement of recorded music as pieces of plastic, like the slow human handling of most information in the form of books, magazines, newspapers and videocassettes, is about to become the instantaneous and inexpensive transfer of electronic data that move at the speed of light. In this form, information can become universally accessible. (Negroponte, 1995: 4)

VR vividly demonstrates that our social contract with our tools has brought us to a point where *we have to decide fairly soon what it is we as humans ought to become*, because we are on the brink of having the power to create any experience we desire. (1991: 386, italics in original)

[T]echnology is absolutely, 100 percent, positive. (Kevin Kelly, executive editor of Wired, cited in Keegan, 1995: 39)

The rapid flowering of ‘Californian ideology’, in which digital technology was cast as the next phase of human evolution, drew on a long tradition which Leo Marx aptly termed the ‘technological sublime’.

One function served by the short-circuit of the ‘new economy’ in the dotcom bust of 2001 is that it at least cleared some space for a more nuanced assessment of digital culture.

IX

Marx had almost nothing to say about the impact of technology on culture – a lacuna that Walter Benjamin generously attributes to the fact that capitalism was in its ‘infancy’ when Marx undertook his analysis. Benjamin’s ‘Artwork’ essay (2003), written during his exile in Paris between 1935 and 1939, famously takes up the impact of ‘technological reproduction’ in the cultural realm. In effect, Benjamin theorizes what Vertov’s *Man with the Movie Camera* had sought to enact, positing a privileged relation between film and the demand to comprehend a technologically transformed world.

The illusionary nature of film is of the second degree; it is the result of editing. That is to say: In the film studio the apparatus has penetrated so deeply into reality that a pure view of that reality, free of the foreign body of equipment, is the result of a special procedure, namely, the shooting by the specially adjusted photographic device and the assembly of that shot with others of the same kind. The equipment-free aspect of reality has here become the height of artifice, and the vision of immediate reality the Blue Flower in the land of technology. (Benjamin, 2003: 263)

For Benjamin, the key question is not simply knowledge of technology but new modes of knowing enabled through technology – an approach that remains instructive in thinking about the circulation of digital information in the present.

For Benjamin, the ‘second degree’ illusion of film montage corresponds to profound changes in social experience as the industrial city displaced ‘nature’ as the primary lived environment. What first appears in his 1927 essay on Russian film as the ‘dynamite of the fraction of a second’ becomes the ‘optical unconscious’ of the 1930s, a technological lever capable of liberating the masses from the prison-house of the industrial city. However, it is a mistake to assume, as Mark Poster (1995) does with his ‘second media age’, that Benjamin was unswervingly positive towards ‘new media’. Film’s ‘shock’ capacity is intensely ambivalent: as much as it can blow everyday reality apart to reveal its hidden springs, it can also render the fragments indifferent to history. Cinema thus occupies a crucial place in the dialectical movement of history: it is *both* a symptom of the hold of modern technology over consciousness *and* a lever for unlocking that hold.

This ambivalence is apparent in the more sanguine formulation of cinema Benjamin offered in ‘Some Motifs in Baudelaire’, written in 1939 alongside the final version of the ‘Artwork’ essay:

There came a day when a new and urgent need for stimuli was met by film. In a film, perception conditioned by shock [*chockförmige Wahrnehmung*] was established as a formal principle. What determines the rhythm of production on a conveyor belt is the same thing that underlies the rhythm of reception of film. (2003: 328)

Here film is aligned, not with the dynamiting of the social world by revealing its ‘optical unconscious’, but with the system of industrial training. Benjamin is drawing on Marx’s comparison between ‘training’ and ‘practice’: where practice depends on skills acquired over time from experience, training depends upon the strict division of labour and the fragmentation of work tasks. For Marx (cited by Benjamin, 2003: 329) the unskilled worker on the assembly line ‘does not make use of the working conditions. The working conditions make use of the worker.’

The political ambiguity of cinema thus turns on whether its radical impact – its capacity to break the world into fragments, dismantling old patterns and enabling new relationships to be imagined – will be reduced to another mode for industrial training of the senses. For Benjamin, this is finally not so much a question of the formal process of fragmentation, as Adorno feared, but a question of meaning. Can ‘distracted’ perception generate collective meaning capable of entering individual experience, and thus become the conscious basis for recognition of the conditions of one’s existence?

X

This ambiguity, described in 1927 by Benjamin’s contemporary Siegfried Kracauer as ‘the go-for-broke game of history’, is helpful in situating the ambivalence of the ‘global information society’ orchestrated by contemporary digital networks. On the one hand, technologically mediated ‘flows’ radically undermine the traditional social consequences of space and place; on the other hand, as Sassen (1991) observes, new information technologies are integral to the emergence of ‘global cities’, which concentrate command and control functions in the global economy. This produces radically uneven spatial textures in which intimacy at a distance is juxtaposed to the disjunction of physically proximate areas and the virtual exile of communities lacking appropriate technology and resources. In the same ambivalent vein, decentralized person-to-person communication offers significant structural challenges to the media and communication forms that dominated the 20th century, yet ‘the technologies of freedom’ celebrated by de Sola Pool (1983) are produced by corporate oligopolies whose scale and global reach is unprecedented, and is matched at every step by the extension of personal surveillance. New media networks enabled the rapid coordination of rolling global political campaigns against war in Iraq, yet the health of workers making computer chips, like the disposal of old First World computer equipment in the developing world, remains largely invisible. And, despite the pervasive rhetoric of freedom, the potential of peer-to-peer networks is being reshaped in the wake of Napster via a combination of technological and legal patches designed to protect existing content owners, who are fast shifting consumers to lucrative time-based licensing models of consumption.

The records of Mohammed Atta, on CCTV tapes and digital logs, were collected not because he was doing anything unusual or deviant. . . . Data-gathering is routine, generalized, and distributed across almost every sphere of daily life. (Lyon, 2003: 97)

In Gilles Deleuze’s terms the digital era represents a shift from ‘disciplinary’ to ‘control’ societies. Where disciplinary societies depended on moulds, physical structures such as Bentham’s panoptic architecture, control societies operate by *modulation*, a flexible form of active moulding defined by the ubiquity of digital information. Yet the flood of information that characterizes digital culture is both the extension of control *and* the possibility of its disruption. The crucial issue is still the threshold Benjamin identified as a consequence of the technological destruction of aura: how to develop a ‘politics’ commensurate to technological modernity, so that information can be made meaningful, not just as the stance of isolated individuals but as a collective understanding capable of entering individual experience of the technologically transformed world. The widespread and unfulfilled demand for a new sociality extending beyond the confined technological boundaries of the market is registered in the advertising strategies of mobile phone companies, as much as in contemporary art, which Nicholas Bourriaud has perceptively characterized in terms of ‘relational aesthetics’ manifested in the emergence of artworks which are no longer objects or images but modes of social connection in themselves.

The old sovereign societies worked with simple machines, levers, pulleys, clocks; but recent disciplinary societies were equipped with thermodynamic machines presenting the passive danger of entropy and the active danger of sabotage; control societies function with a third generation of machines, with information technology and computers, where the passive danger is noise and the active, piracy and viral contamination. (Deleuze, 2002: 319)

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Technologies of Surveillance

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Keywords information society, policing, security, surveillance, techno-nationalism

Information Society as Surveillance Society

It is often said that current advanced societies are 'information societies' because a variety of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are introduced in our everyday life (Castells, 1997). The image of the information society is often very positively and optimistically described so that new ICTs are believed to solve the socio-political problems of our era.

However, the reality of the present information society is far from the dream-like image of the future that has fascinated the proponents of the information society for almost 30 years. Certainly, on the one hand, the advance of ICTs has made our life more efficient and convenient, but on the other hand it has caused several socio-political problems rather than solving them. One of the most prominent side-effects of the information society is the rise of surveillance and the invasion of privacy.

Critics have made it clear that new ICTs can be used as very effective tools for surveying and policing society and people (Lyon, 2001). For example, if 'every breath and step we take' are easily traceable via ICTs (mobile phone, personal computer and car navigation system using GPS), those who try to survey the people for the purpose of policing and control are happy because they can gather a huge amount of information about potential suspects. Thanks to digital technologies and electronic networks, the reality of our society is not so far from that sci-fi-like scenario. In that sense the information society is at the same time the surveillance society (Lyon, 2001).

However, the shape of society is never determined solely by technological developments. The mode of surveillance differs in different social contexts. To understand the conditions of the present surveillance society, we have to pay close attention to the specific political-historical contexts in which ICTs are introduced and domesticated. In this article I shall try to make it clear which social contexts of postwar Japan have shaped the seemingly excessive surveillance in present-day Japan.

Techno-nationalism

Just after defeat in the Second World War, the Japanese government declared its policy of fostering science and technology in order to rebuild the devastated land of Japan (Abe, 2001). In the postwar context of Japan, the development of technology had specific significance. On the one hand, the image of technology was synonymous with that of the US, as it was naively believed that the advance of technology could realize the wealth of the American way of life. On the other hand, the advance of technology had unique political meaning for Japanese people in the postwar era. Under the occupation policy of the US, Japan was forbidden to foster apparently national sentiments. In that political condition, the government policy of enhancing technology could have a supplementary function in satisfying the nation's pride. In other words, the development of technology was not only government policy but was also the national project of recovering the identity and pride that were lost by the defeat in the Second World War. In those socio-historical contexts, taking pride in 'Made In Japan' was nothing but expressing the techno-nationalism of Japan (Abe, 2004a).

The Information Society as Dream-like Future

It is well known that the term 'information society' (*Jo-hô-ka Shyakai*) was coined by the Japanese scholar Masuda (1981). The futuristic project of the information society was enthusiastically accepted not only by the government but also by the public in general. The reason is that the positive image of the information society as a 'wealthy and brighter future to come' was compatible with the techno-nationalistic sentiments of postwar Japan. Based on those nationalistic relationships between technology and society, the government implemented several policies that tried to introduce the new ICTs into people's everyday life during the 1980s (New Media Community, Teletopia and Intelligent City are the names of some of those policies). In the 1990s, 'Multi-Media' and 'IT (information technology)' have appeared as the new catchwords for celebrating the coming information society and new ICTs. In such social contexts in which technological development has been affirmatively accepted and welcomed as it satisfies the national pride, the policy of realizing the information society has been smoothly implemented without questioning or criticism.

Aum Shinrikyo and Policing

Although it has been invisible to the public, the information society also has been a surveillance society in postwar Japan. Several criminal incidents caused by Aum Shinrikyo, a religious cult group, made it clear that ICTs can be utilized as effective policing tools (Abe, 2004b). In the investigation of the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995, the police were able to follow the escape route taken by the Aum Shinrikyo suspects and eventually arrest them. In this investigation, the police fully utilized the N-system, whose original purpose was to monitor car traffic. Using the N-system, the police could easily detect where the suspects were heading. Before the arrest of the Aum members, the N-system was naively believed to be a tool for searching for stolen cars. But it became clear that the N-system could be and actually is used as a policing system that checks every car passing in front of the monitoring cameras.

However, the public's acceptance of the fact that ICTs (in this case the combination of monitoring cameras and electronic networks) are nothing but surveillance tools is more positive than critical. This is because Aum Shinrikyo was regarded as a very dangerous criminal group and the police's tight surveillance of them was considered indispensable, even if such policing might violate the civil liberty of criminal suspects. In other words, in the context of fear and anxiety for Aum Shinrikyo, utilizing ICTs as surveillance technologies was legitimized without discussion about the potential danger of rising surveillance in our everyday life.

Surveillance in the Name of Security

Considering the above-mentioned socio-historical contexts of postwar Japan, it could be said that Japanese society has long been a surveillance society where ICTs function as policing tools.

The shocking terrorist attacks on 9/11 functioned as the facilitating moment for enhancing the surveillance of society and people in Japan. As in other countries, the Japanese government tried to implement several new policies that aim to tighten the surveillance of the everyday life of the ordinary people in the name of 'public security' (Lyon, 2003). Backed by the people's fear of the threat of terrorism, apparently excessive surveillance is being introduced and institutionalized after 9/11. In a social context that gives paramount priority to security, civil rights (the individual's liberty, privacy, freedom of speech) seem to be

easily violated without much public concern and dissent. In that sense the current information/surveillance society in Japan contains profound dangers for the basic values of modern civil society. Certainly the threat of terrorism might be troublesome for our daily life. However, the rising surveillance fostered by the government and public opinion from within seems to be no less harmful and violent than terrorists' attacks from outside.

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Pleasures of Technology

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Keywords automation, parergon, pleasure, technology

In Akihabara, Tokyo's Electric Town, one finds a seemingly odd device – a *sushi drive*. It is a USB memory device that has a plastic shell that is a replica of a hand-made sushi. These drives, that look as sumptuous as any of the plastic food replicas that one finds in the display windows of Japanese restaurants, come in several flavours and in 32MB and 128MB. While it seems like a somewhat odd conjunction of food and computing, it also does seem logical to associate the bite-sized and highly portable sushi with a drive that was created to deliver the same in computing memory. However, it is not enough to tuck this away therefore as a logically coherent object or as a unique and culturally specific articulation of technology. The sushi drive is only a more recent example of the oft-neglected relationship between technology and pleasure.

It is useful first to theoretically articulate the secondary and supplementary place of pleasure in discourses and practices of technology. Towards this end, it is proposed that the notion of parergon as discussed by Derrida provides an interesting

reference point. While Derrida's discussion was developed in response to Immanuel Kant's notion of 'aesthetic judgement' as it bears upon art objects, insofar as judgement of the technological object also enacts limits on what is proper to assessing it, the notion of parergon will be relevant here too.

Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* argues that an aesthetic judgement, just like any logical one, is usually complicated by the presence of what he calls 'judgements of sense' where one's assessment of an object of beauty is affected by questions of whether that thing is agreeable or disagreeable. Kant proposes that a genuine 'judgement of taste', however, should not be based on such issues as agreeableness since they are incidental and not fundamental to such assessments. He claims, 'a judgment of taste . . . is only pure so far as its determining ground (*Bestimmungsgrunde*) is tainted with no merely empirical delight (*Wohlgefallen*). But such a taint is always present where charm and emotion have a share in the judgement by which something is to be described as beautiful.' According to him, qualities such as colour and tonalities are elements that are *added (hinzukommen)* to the object of beauty but the design and composition of these qualities are what constitute 'the proper object of the pure

judgment of taste'. These qualities are considered to be secondary to what comes to be perceived as beautiful since their contribution is to make the form more 'intuitable (*anschaulich machen*) and . . . stimulate the representation by their charm, as they excite and sustain the attention directed to the object itself' (Kant, 1911: 65–8).

Derrida, in his deconstructive reading of Kant's notion of aesthetic judgement, identifies in him one more instance in the long history of attempts to distinguish between what constitutes the proper referent for aesthetic judgement and what does not. Derrida says that this drive to 'distinguish between the internal or proper sense and the circumstance of the object being talked about – organizes all philosophical discourses on art, the meaning of art and meaning as such, from Plato to Hegel'. He suggests, however, that such attempts presuppose and are sustained by what he calls 'a discourse on the limit between the inside and outside of the art object' (Derrida, 1987: 45). This secondary operation that holds a tenuous link with the art object without quite becoming it Derrida refers to as '*parergon*', as that which works alongside the work (*ergon*) while remaining separate and fundamentally different from it. Derrida argues that for Kant the *parergon* is 'that which is not internal or intrinsic, as an integral part (*als Bestandstück*), to the total representation of the object but which belongs to it only in an extrinsic way as a surplus, an addition, an adjunct, a supplement' (Derrida, 1987: 57). Derrida points to the fact that Kant, despite his anxiety to excise the *parergon* from that which constitutes the *ergon* of the work so as to facilitate pure aesthetic judgement, also had a conception of what could be called a good or successful *parergon*. Derrida notes that for Kant, 'the *parergon* can augment the pleasure of taste, contribute to the proper and intrinsically aesthetic representation if it intervenes *by its form* and only by its form'. However, if 'it is not beautiful, purely beautiful, i.e. of a formal beauty, it lapses into adornment (*Schmuck*) and harms the beauty of the work' (Derrida, 1987: 64). It is important to note though that Derrida identifies in the *parergon* a capacity for deconstructive operations insofar as it promises to disrupt and frustrate efforts at separation of what constitutes the work from what it is not even as it issues from the anxiety to undertake such demarcations. He characterizes its liminal status thus: 'a *parergon* comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done (*fait*), the fact (*le fait*), the work, but it is does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside' (Derrida, 1987: 54). In the history of attempts to articulate the 'machine aesthetic',

elements that elicit from and/or address the senses and therefore provide pleasure have been presented as *parergonal*. Thus, to speak of the place of pleasure in technological development and conceptualization alike requires one to (re)invoke some examples of the complex ways in which pleasure is *constitutive* of technology.

The earliest automata were embedded into and functioning as part water clocks and astronomical devices and this led to a historiographical tendency to conceive of automata as secondary and *parergonal* complements to the more technical and functional capacities of this early fine technology. The historian Derek Price argues, however, that a 'deep complementarity exists between the clepsydra principles used in astronomical models and clocks and the almost identical workings of the Heronic singing birds and other *parerga*' (Price, 1964: 15). Price claims that the seemingly marginal automata played a primary role in the development of early pneumatic technology. He argues that the 'most ingenious mechanical devices of antiquity were not useful machines but trivial toys. Only slowly do the machines of everyday life take up the scientific advances and principles used long before in despicable playthings and overly-ingenious, impracticable scientific models and instruments' (Price, 1964: 15). For example, Hero (second century BC) describes a variety of such seemingly trivial automatic operations in his *Pneumatica* – 'a bird made to whistle by flowing water'; 'a trumpet, in the hands of an automaton, sounded by compressed air'; 'figures made to dance by fire on an altar'; and 'an automaton, the head of which continues to be attached to the body, after a knife has entered through the neck at one side, passed completely through it and out the other' (Hero, 1851: 29, 71, 95, 109). The fact that the pneumatic technologies that drive the clock are the very same that animate the automata makes this distinction between the functional and the aesthetic problematic.

David Tiffany cites a curious but little-known fact about these water clocks – that the ones made by Ktesibios, Hero and Philon 'had no scale of hours, no hands or pointer, nor any kind of legible face'. Drawing on this fact, he goes on to argue that 'with no constant means of indicating time to an observer, the ancient water clock does not so much tell time as possess it, or embody it in its mechanical movement and technical configuration' (Tiffany, 2000: 42). Derek Price also draws a similar conclusion about the operations of such clocks without time-reckoning indicators: 'It would be a mistake to suppose that water-clocks, or the sun-dials to which they are closely related, had the primary utilitarian purpose of telling time . . . On the whole, their design and intention seems to have

been aesthetic or religious satisfaction' (Price, 1964: 13). With reference to such automata integrated into clocks, it is noteworthy to examine the automata developed by Islamic engineers between the 10th and 13th centuries AD, specifically the works of al-Jazari. In his *The Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices*, written between 1202 and 1204 and subsequently published in 1206, al-Jazari proposes a variety of pneumatic and hydrostatic automata including water-clocks, clepsydra-type trick vessels, phlebotomy devices and musical automata as well as some amazing wine arbitrating and serving automata. In al-Jazari's water-clocks, he incorporates a variety of elaborate automata that are synchronized to become animated at regular intervals of time. These automata, however, were not merely incorporated to accompany and possibly even vivify what must have been an otherwise more abstract reckoning with time as numerical constants. It is also plausible that insofar as they were early attempts at time reckoning, they were still contending with the novelty of the time reckoning experience and the lovely spectacle created by the automata presented more enticing ways of coming to terms with time's passing than our modern notions of accuracy and predictability. This spectacularization of time constituted automata as the very embodiments of temporal experience where the automotive pleasures elicited by their movements provided one with a sense of the passing of time as such rather than an accurate indicator of the specific time of the day. It is also useful to contextualize these automotive pleasures of reckoning time in relation to the nature of Islamic thought and philosophy during this period best characterized by the poetic algorithms of al-Khwarizmi and the Epicurean poetry of Omar Khayyam.

The history of automation, however, has recorded these many automata developed for pleasure as interesting but useless distractions that merely postponed what was the teleological direction of such automation – to develop an instrument/process for the gradual and effective substitution of human labour. It is crucial to supplement and punctuate this instrumental history of automation with the multiple histories

of the many sensory pleasures that the automata and its movements have always provided.

While it is true that the prohibitively high price of sushi drives makes it a relatively precious item compared to the cheaper and standardized memory drives, the pleasures of owning a sushi drive that embodies a distinct aesthetic and quirky appeal to young and old seems to be keeping its prices and value to owners high. The sushi drive is not memory drive first, then replica food secondarily. It is not an instrumental object first and then a pleasurable object also. It is not functional first and formally interesting as a supplementary aspect. Its functional capacity as a portable memory drive issues from and is indistinguishable from the fun that it represents formally. The sushi drive is a *gadget* – a technological object that is useful because it is fun!

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Information

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(Translated by David Buist)

Abstract Although the concept of information is an inherently qualitative entity implying the capacity for meaning creation, in the historical development of this concept there has been a consistent emphasis on quantitative aspects. The generalization of the information concept from a specialized military term to a concept of broad social application occurred during the period when society as a whole became militarized in the 1930s and 1940s. After the Second World War, with the development of systematic information theory and the spread of computers in society, the military associations of the information concept gradually became obscured. But the popularity of information society theory in Japan and the USA indicates a need to review the military associations of its key concept. Today, with the development and spread of numerous global and local media, the information phenomena are experienced in a manner that far outstrips the narrow confines of the concept's history. So the concept of information needs to be understood as a field of struggle in which different definitions confront each other leading to the creation of new practices and alternative concepts.

Keywords information, knowledge, wisdom

The development of the concept of 'information' in the 20th century is paradoxical in one very striking respect. Considered derivationally, and also theoretically, 'information' necessarily implies the creation of meaning. However, under the growing influence of Shannon's information theory, this inherent aspect of meaning creation has been lost. In the present day, 'information' has come to be understood primarily as the central element of capitalistic database processing systems. As its derivation suggests, 'information' originally referred to the process of imparting 'form' – of imbuing a spirit – to some entity. Information is the process of 'giving form to something'. It involves finding patterns or reading messages in the objects of observation (whether these be natural or social phenomena). Such 'patterns' or 'messages' are not reducible to mere 'data'. They are educed recursively by observing the actions whereby life forms select meaningful patterns from within their environment. 'Information', therefore, cannot be reduced to bit units. The concept of 'information' has its basis in the life process whereby difference is discovered in the environment.

Thus, information is an inherently qualitative entity implying the capacity for meaning creation. Nevertheless, in the historical development of this concept, there has been a consistent emphasis on quantitative, rather than qualitative, aspects. 'Information' clearly has a place among other related concepts, such as 'symbol', 'representation', 'language', 'knowledge' and 'wisdom'. However, there is a tendency to see 'information' as the most superficial and ephemeral of all these concepts. Information is generally denied any profundity of meaning.

Let us consider, for example, the concept of 'knowledge' to which 'information' is often compared. Knowledge is generally understood as something capable of accumulation or storage. When the knowledge possessed by an individual or collectivity increases, this is understood to mean that the subject concerned has accumulated more knowledge. In other words,

there has been an increase in the knowledge held in stock and available for use. The concrete symbol of knowledge is the library, or the collection of books owned by a learned person. As this metaphor implies, the concept of knowledge is profoundly related to writing. Of course, knowledge itself pre-dates the Guttenberg Bible, and existed well before print media became widely available to the public. Nevertheless, before the printing press, the distribution of knowledge was severely limited and largely monopolized by monarchical and priestly authority.

In contrast, 'information' is essentially conceived as a 'flow'. It is something that circulates from one place to another, but is not necessarily stored anywhere. Information is associated with 'news' about persons and events brought to us from a distance. The word is often used in reference to enemy 'secrets' obtained through espionage. The typical manifestations of 'information' are such things as bulletin boards, posters, or magazine supplements. Even in ancient times, people did treat certain forms of knowledge as 'flow' rather than 'stock'. To this extent, information is not a new phenomenon. However, it was only with the development of capitalism that information surpassed knowledge and assumed a central position in the world of human consciousness, rather than being left on the periphery of knowledge as before. This reversal of the hierarchy between 'knowledge' and 'information' was promoted most especially by the development of electronic communications and mass media.

In this context we also encounter the concept of 'wisdom' – the third element of the triad I am considering here. Generally speaking, wisdom is something neither stored nor circulated. It is something that is simply discovered by individuals or groups. In some cases, it may exist inherently in the environment. Wisdom is often passed on from one generation to the next as a form of inheritance. It is embodied symbolically in the elders and storytellers who pass it on. If knowledge is something that is gradually stored up, and information is something that flows and circulates, then wisdom can be characterized as that which for ever returns. Wisdom is something to which people constantly return in their search for truth (Burke, 2000). In 'folk societies' – what Lévi-Strauss called 'cold societies' – wisdom is the normative form of knowing. Indeed, wisdom – not knowledge or information – has been the dominant element during most of the history of human consciousness (Lévi-Strauss, 1962). The supporting medium of wisdom is to be found in neither telecommunications nor in books, but in the culture of face-to-face oral transmission.

The Military Use and Development of the Concept of Information

What I have said up to this point is valid so far as concerns the concept of 'information' as generally understood today. However, my purpose is not to pursue further the present-day meaning of the concept, but rather to clarify the socio-historical context through which it came into being. Concepts are inherently historical by nature. They cannot exist independently of the context from which they derive their meaning. The purpose of my investigation is therefore to find out how, and by whom, the word 'information' has been used. How has its meaning been fixed amid the complex web of discourse, and to what forms of technological or policy practices has it been linked? These are the questions I seek to answer through a concrete historical analysis.

Since ancient times, information has been assiduously collected and managed by state authorities. Monarchs of pre-modern states were often very keen to gather information on every region within their domain. In commercial towns of the ancient and medieval periods, it was generally understood that the flow of information and the trading of goods were inseparably connected. As shown by Peter Burke, numerous surveys were undertaken to gather information on the native inhabitants in the New World territories colonized by Spain in the 16th century. At around the same time, merchants in Genoa, Venice and Florence were exchanging massive quantities of information through the medium of letters. Later, the Dutch East Indies Company built up an international information network. Throughout history, the collection of information has been one of the main activities of dominant political and economic powers (Burke, 2000).

However, it is only comparatively recently that information has come to be understood as a legal or policy concept, as opposed to simply being an item gathered, managed and traded. The formal organization of information in this way seems to be a relatively recent phenomenon. Before the present period, modern states were more concerned with the organization and management of ‘knowledge’, rather than ‘information’. Numerous institutions were set up for this purpose, including libraries, museums, archives, encyclopaedias, maps and statistical compilations. These are all very characteristic features of modernity and have spread throughout the world since the 19th century (Anderson, 1983). However, since the early 20th century, states have shown an increasing propensity to focus on the conceptualization and management of the ‘flow’ of information, rather than the ‘stock’ of knowledge.

I will now demonstrate this historical process by outlining the development of the ‘information’ concept in Japan. The concept of ‘information’ is usually translated as *jouhou* (情報) in the Japanese language. However, the history of the formation of this concept in the various countries of Asia, including Japan, is far from simple.

The most influential proponent of ‘western civilization’ in late 19th-century Japan was Fukuzawa Yukichi. (He was also the founder of Keio University.) In a book he wrote in 1879, *Minsei Isshin* (Renewing the Life of the People), he asserted that ‘information technology’ was the very essence of modern civilization. ‘Information technology’ at that time was represented by four things: the steam locomotive, the telegraph, the printing press and the post office. According to Fukuzawa, the concept of ‘knowledge’ embraced not only theoretical reflection, but also a dimension of broad observation and experience. This horizontal dimension of knowledge he referred to as ‘information’. Through the medium of the aforementioned ‘information technology’, the world would become smaller and the social perception of time would be transformed. Fukuzawa claimed not only that ‘the telegraph would shrink the surface of the earth’, but also that ‘if steam were added to the telegraph, time would shrink, things would become more plentiful, and human life prolonged’. He believed that the modernization of a small Far Eastern country could be attained by bringing about the penetration of all areas of its society by ‘information technology’ (Fukuzawa, 1959[1879]).

Fukuzawa might thus be described as the first ideologue of the ‘information society’ in Japan. However, it was Mori Ogai who actually introduced the use of the word *jouhou* (情報) to translate the western concept of ‘information’. Mori is well known as one of the most illustrious figures in modern Japanese literature. At the same time, he was extremely active in military affairs, rising to become the territorial army’s chief medical officer (thanks largely to his adeptness at German). In 1901–3, he published a Japanese translation of Carl von Clausewitz’s *On War*, in which the following definition is given: *Jouhou* (情報) is the totality of knowledge about the enemy and enemy nation, and it is therefore the foundation of our country’s plan and action in war’. Even before Mori, the army had used *Jouhou* (情報) as a translation for the French word *rensainement* in an 1876 translation of a French military treatise (Nakamoto, 1993). Other words, such as *chouhou* (諜報) and *houchi* 報知, were frequently used in the Japanese military to convey the same sorts of meanings as *Jouhou* (情報). The Japanese interest in ‘information’ clearly began among the military.

However, for ordinary Japanese people, *Jouhou* (情報) had for a long time simply conveyed the meaning of a ‘report on a situation’. *Jouhou* is a compound word represented by two Chinese characters. The first character, pronounced *jou* 情, originally included such meanings as ‘mind’ or ‘soul’, ‘condition’ or ‘appearance’, and ‘pity’ or ‘sympathy’. The second character, *hou* 報, embraced a diversity of senses, including ‘retaliation’, ‘reporting’ and even ‘secret relations’ (i.e. adultery). Other words containing the character *jou* 情 also refer to matters relating to intimacy between the sexes: a *joujin* 情人 is a ‘lover’; *jouyoku* 情欲 means ‘sexual desire’, and *joushi* 情死 is a suicide pact between lovers. It is perhaps these associations of the component characters of *Jouhou* (情報) that have discouraged its use as a translation for ‘information’ in the Chinese language. In Chinese, ‘information’ is generally rendered as *xinxi* 信息, and is written with completely different characters from *Jouhou* (情報).

However, until the early 20th century, *Jouhou* (情報) was not the most commonly used

word to express the idea of a ‘report on a situation’ (although its use in this meaning had begun to increase). Until that time, the word ‘*shinbun* 新聞’ was more frequently employed (Yoshimi, 2000). Nowadays, the word ‘*shinbun* 新聞’ is used exclusively to mean ‘newspaper’, but it used to have a broader meaning embracing all forms of news and reporting. ‘*Shin* 新’ means ‘new’ and ‘*bun* 聞’ means ‘hear’. When compounded, these two characters expressed the meaning of ‘something newly heard’. With the growth of the newspaper industry, the sense of ‘hearing’ was gradually lost, and the word came to apply only to the printed medium of news. Over the course of the 20th century the boundaries between concepts such as ‘*Jouhou* (情報)’, ‘*shinbun* 新聞’ and ‘*houchi* 報知’ gradually shifted.

During the 1920s and 1930s, in Japan as elsewhere, the concept of ‘information’ came to be closely associated with the aspect of military ‘intelligence’. This change of emphasis was largely a product of the system of all-out warfare instituted in the First World War. During this time, the warring countries of Europe all set up intelligence bureaus with the aim of manipulating the flow of information for strategic purposes. The Japanese government quickly learned to follow this trend, and set up its own department for the management of ‘*Jouhou* (情報)’. This was eventually elevated to cabinet-level status and became one of the central organs of state power. Under the wartime system built up in the 1930s (and first half of the 1940s), all aspects of ‘information’ were comprehensively managed in accordance with the aims of war. This included everything from print media, radio broadcasting, film and posters to rumour, personal correspondence and graffiti. At the same time, other countries, including Germany and the US, also rapidly developed agencies for the management of information in accordance with military objectives. The formation of the ‘information’ concept was thus linked globally with the system of all-out warfare.

Indeed, not only in Japan, but also in the US, the growth of the ‘information’ concept was based principally in the military structures of the Second World War. Claude Shannon’s information theory, Norbert Wiener’s theory of cybernetics, and the foundations of computer science laid by John Von Neumann all grew out of American military research, which had been conducted for the purpose of guided missile technology or code-breaking.

It was from such a historical context that ‘information’ came to be chosen as a key concept embracing not only military intelligence in the classical sense of espionage, but also the whole field of communications and computer technology. Social scientists also came to be involved in mass communications research at the same time, but this research too was linked to military propaganda objectives, focusing especially on the use of the new medium of radio broadcasting (Hardt, 1992).

From the Military Concept of Information to the Theory of Information Society

When we examine the history of the information concept in Japan, we detect a general shift in the principal area of application from the military to the economy. Even before the modern era, information had flowed in the towns and roadways through the media of books, print, letters and rumour. The period of early modernization then witnessed the rapid development of what could be called an ‘information system’ consisting of museums, libraries, cartography and statistics. However, until the early 20th century, no clear distinction was drawn between ‘information’ and ‘knowledge’. It was only then that the word ‘*Jouhou* (情報)’ attained any special status and eclipsed other related words such as ‘*shinbun* 新聞’ and ‘*houchi* 報知’. It was the systematization of knowledge for wartime mobilization that raised the specific social importance of ‘information’. What had once been no more than military ‘knowledge about the enemy’ came to be seen as a matter of crucial strategic importance for society as a whole.

The concept of the so-called ‘information society’ developed almost simultaneously in both Japan and the US during the 1960s and 1970s. As is well known, this idea was advocated by such people as Fritz Machlup (1962), Daniel Bell (1973) and Alvin Toffler (1981). Each of these promulgated their own key phrases, such as the ‘knowledge industry’, ‘post-industrial society’ and the ‘Third Wave’, and each contributed in their own way to what eventually came to be known as the ‘information society’. There is little need for me to go into details about

these theories and their popularization as visions of the future for the masses over a span of nearly two decades, mostly in the US. I will focus instead on the development of the ‘information society’ concept as it unfolded in Japan. From the 1960s to the 1980s, there were a series of cyclical booms in the popularity of this concept in Japan. These did not necessarily reflect any influence of ideas from the US, but rather occurred simultaneously against the background of similar historical conditions in the two countries.

Japanese ‘information society’ theorists are fond of the assertion that ‘information society’ was conceived independently in Japan and has nothing to do with Machlup or Bell. ‘Information society’ is promoted as an export from Japan to the rest of the world. Indeed, the origins of the Japanese discourse on ‘information society’ go back as far as 1963, with the publication of articles on the ‘information society’ by Umesao Tadao in the journals *Housou Asahi* and *Chuuou Kouron*. Umesao employed a biological analogy to characterize the transition from ‘industrial society’ to ‘information society’. The physical structure of an animal can be divided into three parts: the endoderm (digestive and respiratory organs), the mesoderm (skeletal, muscular and reproductive organs) and the ectoderm (brain, neural and sensory organs). According to this model, industrial society was said to be founded on the ‘mesoderm’ of ports, transportation and construction, while ‘information society’ would involve a shift to a basis in the ‘ectoderm’ of information, communication, mass media, education and culture (Umesao, 1988).

Around the years 1967 and 1968, words like ‘informatization’ (*jouhouka* 情報化) and ‘information society’ (*jouhou shakai* 情報社会) came to be employed strategically by futurologists, economists and the government. In 1968, Masuda Yoneji published *Jouhou Shakai Nyuumon* (An Introduction to the Study of Information Society). In 1969, Hayashi Yujiro published *Jouhouka Shakai* (Informatized Society). The latter sold over 100,000 copies and became a best seller. The ‘information society’ boom in Japan thus pre-dates the popularity of that concept in the US. In 1971, a group of leading social scientists and information society theorists collaborated in the production of a 20-volume series called *Kouza: Jouhou Shakai Kagaku* (講座: 情報社会科学、Lectures on Information Social Science). The inherently optimistic nature of information society theory seemed to capture the generally optimistic mood of the times. Japan had entered the era of high economic growth, having overcome the hardship of postwar recovery, and had just witnessed the Osaka Exposition, which was the ultimate symbol of the newfound prosperity. Discourse on the ‘information society’ not only dominated the mass media, but was increasingly incorporated into Japanese public policy-making.

Against the background of this popularization of the ‘information society’ concept in Japan, it began also to be exported to other countries. Of all the proponents of this idea, it was Masuda who became the most internationally famous. Not only was he the first to coin the term ‘information society’, but it was also his particular vision of what this word meant that was diffused wherever he travelled on his many international lecture tours (Masuda, 1968). With the development of new communications systems and computers in the 1970s, the concept of ‘information society’ came to be used in Europe and North America by such people as Bell and Toffler. This reflected a trend that had already become well established in Japan before the beginning of the 1970s.

Of course, when viewed from a wider perspective, the popularity of ‘information society’ theory in Japan can be seen as a response to the emergence in the US of theories about the ‘knowledge industry’ and ‘post-industrial society’. As many critics have already pointed out, ‘information society’ theory suffers from a number of serious deficiencies both in its American and Japanese versions. The first problem is that it tends to ignore the qualitative dimension of information. It views everything in terms of social changes measured in quantitative terms, such as the increase in the amount of information flowing in society, the information industry’s rising proportional contribution to total economic output, or the growing size of the information sector in the employment structure. These quantitatively measured changes are seen as the causal factors behind major overall socio-structural transformation. This approach can be challenged from two perspectives. First, it can be said that information society theory fails to give due attention to the potentially conservative effects of quantitative changes, simply

reinforcing the existing social order. Secondly, one may wonder whether the increasing influence ascribed to 'information' should really be seen solely in quantitative terms. There are qualitative differences among the various forms of information that cannot be reduced to the variables of capital and labour power. This surely has crucial implications for our understanding of 'information society'.

The second limitation of information society theory is of course its tendency toward technological determinism. Notwithstanding a small minority of pessimistic theorists, the 'coming of the information society' is almost universally greeted with great optimism. It is generally assumed that information technology alone can fundamentally alter society. The exact nature of the technology cited as the explanatory variable has changed with the times. At one time it was television; later it was the main-frame computer; then it was the computer network, and most recently, mobile media. Despite this variation in which technology was cited as the greatest cause of social change, the idea that 'new information technology' would bring about a more advanced 'information society' has remained constant. Since the 1970s, many empirical studies on the social structuring of technology have been carried out. These demonstrate the fundamental social embeddedness of all technology, thus undermining the notion that technology can be viewed as an independent variable causing social change. By the 1980s, it is safe to say, the presupposition of technological determinism underlying information society theory had collapsed.

The third problem with information society theory is its reliance on a unilinear and teleological conception of social development. Theorists such as Daniel Bell and Masuda Yoneji presented stage theories of social change that were so clear-cut and schematic that they could almost be caricatures: agricultural society was succeeded by industrial society, which in turn was about to be overtaken by the post-industrial 'information society'. The transition from industrial society to 'information society' was seen in terms of simplistic dichotomies: from steam engine to computer, from factory to information network, from physical production to intellectual production, from market economy to the work-sharing economy, and from labour movement to citizens' movement. Bell simplified history into three stages: pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial. He saw a transition from 'games between nature and man' to 'games between man and man'. This, he asserted, would lead to an expansion of mental labour in specialized technological services.

'Information' as an Arena of Struggle

I have just outlined the principal characteristics and problems of information society theory in the 1960s and 1970s. To put it in a nutshell, information society theory reduced quality to quantity, saw social change as being determined by technological change, and adhered to a unilinear stage model of history. What is striking is that these are precisely the characteristics that embody the industrialization and modernization process since the 19th century. Through the principles of mass production and scientific management, modern industrial society has succeeded in reducing 'quality' to 'quantity'. It has consistently made investments in technology and pursued economic growth through technological advancement. Furthermore, this modernization process is both the result and the cause of the teleological model of developmental stages. Clearly, there is nothing 'post-' modern about information society theory. It is no more than a faithful reproduction of the principles of 'modern' industrialism adjusted to fit the 'new' conditions of information technology. Inherent to information society theory – in all its varieties, from Bell and Toffler to the Japanese theorists – is the very modern idea of centralized control from above.

This may be related to the fact that the concept of 'information' was originally disseminated in the context of military control and manipulation. As I have already noted, the establishment of the concept of *Jouhou* (情報) in Japan occurred in concert with the formation of a system for all-out warfare, with the Cabinet Information Office (*Naikaku Jouhou B* 内閣情報部) at its summit. 'Information' was therefore from the outset heavily associated with such things as military 'intelligence' and 'propaganda'. This association between 'information' and the military is not unique to Japan. It can also be seen in the formation of information

theory in the US. The generalization of the information concept from a specialized military term to a concept of broad social application occurred during the period when society as a whole became militarized in the 1930s and 1940s. With the development of systematic information theory and the spread of computers in society, the military associations of the information concept gradually became obscured. It thus took on the appearance of an inherently neutral and universal concept.

The popularity of information society theory in Japan and the US since the 1960s indicates a need to review the military associations of its key concept. To the extent that the information concept is still understood within the framework constructed by Shannon, Neumann and the information society theorists, a continuity clearly exists with the military intellectual history of the Second World War. Just as the life of the wartime system was prolonged under the ‘quasi-war’ conditions of the Cold War, so too the concept of ‘information’ retained its wartime ideological connotations even after it had been put to wider use in the ‘postwar’ era of the Cold War (Robins, 1999: 131–46).

With the development and spread of numerous global and local media, the information phenomena of the present day are experienced in a manner that far outstrips the narrow confines of the concept’s history (Lash, 2002). Even in the field of information science, there is a trend toward redefinition of the information concept in such a way as to include the dimensions of meaning and value, thus avoiding the problem of quantitative reductionism. Nowadays, much of the knowledge linked to the concept of information does not fit neatly within the traditional boundaries of computer science. The concept of ‘information’ is now being linked with concepts of the humanities and social sciences, including language, signs and symbols, texts and images. Thus, the information concept is being applied to a wider area of knowledge and daily practice than before, and in the process its meaning is expanding beyond the taken-for-granted horizons of military and information society theory (Nishigaki, 2002).

I began by outlining a concept of ‘information’ as the action of life ‘giving form’ to things. This is a very different concept of information from the military and industrial use of the term. This suggests that ‘information’ is not something that can be reduced to some common origin or definition. Information needs to be understood as a field of struggle in which different definitions confront each other leading to the creation of new practices and alternative concepts. Indeed, the reason why it is worthwhile for us today to pursue the concept of ‘information’ is not so much because it has so many different possible definitions, but rather because of the relations of struggle among the hegemonic dimensions of this concept formed within the modern military-industrial system. There is a constant need for reflection on the conceptual foundations underlying the discourse of ‘information’ in contemporary society. We must be vigilant about exactly what is happening in the conceptualization process when diverse phenomena are categorized and highlighted as forms of ‘information’. As the information concept comes to embrace more and more areas of society, it necessarily acquires greater and greater complexity. This complexity will then provide further opportunities for diverse discursive strategies, including both struggle and accommodation.

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Copyright

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Keywords authorial individualism, books, 'digital rights', *droit d'auteur*, intellectual property, print logic, public sphere

It is generally accepted that the modern institution of copyright first took shape with the enactment of the English 'Statute of Anne' in 1710 (the '1710 Act'). The context from which this legislation emerged is instructive. The beginning of the 18th century had marked the end of a 30-year period in which the publishers' guild, the Company of Stationers, had progressively lost its monopoly over the book trade and its capacity to act as the agency for official censorship of books, both of which dated back to the guild's royal charter of 1557. As newcomers to the trade began to turn an easy profit through the reprinting of books formerly reserved to members of the guild, the latter campaigned vigorously for legislative recognition of the exclusive printing and publication rights to which the guild's internal regulations had previously, in practice, entitled them. Tainted as their claim was by a history of associations with monopoly privileges, censorship and the absolutist

conceptions of royal power that had supported both, it met with trenchant political resistance; and when the House of Commons elected in 1705 finally acceded to the demand for regulation of the book trade, it insisted that exclusive printing rights be vested in authors, not publishers, in order to prevent the perpetuation of the established publishers' monopoly of valuable old works such as those of Shakespeare and Milton (Rose, 1993). In 1710 an Act was duly passed giving to the author of a 'book' the exclusive and assignable right to 'print' and 'reprint' the book for a period limited to a maximum of 28 years from the date of its first publication.

The potential (and potentially adverse) socio-economic significance of copyright has been evident to lawmakers in this area from the beginning. The 1710 Act, for example, was entitled 'An Act for the Encouragement of Learning', and it opened with a preamble explaining the goals of the legislation as follows: authors suffer detriment when their writings are printed and sold without their permission, and the new authorial printing right is necessary 'for preventing such practices for the future, and for the encouragement of learned men to compose and write useful books'. Given

that the authorial right was alienable, it must have been understood that publishers' investments in publishing texts they had purchased from authors would also be underwritten by the legislation, and indeed the immediate practical impact of the 1710 Act was to ensure that publishers of newly authored books who had purchased the copyrights in these books from their authors could veto the sale of rival (cheaper) editions. The legislative calculation evidently was that any adverse effects of this interference with economic competition – such as restrictions on supply or 'artificially' high prices – would be offset by the social benefits of the continued literary production and distribution thought to be guaranteed by the right's existence. Nonetheless, the Act put in place further safeguards against its abuse: for example, the right was limited in scope (at least initially, it was understood to be a right to prevent the printing of facsimile editions of books – not a right to prevent copying or communication in general, and not a right to veto the printing of abridgements, translations, adaptations, etc. of literary material); it was limited in time; and if it was shown that publishers were abusing the right by charging 'high and unreasonable' prices for books, the Act provided a mechanism for forcing these prices down.

Subsequent legislation in this area has been characterized by a similar attempt to 'balance' new incentives for creators and investors against guarantees of access for users of cultural materials. Yet this essentially utilitarian approach to the design of the copyright system is plagued by its own indeterminacy: to quote one commentator, '[t]he more desirable a work is, the greater is the need to ensure the creation of the work *and* the greater the need to ensure its widespread dissemination. . . . [Thus] incentive and access always oppose each other with exactly equal force' (Lunney, 1996: 486). Nonetheless, the 1710 Act's title and preamble 'enunciate the policy that became the essential rationale for both English and American copyright laws: copyright is an incentive to authors to create so that the public may have access to and be enriched by their works' (Ginsburg, 1990: 998). Article I(8)(8) of the US Constitution, drafted in 1787, provides the constitutional foundation for Federal copyright (and patent) laws to this day, in terms that echo the consequentialist tone of the English Act – 'Congress shall have Power . . . to promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries' – and the copyright created by the first Federal Copyright Act of 1790 was similar to its English predecessor in terms of its subjects, objects, scope and duration.

In France, meanwhile, although all privileges (including publishers' printing privileges) that had depended on an exercise of the royal prerogative were abolished in 1789, the post-Revolutionary National Assembly passed a decree in 1793, dubbed the 'Declaration of the Rights of Genius', which inaugurated the modern *droit d'auteur* as an authorial property right, lasting for the author's life plus ten years, and subsisting in 'writings of all kinds' and 'all productions of the beaux arts'. Although as initially conceived, this measure – like the Anglo-American copyright initiatives that had preceded it – was understood as a means to the end of encouraging the dissemination of 'learning', it subsequently acquired a markedly different character: the *droit d'auteur* came to be seen as the realization, in positive law, of a natural authorial right to respect for the bond between an author and his or her work considered as the mirror of his or her creative personality. To a greater or lesser extent, this conception of the philosophical basis of authors' rights (indebted in no small measure to Kant: see Kant, 1785/1998) is shared by jurists of the so-called 'civil law' tradition generally. ('Civil law' is a catch-all term generally used by English-speaking commentators to accommodate all legal traditions deriving not from the English common law but from Roman law. Exemplary civil law traditions would be those of France, Germany, Scandinavia and their respective former colonies and zones of influence.) The copyright systems of the world, then, are generally understood as falling into two broad categories: the Anglo-American, with its understanding of copyright as an instrument for 'incentivizing' the production and dissemination of cultural goods; and the civilian, with its understanding of the author's right as founded in the 'natural' autonomy of the human creator. However, in practice these differences have counted for little as economic forces – marshalled by the WTO and its client states of the industrialized West – have pushed national intellectual property regimes towards ever-closer alignment during the last decade or so.

One view of global developments in this field since the 18th century is that the early English, American and French initiatives outlined above set in train a process of legal-conceptual evolution that gradually but inexorably: broadened the range of persons qualifying as subjects of exclusive rights in cultural materials (from writers in the 18th century to e.g. record companies in the 20th); broadened the range of entities qualifying as objects of these rights (from texts in the 18th century to e.g. films in the 20th); lengthened the duration of these rights (to as much as 70 years from the death of the human author); and expanded their scope (from a printing right in

books to a bundle of rights to control all kinds of reproduction and public communication, including communication through digital networks). Yet these developments, far from being propelled by a logic internal to legal doctrine, have been thoroughly entwined with parallel developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs); in the theory, practice and criticism of the arts; in the culture industry; and in the regulation of the public sphere generally. Because of this, and because copyright law is implicated with such processes as the institutionalization of familiar cultural hierarchies (author/reader; thing/action; work/*texte* and so on), it is now a focus of theoretical inquiry across a number of disciplines beyond law.

Much has been made of the fact that copyright law operates with a conception of the cultural artefact as a bounded expressive form originating in the creative efforts of some individual: a fixed, reified work of authorship. For those whose thought has been shaped by the philosophy of deconstruction associated with Jacques Derrida, or by the semiotics of Roland Barthes, the affinities between this category and the aesthetic conception of the organic work that emerged in the wake of the Romantic movement in the early 19th century are proof that copyright law gives juridical form to a Romantic aesthetic. This (extravagant) claim is frequently accompanied by the companion argument that the Romantic paradigm – including its legal manifestation, the copyright system – is threatened by practices of cultural appropriation and remixing (e.g. digital sampling and appropriation art), and that these practices manifest an alternative ethic/aesthetic of ‘intertextual’ cultural production that will one day displace the possessive authorial individualism embedded in copyright law. Others (more plausibly) have noted that the original, individuated, complete and inviolable work presupposed by copyright law, if not exactly a ‘Romantic’ conception, is certainly specific to a particular time and location: the modern West. As such, it screens out forms of cultural expression that proceed from collective – often orally transmitted – traditions and articulate a dialectic of repetition and variation of the elements constituting those traditions. Whole swathes of creative activity from the American blues to Australian Aboriginal art are difficult if not impossible to accommodate within the modern copyright system for this reason (e.g. Jaszi and Woodmansee, 1996).

It would, however, be a mistake to see copyright law as necessarily oriented towards institutionalizing any particular aesthetic as such, not least because before it was ever perceived as regulating the arts it was a mechanism for regulating

the printing press. Historians of print and publishing have argued that the advent of printing in 15th-century Europe was of fundamental importance, not only for the economics of the book trade but because it revolutionized conceptions of literary form: it triggered a shift from variable manuscripts to exactly identical texts as the form in which written material was reproduced and disseminated, and this in turn generated both a conception of the text as a static, fixed object, and the assumption that a determinate individual was not only the writer of this text but its author (e.g. Eisenstein, 1983). Commentators adopting this perspective tend to see copyright law’s historical role as that of institutionalizing this ‘logic of print’, but there are several varieties of this tendency to explain the institution by reference to the technological means of cultural production and dissemination. The tendency is understandable: the role of the 1710 Act, for example, was indeed that of regulating the uses to which printing technology was put, and the Act even borrowed its modes of identifying the object of copyright (the ‘book’), as well as its understanding of what it would mean to trespass upon this object (‘printing’ the book), from concepts made thinkable by the technology of moveable type and the activity of trading mass-produced books in the marketplace. Yet the tendency veers towards technological determinism, and as such has fed some of the wilder claims of those concerned to theorize the relationship between copyright and the emergence of the Internet as a medium for the distribution of digitized content in the 1990s.

The Internet initially focused attention on the *threat* posed by the digital revolution to copyright law’s norms, conceptual distinctions and enforcement mechanisms. A popular strategy in some quarters in the early 1990s was to explain the nature of this threat by combining ‘cyber-theory’ with post-structuralist semiotics. This approach emphasized the incompatibility between the electronic ‘text’ (any digitized data) experienced in digital networks, and the ‘work’ presupposed by the law – electronic texts were said to be multi-vocal, manipulable, linked electronically to vast networks of other related texts, and detached from their authors; whereas works are unified, inviolable, discrete objects of authorial control – and highlighted the similarities between the virtual space of the Internet and the Barthesian space of ‘textuality’ (Bolter, 2001). It was assumed that copyright law’s writ simply could not run in this space; that the (technologically induced) death of the author would soon also herald the death of copyright. More recently, however, this assumption has been overtaken by new technico-legal innovations: encryption and other similar measures can now

re-enclose the very content that had earlier been freed up by digitization, thus reinforcing the protection given by copyright law with the virtual equivalent of physical fences; and these fences in turn are now legally guaranteed against circumvention.

As commentators have tried to make sense of these latest developments, technological determinism has entered a new alliance with welfare economics. For the economist, technological change has indeed been a significant factor in the development of copyright, but for the specific reason that it has brought progressively into view the 'public good' aspect of informational and cultural 'resources'. (Thus when printing technology made texts easier to copy, the vulnerability of the text to appropriation without payment began to be problematized as an invitation to 'free-riding'.) From this perspective, ICTs are significant, not in themselves, but because they have prompted initiatives – such as copyright legislation – oriented towards turning public goods into privately appropriable goods. Within the incentive-access economic paradigm outlined above, copyright was nonetheless traditionally regarded with suspicion as a monopoly right, and it was always thought economically desirable to limit its reach, and to 'balance' private rights with safeguards for competing producers of cultural commodities and for end-users. Within the now-dominant neoclassical paradigm, these concerns have been marginalized: property rights, it is said, should ideally extend to every conceivable valued use of informational and cultural resources, and it should be left to the market (not the state) to devise mechanisms for ensuring their optimal supply and dissemination. Digital ICTs are now seen as facilitating the emergence of such mechanisms (e.g. pay-per-use 'click-through' contracts between right-holders and individual users), and the desirable future from this perspective is thus one of ever-expanding copyrights (to capture all value), digital fences (to secure these entitlements) and 'digital rights' (to deter fence-cutting) (Ganley, 2004).

One questionable assumption (among others) underlying welfare economics is that the economy can be understood as a separate domain. Critical political economists, by contrast, seek to situate markets within a wider 'totality' of social, political and cultural processes. Further, their central focus is not on the sphere of exchange but on relations of production, and how these generate particular configurations of ownership and power. The understanding of copyright this generates, while not denying that cultural and informational commodities have public good characteristics, foregrounds copyright enforcement as one strategy, among others, through which media/entertainment corporations attempt to circumvent the obstacles

these characteristics pose to the valorization of capital. Hence this approach theorizes the past, present and future of copyright law as bound up with the evolution of a distinct sector of capitalist production: the culture industry. Other critics of the view that copyright is to be understood solely as a device for alleviating market failure take inspiration from Habermas's theory of the 'public sphere': a sphere of public communication that is both independent of institutionalized centres of political power, and capable of challenging their dominance. That sphere is said to have first emerged in the 18th century, sustained by printed materials – newspapers, pamphlets and books – that were financed not by official patronage but by the reading public. Hence it was a space for airing the views and values of a wider community beyond the prevailing political elites. It has been argued that the modern copyright system arose with and contributed to the emergence of this print-mediated public sphere: with its introduction, authors could for the first time hope to earn a living from the sale of their works through independent publishers who stood apart from the censorial arm of the state and the interference of aristocratic and ecclesiastical patrons. On this view, copyright's primary role was, is and should remain the support of a democratic culture (Netanel, 1996).

The current trend, however, is undoubtedly one of using copyright law to privatize and enclose what remains of the public domain of culture and information (for an analysis of what the public domain means in this context, see Boyle, 2003). This process of enclosure entails the re-characterization of this domain as a pool of 'resources' to be allocated via the market to those who value them most as indicated only by their 'willingness' to pay.

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Simulation

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Keywords code, hyperreality, materiality, real, simulation, virtual, war

Simulation is a key feature of the contemporary capitalist world. As a concept, it has been addressed by thinkers as far flung as Guy Debord, Paul Virilio, and Umberto Eco (Cubitt, 2001), but is most closely associated with the writings of Jean Baudrillard (1993a; 1994). In his famous *Symbolic Exchange and Death* (1993a, orig. 1976), Baudrillard maps three orders of western culture or *simulacra* that have emerged since the Renaissance. The first of these is the classical order of the counterfeit, where one-to-one copies of nature are produced that cast signs along with social relations in a single, synthetic substance, most notably stucco. This capturing of nature through artistic or theatrical means was superseded by the Industrial Revolution, and the mass production of objects and signs. In this, the second order of simulacra, it is no longer the reproduction of nature but rather the 'indefinite reproducibility' of things that counts. With this, the *series* rather than the 'original' becomes of primary significance. Baudrillard's work here chimes with Walter Benjamin's analysis of the work of art in the age of mass production, which considers the extent to which objects are stripped of their aura once they become technically reproducible. But Baudrillard goes further by introducing a third order: the order of *simulation*. In his view, the age of industrial production is short-lived for 'as soon as dead labour gains the upper hand over living labour . . . serial production gives way to generation through models' (Baudrillard, 1993a: 56). At

this point, a third order of simulation is said to emerge: 'there is no more counterfeiting of an original, as there was in the first order, and no more pure series as there were in the second; there are only models from which all forms proceed according to modulated differences. Only affiliation to the model has any meaning . . .' (Baudrillard, 1993a: 56).

Baudrillard's analysis of these different orders, which he (1993b: 5–6) later connects to different configurations of economic value, has proved enormously influential across contemporary social and cultural theory. Many commentators, for example, have attempted to map differences between modern and postmodern culture in terms of a shift from the second to third orders of simulacra. Such a shift is said to involve a movement from the mass production of physical commodities to the production and circulation of the exchange-, sign- or brand-value of objects (for a concrete analysis of this process see Klein, 2001). Baudrillard himself has little if anything to say about the postmodern or postmodernism per se, but does give a provocative account of the global dynamics of an emergent culture of simulation. In his reading, such culture has three inter-related features. The first is that computer modelling can be used to design and 'crash-test' objects or ideas by running them through different imaginary scenarios, which in turn predict and perhaps shape events before they take place. The second is that reality is giving way to hyperreality – that which is more real than the real. Baudrillard, for example, talks of the 'hyperrealism of simulation', and suggests that technologies, in particular digital media, increasingly shape our capacity to know the world (including key events such as the Gulf War), and with this blur the

boundaries between what is 'real' and what is virtual or mere 'appearance'. In these terms, reality is not understood to be a universal phenomenon, as is generally presumed, but rather is treated as a historically specific construct. Finally, the order of simulation is founded on a world of code. This might well be the surface code of local or global signifiers, brands or logos, or the deeper binary codes that both underpin and are produced by computational machines. Alarming, Baudrillard sees a shift towards binary values at all levels of culture, and even life in the form of a genetic code. He declares, for example, that 'digitality is among us. It haunts all the messages and signs of our society, and we can clearly locate its most concrete form in the test, the question/answer, the stimulus/response' (Baudrillard, 1993a: 62). In other words, culture can increasingly be coded into, and thus be reduced to, either a yes or a no, a 0 or a 1.

This presentation of digital culture has been hotly contested. Critics such as Katherine Hayles see in Baudrillard a tendency to abstract simulated environments from the technologies that make them possible. She declares: 'If simulation is becoming increasingly pervasive and important, however, *materiality* is as vibrant as ever, for the computational engines and artificial intelligences that produce simulations require sophisticated bases in the real world' (2002: 6). Others, by contrast, have used Baudrillard's theory of simulation to produce concrete analyses of contemporary global culture. Nick Perry (1998), for example, draws on Baudrillard's theory of hyperreality to explore cultures in which it is no longer possible to distinguish clearly between reality and representation, and which instead produce endless 'original copies'. James Der Derian (2001), meanwhile, has developed Baudrillard's (2004) remarks on the virtual nature of contemporary warfare into a more general analysis of the fading boundaries between violence and entertainment. For Der Derian (2001: xi), contemporary culture is underpinned by the emergence of a 'military-industrial-media-entertainment network' in which 'made-for-TV wars and Hollywood war movies blur, military war games and computer games blend' and 'mock disasters and real accidents collide', in the process of which new configurations of 'virtual power' are said to emerge. The most striking examples of such power are to be found in current forms of 'virtual' and 'virtuous' war, which, for Der Derian, confuse and pixilate 'war and game on the same screen' (2001: xvi), and beyond this join 'the human mimetic faculty for entertainment and gaming' with 'new cyborg programs for killing and warring' (2001: xx).

Baudrillard's concept of simulation, however, has yet to be exhausted. If his orders of simulacra

are read genealogically rather than in linear fashion (as in Hayles, 2002), they can be seen to compete against each other for ascendance. The consequence of such a reading is that simulation is not a universalizable or totalizing end-point to history (as suggested by Cubitt, 2001) but rather *one* powerful dimension of a global culture that continues to have many competing logics and principles. This, in turn, opens possible new lines for the analysis of a globalizing world in which different orders of production and value are drawn increasingly into contact and potential conflict with one another. Baudrillard's early work, for example, emphasizes the power of symbolic exchange – primordial forms of gift exchange that lie outside of the logic of western orders of value – to disrupt the precession of simulacra. In the early 1990s, Baudrillard also added a fourth (dis)order to the scene: the fractal or viral (Baudrillard, 1993b). These realms might, in turn, open ways of thinking about the concept of simulation that have yet to be fully developed. For while Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality has had wide appeal, few have followed his attempt to re-think simulation against the backdrop of chaos or fractal theory, or in connection to symbolic or singular forms that are radically other to western conceptions of value. It is along these lines, however, and in the light of recent analyses (Hayles, 1999, 2002) of the embodied nature of the virtual age, that new conceptualizations of simulation, and of simulated global cultures, might be forged.

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Virtualities

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Keywords Bergson, Deleuze, ideal, immaterial, intangible, virtual

Everyday life and culture are intangible in the same sense that the term is used in economics where ‘intangibles’ confer value in the ‘new economy’; for example, ‘goodwill’ built up toward a business or corporate image, the collective effectiveness of teams, as well as an organization’s overall ‘knowledge’. These can be operationalized in activities such as ‘service’ that can be assessed and scored. Intangibles have become assets for investment purposes and measures of economic sophistication.

Intangibles such as ‘culture’ have become more integrated into the knowledge society as part of this economic logic. A ‘talent’ might be performatively actualized in a specific work, performance or oeuvre. Thus, intangibles describe a capacity for action or creation rather than a specific action or thing (Patriotta, 2003) – positive types of emergence that generate valued outcomes, results and behaviours.

Intangibles are often a mixture of abstractions, potentials and ‘virtualities’ – ‘things’ that have a ‘real’ existence, even if they can’t be seen or touched. Virtualities are not just ‘ideas’ but things: a code, habitus or class that exists even if one cannot treat it as a tangible object. Gender is a case in point – not a tangible ‘thing’ or materiality, not simply ‘sex’, but rather a performative identity, a theoretical object with predictive power, independent of the age or form of the body itself. Even the body has been argued to be much more than its material ‘stuff’ (Butler, 1993). One could add race – neither just ethnicity nor skin colour but something held to exist in popular racisms. Yet racialization is neither reducible to a single material aspect of a body nor even a single category of embodiment – the shape of noses or other equally debunked trait which has been latched on to as an indicator of difference. Signs are independent of a given set of print characters or vocalizations. ‘Social facts’ including identity and social groupings are intangible but are widely felt, defended and held to exist – community, the public, gender, race, the ‘global’.

There is a politics in and of the virtual. When challenged on one’s object of inquiry one needs to be able to precisely defend not only the terms of research but its objects and foci. ‘Society does not

exist’ was the infamous comment of Laclau and Mouffe parroted by Margaret Thatcher against the social sciences. Realism in the social sciences defended central objects of research such as class, locality and gender (cf. the work of Bhaskar, 1991; Harre, 2002) – things that exist in virtue of other relations (of production) or are manifest only in their effects (i.e. virtualities, as defined below). ‘Society’ was not defensible within a reductionist Cartesian ontology, a nominalism of physical objects. Ironically, even if it is an abstraction within neo-conservative economics, ‘the market’ as understood by economic and political actors is as much a virtuality as society (Carrier, 1998).

Twenty-five years of emphasis on materialism has impoverished the examination of intangibles. In the case of cultural research, it is essential to have an epistemology and ontology which deals with more than the material. In attempting to critique conservative discourses on, for example, innovation, a sound base for critique, notably of the virtual and of probabilistic entities, is necessary in order to avoid false problems and definitional debates (Bergson, 1970; Grosz, 1999). This is essential to avoid having progressive social science research and analysis being co-opted into managerialist epistemologies of knowledge and is a requirement for critical reflection on the role of social science knowledge within contemporary political economic regimes.

Defining Virtuality

We need to make explicit the oblique references to intangibles and the Virtual (Grosz, 1999: 25; Hardt, 1993: 16) on which we will focus (see Shields, 2003). Dictionaries define the Virtual in everyday life as ‘that which is so in essence but not actually so’, such as a child’s claim to have ‘virtually completed’ their homework. More philosophically, the Virtual designates objects and states that exist but are not tangible, not ‘concrete’. The Virtual is known only indirectly by its effects. Dreams and memories are famously defined by Marcel Proust in his correspondence on *Remembrance of Time Past* as virtual: ‘real without being actual, ideal without being abstract’. Proust’s comment provides an important model for the subsequent but often inconsistent use of the term (Bergson, 1988; Deleuze, 1994, 2000). Drawing on Proust’s quotation, these ontological categories are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Tetrolology – Relation of ontological categories of existence. Continuous movement takes place between categories (e.g. actualization, abstraction), governed by social ritual (e.g. rites of passage), contested (e.g. religious war), symbolized by mythic figures (e.g. angels, aliens, ghosts) and signified in everyday terms (e.g. design, chance, déjà vu, miracle)

	<i>Real</i>	<i>Possible</i>
Ideal	virtual (e.g. memories)	abstract (e.g. concepts)
Actual	concrete (e.g. material)	probable (% e.g. risks)

The Real is both Concrete (material) and Virtual. Similarly the Ideal is not only a matter of abstractions but includes the Virtual as the ‘ideally-real’. The Probable is known mathematically. It is possibly the greatest accomplishment of modern calculation and social science knowledge. The Probable can be easily grasped as the ‘actually possible’. At the other extreme of the Possible is the absolutely Abstract, an ‘ideal possibility’. Each is distinct in its spatial and temporal characteristics – Table 1 is a matrix of spatial scales and past, present and future.

The Virtual itself can be said to be a capacity to be actualized as a singular, concrete object. Actualization is performative – the Virtual itself is a multiplicity which can be actualized in different ways. If it is known by its effects, then it is known through a specific instantiation, not as a whole. It thus retains its creative character as an ontological category pertinent to discussions of change, becoming, genesis, development, emergence, autopoiesis, the genetic power of codes as well as of codings themselves.

For example, as objects wear or bodies age, their concrete materiality changes, but they retain their virtuality – their identity and their coherence with themselves. This close relation between the actual and the Virtual, in which a quality becomes the essence of the matter, also appears again and again in contemporary understandings of the Virtual. Objects are ‘the point of indiscernibility of two distinct images, the actual and the virtual’ (Deleuze, 1986: II 82; 1994: 209–10). Differentiation is the primary quality of this relation. The Concrete is not a copy of the Virtual – the relation is not one of resemblance or identity (Deleuze, 1994: 212) as it might be between the Concrete and abstract representations such as concepts or images. Unlike the realization of the Possible as the Real, actualization is an inventive drama (Deleuze, 1988: 101) in which there is a ‘contraction’ of virtuality which ‘always takes place by difference, divergence or differentiation. Actualisation breaks with resemblance as a process no less than it does with identity as a principle’ (Deleuze, 1994: 212).

Virtualization is creative questioning – it opens up problem frames (milieux, problematiques) to

critically question cultural formations, ‘the way things happen’. Virtualization moves from situations (the actual) to create problems, ‘the knot of constraint and finality that inspires our acts. Final causes, the “why” of the situation . . .’ (Lévy, 1998: 174). The Virtual is neither absence nor an unrepresentable excess or lack. It troubles any simple negation because it introduces multiplicity into the otherwise fixed category of the Real. Tangible, actually real phenomena cease to be the sole, hegemonic examples of ‘reality’. The logical identity of the Real with these phenomena is broken apart, allowing us to begin to conceptualize processes such as becoming in terms of emergence and dialogism (cf. Bakhtin, 1981) rather than only as a dialectical as a negation of existing identities (Laclau, 1996: 20–46). It allows us to designate and defend as Real those intangibles we most cherish: community, identity, trust . . .

The real qualities of the Virtual, such as a memory of an event, distinguish the Virtual from the unreal or even surreal qualities of the Abstract. But the strength of Table 1 is that it allows us to both distinguish the Virtual from – and relate it to – worlds of material existence, the mathematical worlds of probability and possible occurrences, and the abstract world of pure idealizations. These relationships are mediated by human agency, the flow of time and concurrence of place – something that is captured in the everyday language of surprise at transformations, the calculation of risk and the invoking of spirits. A risk or myth, an event or dream draws on all aspects of the Real and Possible. Contemporary cognitive science and neurology shows Proust to be incomplete: in any dream, one could find not only the Virtual but the concrete-present of neurochemistry.

Process and flow such as realization and abstraction are more dominant than reified categories. Idealization and Actualization describe movements between the Ideal and the Actual. Within discourse and social process, there is constant reference back and forth between categories. Traffic between them is heavily controlled through cultural protocols including manners, rituals, socially legitimated narrative forms and more complex, contested, formations of convention. These include cultural

habitus as well as more time-limited and space-bound conceits and performances.

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The Concept of Information

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Keywords cultural studies, cybernetics, individuation, information, post-industrial society, postmodernity

Although the first appearance of the word information in English can be traced back to the 15th century, the term rose to prominence in the second half of the 20th century as a result of its increasing centrality to the natural sciences (Segal, 1998). In the aftermath of the Second World War, information was seen as a key element in the process of reunification of different branches of science under the umbrella of cybernetics or the theory of messages. Cybernetics identified information (together with communication, command and control) as a central element in the organization of living organisms and physical systems (Wiener, 1961). In this sense, the term signals a convergence of the new paradigm of molecular biology with the systemic approach elaborated by cybernetics. Identified by Claude E. Shannon with the content of a communication act,

and given an appropriate logarithmic function, information is also identified in molecular biology with negentropy, that is with that physical force which runs against the natural tendency of life to disorganization. As negentropy, information explains how organized systems persist in the face of surrounding entropic forces (Campbell, 1982). This tendency culminates in the identification of information with DNA and thus signals a conceptual shift in biology towards a kind of hylomorphism (a new dualism of form and matter) or even a neo-Platonism (where life is reduced to the expression of a pattern that can be abstracted from a physical body and replicated across a number of media).

In a parallel but connected development, the term information becomes central also within sociology, where it is seen as the controversial marker of a qualitative shift in the mode of production from industrial to post-industrial societies. Theories of the information society maintain that we no longer live in industrial societies organized around the production of material goods in factories, but in post-industrial or information

societies centred around services and knowledge work, trading and extracting value out of knowledge-as-information. The term information society is thus often used polemically as a critique of Marxist political economy which is seen as based around the outdated characteristics of industrial production and thus not able to take into account the radical implication of this shift to information as source of added value (Bell, 1976).

A critical perspective on the informatization of knowledge in post-industrial society was also introduced by Jean-François Lyotard who made information central to his analysis of postmodernity. Lyotard identified information with a shift in the status of knowledge as such, where the latter is increasingly wrested away from its status of grand explanation or narrative and bent towards the technical requirements of performativity. For Lyotard, information refers to a mode of knowledge that is no longer reflective or contemplative but performative and pragmatic (Lyotard, 1989). This shift to knowledge-as-information is also confirmed by the discipline of economics where the latter is identified as a quantitative measure that determines, for example, the different value of goods or as a factor to be considered in the temporal dynamics of markets.

In media and cultural studies, the term information is identified first by Roland Barthes' cultural semiotics as a basic level of meaning or denotation – the raw perceptual material out of which the work of connotation or ideology is done (Barthes, 1993). The term 'information', however, is later marginalized because of the problematic implication that such raw perceptual input can actually be separated from the work of signification. Information is thus generally dissolved in the subsequent discursive constructionism which remained the basic paradigm of the field in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1990s, feminist science and technology studies also elaborated a critique of the paradigm of informationalism in computer science and cyberculture. Informationalism is identified with a discursive construction of the body that reduces its phenomenological quality of embodiment to an abstract and reproduceable pattern of data. This analysis also draws on earlier feminist critiques of molecular biology and its tendency to identify DNA with the deterministic basis of life (Hayles, 1999).

The feminist critique of information resonates with accounts of cyberculture and global communications that emphasize their destructive impact on embodied forms of experience. Information is thus seen as an abstract force that, by virtue of its instantaneous transmission and its immaterial characteristics, undermines the phenomenological basis of perception as framed by

localized space and time (Virilio, 2000). Other sociological perspectives, however, have pointed out how within contemporary societies, information is the new mode of power and hence a critique of information is as important today as that of ideology and discourse was within modernity (Lash, 2002).

From a philosophical perspective, Gilbert Simondon's work provides us with a useful alternative to the phenomenological critique of information as an agent of disembodiment and alienation. He argues that the concept of information needs to be rescued from two different but equally reductive perspectives. On the one hand, it needs to be saved from the hylomorphism of Ancient Greek philosophy which conceives it in terms of a dualism of form and matter; on the other hand, it needs to be rescued from the technical theory of information which reduces it to a message exchanged between a sender and a receiver. For Simondon, the communication of information does not involve either a dualism of form and matter or an exchange between two pre-constituted individuals, but it is an aspect of the ontological process of individuation or becoming, of being understood as existing in a condition of meta-stability. When seen from the perspective of processes of individuation, Simondon argues that the concept of information problematizes our understanding of the adaptive relation between an individual and its environment (as framed by cybernetics) and that of a knowing subject with a known object (as understood by phenomenology) (Simondon, 1989).

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Media

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Abstract All media begin as a potential in our bodies, expand into the public domain, creating a world – and finally end again in the body, as a way of being, a range of feeling, a belief system. Media theory studies this trajectory. For media theory, media have two limits. Media cannot, by definition, make contact with the extramedial (because, if they could, they would become intramedial). And when media are translated into software they lose their identity and become part of something beyond media theory.

Keywords art, McLuhan, media, media theory, Modernism, Situationism, software

Media: General and Specific

Media are means of reaching others; that is the simplest definition. This universal conception of media defines the calls and songs of birds as media, the roaring of animals, even the pheromones female moths secrete to lure males and the ones beetles use to lead each other to sources of food. According to this definition, even the pollen of flowering plants is a medium, because it is a means by which flowers bridge the distance between them. In this general view the entire living world is one big information-processing system whose various parts continuously communicate to each other the states they are in and their responses to previously received messages. The universe itself is understood as a collection of media, for planets, stars and galaxies communicate with each other by means of gravity, light and other kinds of radiation.

‘Media are extensions of our senses into the public domain’ (Marshall McLuhan). This is the specific definition of media. Every medium amplifies the function of a particular sense – the lens and the webcam extend the range of action of the eye. At the same time, that medium numbs or ‘amputates’ the remaining senses, such as smell and touch. It’s not just that we seldom smell what we see with the help of media. The reason the sound in the cinema is turned up so high is because we wouldn’t hear the soundtrack otherwise, so concentrated are we on the overwhelming visual imagery our eyes must process. Media are extensions of elements of the body, of the organs devoted to perceiving, monitoring and regulating that body. The senses are the organs that call forth emotions in the body.

Alongside the externally oriented senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and sense of balance – we possess many senses inside our bodies. These register the states of various chemical and physical equilibria, such as levels of hormones, acidity and sugar levels. The internal senses make homeostasis possible in the internal environment; that is, the dynamic, physical and chemical balance that must be maintained to keep our cells and molecules active. If we include these internal senses in our definition of media, then narcotics and stimulants are also media, and so are medicines. If one continues down this road, one could see perfumes as media of smell, and salt and other flavour enhancers as media of taste.

A more common definition is: a medium is a technological or artificial extension of a bodily faculty. This concept of medium encompasses more than just the senses. Walking is not a sense, but a bicycle is a medium of transport, a technological device which extends the body’s capacity for locomotion by means of wheels and handlebars. The message sent with a bicycle

is the cyclist's body. Since energy and matter are two manifestations of the same phenomenon, in this definition of media it makes no difference whether one is transmitting information on a wire or electromagnetic waves or sending things via a transport medium. Electric light is a medium, because it extends vision in time: it lets us see something for longer in what would otherwise have been the dark (for longer than a candle, and with a greater range). The same is true of glasses where age is concerned: glasses lengthen the active life of an intellectual (reading, writing, observing, teaching) by decades.

Spoken language is a phenomenon at the boundary of nature and technology. It is part of the body as well as an extension of that body into the public domain. Our power of speech enables us to reach others and be reached by others without leaving our bodies. The same goes for sign language and other forms of nonverbal communication. Unamplified – without loud-speaker or signal flags – these are not media, but bodily abilities. Media are means of amplifying input from the world within our bodies, but also, inversely, of expanding our bodies' potential for action in the world. With media, traffic is always two-way. This is true of all technology. On the one hand, technology allows us to get to know the world better or differently than we could without its support; on the other hand, it provides us with a means of intervening in that world. The simplest way of getting to know the world is always to reach out, change it, and see what happens.

Media and Modernism

Historically speaking, awareness of the medial nature of all human expression and perception was late in coming, somewhere at the end of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century. Impressionism and cubism in painting were among the first artistic movements to confront viewers with the fact that when they looked at a painting, they were seeing a painted piece of canvas, a construction dreamt up and executed by a painter. Regarded as a medium, a painting is no more than that: paint on canvas, set down as fields, lines and points. Paintings were no longer intended to create the illusion of representing something other than themselves, a space containing a person or a landscape, or else a representation of the painter's unique vision of these phenomena outside the painting.

A painting is not a natural representation of something else, something spatial with a third dimension reaching deep into the canvas. The painting is two-dimensional: its inside and outside, front and back, top and bottom and all the rest lie on a flat plane. The point is not to look at the canvas bit by bit; you must take in the whole thing at one glance. Then you will see, as if for the first time, that you are looking at a medium instead of a message, instead of a so-called representation of something in the 'real' world. That real world is an illusion in painting; only the painting itself is real, as a medium. After studying cubism Marshall McLuhan came up with his slogan, 'The medium is the message'. This statement proved applicable to all media.

Marshall McLuhan got the essence of his media theory from the cubists, who were among the first representatives of what became known as Modernism in art. Modernism is the will to be modern – that is, the will to connect to the latest media. According to McLuhan, the cubists linked their painting to the medium of film, which was still new at the beginning of the 20th century. All modernist 20th-century art – poetry, literature, sculpture, music, ballet, film, photography, video art, and so on – links the medium through which it manifests itself to a more modern medium, in the hope of discovering what is unique and irreplaceable about its own, older medium. Modernist art legitimizes itself not through building on an illustrious past, but through the special, authentic characteristics of the medium in which it is created. Modernist art is art that seeks to engage the medium itself – written language, clay, bronze, notes, movements, poses, pictures. Modernist artists try to get the medium to propagate a message no person ever would have hit on – an extra-human message, because it is purely medial. Modernist art is art that seeks to make its medium its message.

Media and the Extramedial

The sentence ‘The medium is the message’ is the core of media theory, but at the same time it is a joke, a distortion of the central thesis of information theory, which holds that communication occurs when a sender sends a message through a channel to a receiver, who then either responds or does not. Information theory and media theory both try to answer the question of what exactly is being transmitted or exchanged when we communicate and use media. According to information theory, this is a certain precisely quantifiable amount of data, diluted with a certain equally quantifiable amount of noise. Information is measurable regardless of the medium in which it is sent. According to media theory, there is much more going on in communication than just an exchange of information: the medium influences the sender as well as the receiver. Information theory pays no attention to how it does this. But every medium influences both poles of communication in its own characteristic way.

In the first place, the medium determines what information can and cannot be transmitted. In fact, most information sent through a medium says more about the characteristics of the medium itself than about anything else. This aspect of communication was expressed by McLuhan in the aphorism ‘The medium is the message’. In the second place, the medium evokes in the sender as well as in the receiver a certain more or less definable environment – a mental space or sphere of interest in which users of the medium can understand each other because they share a way of seeing, pre-formed by the medium, while those unconnected to it have no clue what’s being talked about. McLuhan summed up this aspect in another aphorism: ‘The medium is the message’.

All media begin as a potential in our bodies, expand into the public domain, creating a world – and finally end again in the body, as a way of being, a range of feeling, a worldview, a belief system. We are our media. And because we are never the only ones using a medium, as media users we are always part of a crowd. With some media, this crowd appears literally, such as with lectures, concerts, theatrical performances or film. With others, it remains imaginary: we must imagine it as we use the medium. With television, the crowd appears in the form of ratings; with radio, in the form of listeners who phone in; with youth TV stations, as e-mailing or texting viewers; with newspapers, as circulation figures; on websites, in the page hit count. We read books alone, but it makes us part of a language community. In the media we are never alone.

Modernism tried to divest itself of the illusions that sprang from the traditional representational use of media. At the same time, Modernism gave rise to its own illusion when it claimed that media could only speak about themselves (and that what they had to say was brilliant, moving, profound, tragic, real). The modernist illusion called upon a scientific worldview in which reality consisted only of matter and energy. Anything else we believed we saw sprang from the imagination. This conception of scientific knowledge was Newtonian and, in that sense, antiquated, though the modernists embraced it blindly. The world consists not only of matter and energy but also of information. Information refers to the form in which matter and energy manifest themselves. A picture is an accumulation of matter or light in which something else can be discerned besides that matter or light, namely the thing that the image is depicting, referring to. This something else is information. Information is everything in an image that one knows could have looked some other way.

Every human creation refers to something else. Even music refers to more than the sounds that make it up; perhaps we should say that there is more at play in music than the instruments it is made with. If there were not, it would move no one. Music has a much more direct connection to the body than any image – it follows the rules and dialogues of feeling rather than those of reason, and it tells us more about the rhythmic and melodic passage of time than about the extent of space. Thus, words are groups of sounds or letters that refer to something other than the sounds and letters themselves – they refer to life, in us and outside us. This reference to life is not so much the meaning of the words as the reason we are willing to use them in the first place – willing to speak, or to read what another has written.

In every medium, there is something that touches the outside, the extramedial – that which the medium is about and yet is outside the medium's reach, though it can be evoked, suggested, extolled. The extramedial, by definition, cannot be represented with media; if it could, it would be intramedial. Yet the extramedial can only be experienced thanks to media; we feel its presence before we have understood anything of the meaning of a work. Some poems have it, as do some photographs, some music, some installations. Other art does not. Or might suddenly if one returns to it later. But only when the extramedial is there can we summon up the energy to study a photograph, savour and ponder a poem, give a piece of music our attention instead of letting it wash over us, or take up the challenge of engaging with an interactive installation.

Only after one has noticed the extramedial does one ask questions like: 'Why is this word here and not another?' or 'Why do those trees and bushes hang under the line of the horizon like that in this photograph?' or 'Why that hiccup in the melody, or that slightly too-short beat after that held note?' With skilfully made poetry, photography or music, we feel admiration for the creator's or performer's craft, but with 'really good' work, we begin to feel grateful for the existence of life itself. The meaning of sentences, images and sounds is secondary; the extramedial charge is always experienced first and transcends the experience of what we have seen or read, until . . . well, until what exactly? The extramedial is not matter, energy or information. It is a fourth element that is called forth by means of mediation.

Media theory cannot describe all of reality. Media-theoretical description finds its limits in the certainty that there is a domain outside the media which remains inaccessible to media and media theory. Acknowledging the extramedial will prevent media theory from developing the totalitarian tendency to try to explain everything, and thus to control and change it. Only our existence in the media can be controlled and changed; nothing else can. The media have their limits. Past those limits, even media theory can do nothing.

'The Media'

'The media' did not exist before the beginning of the 1980s. What did exist was the press on the one hand and public opinion on the other. The press encompassed all journalists, whether they wrote for daily or weekly papers, filmed footage for television or independent documentaries, or made recordings for radio. These reporters kept to a strict journalistic ethical code which said they should report current events as objectively as possible and influence those events as little as possible through their presence and reporting. Subjective interpretation and politically tinted opinions were reserved for editorial commentaries, opinion pages and current affairs programmes. There, journalists themselves as well as people involved in current events could give their readings of those events. From this position, 'opinion leaders' tried to influence public opinion, and this opinion – sometimes archaically designated 'the voice of the people' – was the only entity not directly involved that was allowed to influence the events that made the news.

The contrast between objective newsgathering and subjective or ideologically tinted propaganda proved to be unsustainable in the 1980s. When the TV cameras were brought into parliament buildings, MPs began behaving differently. Instead of making dull speeches and impassioned arguments, they began to deliver performances. As in any performing art, these were evaluated on how they came across to the audience. The validity of the arguments was pushed further and further into the background. The journalists could only conclude that reporting was equivalent to exerting influence. Ever since this discovery, whenever press conferences and other staged events are reproduced, images of the photographers, camera-persons and radio microphones involved in the reporting of the event are always shown. The press's image of its own product has become an integral part of the information presented. Journalism no longer considers itself a mirror of reality or the truth behind public opinion. News is a product which is manufactured, like any other, by means of a creative-industrial process. The value of the product depends on its speed, uniqueness and aesthetic qualities – in short, its topicality – and is proven by viewer ratings, or entertainment value. If an event is

to appear in the media – to become infotainment – it must meet the criteria of topicality and entertainment.

This development led to a different way of dealing with the press among people who for one reason or another wanted to get into the news. The fact that it was the presence of journalists that made an incident into a media hype necessitated a heightened awareness of how the performance would come across among those who caused that incident, whether it was an official opening, a protest demonstration or a public appearance by a politician, artist or musician. For example, while it had previously been said that NGOs – known as ‘action groups’ in the 1980s – should not use or provoke violence because it would turn public opinion against them, now the press and public opinion were experienced as a single block, known as ‘the media’: if you wanted to get into the media, a little violence or other conspicuous behaviour wasn’t a bad idea at all. While in the past the media had been used as a mouthpiece or megaphone to communicate one’s own small message to the masses, from now on the media themselves were the target at which actions were aimed, for the media and public opinion were indistinguishable.

‘The media’ is less and less a collection of machines and their operators – formerly known as journalists – and increasingly a mentality: namely, the realization that everything is recorded but only a few fragments will end up as items in news broadcasts, current affairs and entertainment shows, and magazines. To become an item, one must provide mediagenic images or provocative statements. It has also become commonplace for reporters to ask, ‘Can you sum up this issue (an award-winning novel, a fight between segments of the population in an urban neighbourhood, an unhappy childhood) in one sentence?’ The answer ‘No, it’s too complicated’ spells the end of the item. What was once seen as an independent press is now regarded by all sides in any social conflict as one of the weapons to use in fighting, discrediting, ‘criminalizing’ or even ‘demonizing’ (as it is called in newsspeak) each other. One no longer fights for a good cause; one stages one’s resistance so that the media will pay attention, not in order to stir the masses with their public opinion to resistance or revolution, but in order to have been in the media.

Media and ‘Situations’

The absolutization of the media in the 1980s led to a great media aversion in all those who remembered a time when journalists reported what happened rather than shaping ‘media events’. Cultural critics rediscovered the old Situationist manifesto *The Society of the Spectacle*, and observed with dismay that its prediction had come true: any event on earth would henceforth be found interesting only if it presented itself as a spectacle. In the original French, the word ‘spectacle’ actually means nothing more than ‘something that is merely visible’: spectacular television programmes such as game shows with lavish sets and dozens of extras were not a cause for concern for the Situationists. They were worried about the fact that all experiences involving the entire body, experiences in which one ‘lived directly’ – such as parties, drinking sprees and wanderings – were increasingly being displaced by experiences reserved for the eye alone (display windows, advertising, photographs, films, television).

The Situationists of the 1950s and 1960s invented methods of generating authentic, complete experiences that could not be represented in images. When these were successful, and a series of crazy incidents ended in a general party feeling, then, they said, a ‘situation’ had been created. The main methods for creating ‘situations’ were ‘dérive’ (wandering through unfamiliar cities to the point of trance) and ‘détournement’ (distorting texts and images to breathe new life into them). ‘Situations’, it turned out, could be bigger than the first rather lonely generation of Situationists had experienced. Every generation since has witnessed moments when a demonstration, concert or protest action suddenly turned into a ‘situation’ that later assumed legendary proportions. Examples are the May 1968 student protests in Paris that ended in rioting, the concert at Woodstock in 1969, the 1980 squatters’ riots in Amsterdam, Berlin and Zürich, and the anti-globalization ‘Battle of Seattle’ in December 1999. These events were reported in the media at length, but exactly what had happened to the

participants who created these situations was something it was impossible for the media to grasp.

For it could not be seen; it had to be experienced through participating oneself: the party (for this is how situations are experienced) was extramedial, fundamentally unimaginable. People who knew each other barely or not at all suddenly recognized each other as old friends and got together, instead of simply passing each other anonymously, as is usual in the city. They met and got down to work, with no need for lengthy discussions about the hows, whys and wherefores. Out of these situations or 'happenings' were born social movements that combined 'direct actions' (or in some cases, nothing more than illegal dance parties) with special behavioural codes, fashions and lifestyles. Every social movement of the last 20 or 30 years found itself confronted with the question of how it could maintain the 'real' or 'directly experienced' communality of the original event once the media had discovered it and turned it into spectacle.

New Media

The computer, so goes an oft-repeated proposition, remediates all preceding media – look around on a few websites and you will find not only written and printed texts, photographs, film and video, television, and security cameras (webcams), but also scanned paintings, drawings, etchings and so on. Through computer speakers one can listen to LPs, CDs, MP3s, radio programmes and film scores. One can send letters by email, and even telephone through the net. Once all media were moved to digital carriers, the computer became a metamedium, a repository in which a user can jump from medium to medium with the proverbial click of a mouse. But this is not so much a remediation of all old and new media as a hybridization, a merging of different kinds of media into a new entity. This unity is symbolized by the laptop and mobile phone, in which all media are brought together and become mobile, portable, playable and usable everywhere. How do the various media bear up under this hybridization? Can the separate elements still be recognized on the basis of their historic origins, or has something new been created? And to understand it, is a knowledge of history unnecessary, perhaps even a hindrance?

Excursion: TV

An earlier example of the hybridization of two media shows how much 'monomedia' change in such a merging. Television is an example of a medium that is mainly supposed to remediate older media but has become something completely different in doing so. We can, of course, see films, documentaries, plays, videos, photographs, illustrated radio programmes and telephone conversations on television. But we view all these remediated 'media' differently on television than we do in their original settings. A typical televisual form such as the news differentiates itself from the medium of video by means of live reports, which are designed to prove that there has been too little time to manipulate the image. Live broadcasts guarantee the cinematic truth of what we see, though it is not cinema since film is never live. Other televisual forms such as soaps and sitcoms are definitely not film either, although they are made according to cinematic principles. The difference between a series and a film is that one must watch a film from beginning to end to understand it, but one can start watching a television series at any point in any episode. A series is not a film in serial form: series consist of chains of ideas which neither drive each other nor cancel each other out, as they would in a movie, but merely alternate. The suspense of television lies in seeing what the next link will look like. Who did what in previous episodes is not important. The ideas speak for themselves.

On television one watches programmes: that is, one follows the programmes the characters act out. These can be banal – programmes of grouchy fathers and quiz contestants – or refined and complex – ones of metaphysically inclined special agents and confessed gambling addicts. TV programmes are often dependent on a situation: a wedding, a competition, a prison, a police station or a news situation such as a plane crash or a political conflict. The

only reality depicted in the television image is that of the programmes of the characters and the situations they find themselves in. Television does not show who they are, where they are going or who they will become, as photography, film and video respectively do. Every TV episode, whether it is of a soap or a current affairs show, shows in an instructive manner how programmes function somewhere and how they affect each other and how one can hold one's own in a particular environment. Television is not good at telling us why: why would one want to hold one's own? That is more of a task for literature and the movies. There are no people to be seen on television: we see only the conceptual structures within which they move. This allows the television image to be totally transparent and understandable while always keeping a distance and remaining strange. Television can at once bore us and fascinate us.

The purpose of television is to show that the viewer can enter any imaginable programme at any moment: as a fashion model or a mother, an artist or a manager, a child or a senior citizen. Anyone can make a television programme their own, while not everyone can become a film or pop star. And yet film stars on TV are nothing more than programmes themselves, whether they are acting in movies or appearing on talk shows. On talk shows they perform the movie star programme; in films shown on TV, the actor programme. The same is true of pop stars who appear in videos and interviews. If you are going to appear on television, you should ask yourself: which programme should I make of myself, and how? Show how you do whatever it is you have been invited to be on TV for, and make immediately clear by means of a tormented or sympathetic expression that there is something behind it (you need not explain what).

The fact that every TV season, as exceptions to prove the rule, there are one or two series about 'real people' (as real, that is, as the actors in a good movie), as opposed to programmes, caricatures and stereotypes, demonstrates that the present state of affairs is not really so bad. Too much reality would make television an unbearable medium, one you could watch for an hour a week at most. Documentary photography, which depicts a misery the viewer always knows has really taken place or is still going on, becomes depressing if you look at too much of it. If the audience wishes to engage enjoyably with a medium, a healthy dose of silliness is called for.

Digital Emulation

The point of media use is not to remediate something old into something new or to make something new reappear in something old, but to allow the old and the new to hybridize into something unprecedented, and then go a step further so that one must reorganize one's whole internal order in order to process the information streams, thereby becoming something unique and characteristic of oneself and the generation one is a part of. This notion brings us back to computers, and to the practice of emulation. Emulation is the translation of hardware into software. Emulation makes it possible to run not only every old and yet-to-be-developed PC program on the average computer, but also every version of Apple and Atari and their applications; everything for PlayStation, Nintendo, Vectrex, Gameboy; and the arcade and slot machine programs of the past, present and future – in short, all the hardware of every time and everything it ever was, is and will be capable of doing. Because the entire digital universe is made up of ones and zeros, it can be called forth on a single machine. The fact that there are different types of hardware is an expression of the economic boundaries between the different computer companies. These economic boundaries are a consequence not of the traits of the computer medium but of historical circumstances – from designers' ambitions to business people's need to earn money. Emulation is the translation of this accidental digital segmentation back into one universal code that can run on any hardware.

When emulation ruptures the artificial boundaries between hard and software companies it wipes out the economic and cultural history of the computer medium. Paradoxically enough, emulation is at the same time the only means computers have of safeguarding and unlocking their own history, what with one antique format after the other being lost. Emulating all the hardware and software of the past is the only way computer history can be written on the

computer itself. Social and financial reality outside the computer do not appear in this version of history, but everything computers themselves were ever capable of does. In emulating games, the post-historical generation of computer fans can preserve all its past experiences and trances, now and for ever. And this answers the question of whether the computer is something totally new or just a collection of remediated older media.

Beyond Media Theory

If it is true that even a computer's hardware can be converted into software, and all other 'media' remediated on computers are nothing more than software packages, then there is no longer any point in speaking of media when we talk about computers. Nor does 'new media' make sense, even if the word 'media' is used in the singular despite being a plural form. Anyone wishing to understand the digital universe need not try to discover what exactly is new about various applications, and which of their functions have existed before in analogue form: the language of new media is written not in words or pictures but in zeros and ones. Looking around the computer's digital universe, one sees hardware, software, networks, objects, environments, situations and spaces, but no media – for everything there communicates, and when everything is a means of communication, the word 'medium' loses its explanatory power. In the digital sphere, everything ultimately is or can be converted into software. History, too, is software – a network of databases along with a series of search engines. What the computer age needs is a unified software theory. That is beyond the reach of media theory.

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Media Theory

Mark B.N. Hansen

Abstract Poised on the cusp between phenomenology and materiality, media institute a theoretical oscillation that promises to displace the empirical-transcendental divide that has structured western meditation on thinking, including the thinking of technics. Because media give the infrastructure conditioning thought without ceasing to be empirical (i.e. without functioning as a *transcendental* condition), they form the basis for a complex hermeneutics that cannot avoid the task of accounting for its unthematizable infrastructural condition. Tracing the oscillation constitutive of such a hermeneutics as it serves variously to constitute media theory in the work of critics from McLuhan to Kittler, from Leroi-Gourhan to Stiegler, my interrogation ultimately conceptualizes the medium as an environment for life: by giving concrete form to ‘epiphylogenesis’ (the exteriorization of human evolution), concrete media find their most ‘originary’ function not as artifacts but via their participation in human technogenesis (our co-evolution with technics).

Keywords information, meaning, mediation, technical life, technogenesis, temporality, transduction

‘Media determine our situation.’ So runs the opening line of Friedrich Kittler’s important and influential theoretical historicization of media, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1999). In supplementing Foucault’s concept of the historical a priori with a concrete exploration of mediatic materiality, Kittler radicalizes the pre- or anti-hermeneutic dimensions of Foucault’s work in a way that bears decisive significance for contemporary media theory. Put schematically, Kittler’s critical position institutes a fundamental division between two types of approach to media: one that explores the experiential dimensions of media, including new media, and another that excavates the technical logics of media, logics which – for Kittler at least – are only contingently and impermanently synchronized with the ratios of human perception. What results from this division, itself the legacy of a certain (arguably contestable) assimilation of information theory, is an ineliminable oscillation between the materiality and the phenomenality of media. Without necessarily betokening the impasse of incompatibility, this oscillation does seem to impose the necessity for perspectival shift, such that the media critic must choose whether to foreground the infrastructure conditioning experience (media materiality) or the experience thereby realized.

This oscillation, I would like to suggest, comprises the most fundamental theoretical challenge posed by media to the cultural theorist. In one sense, it seems to constitute an updating for our media age of literary (and philosophical) deconstruction: like the many oscillations in Paul de Man (or Derrida) – oscillations of enumeration and metaphorization, of materiality and phenomenality, and so on – this properly mediatic oscillation seems to impose a constraining, but also enabling, frame on hermeneutic practice. In another sense, this oscillation can be understood as a new kind of transcendental condition for experience, though it is one that, because of its anchoring in concrete or material technicity, would appear to disturb traditional divisions between the transcendental and the empirical. In this way, as I have already suggested, it resembles Foucault’s historical a priori but also Gilles Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism: like these, it proffers the conditions for real experience without exceeding the domain of experience, without being, properly speaking, transcendental at all.

Contemporary media, I want to suggest, occupies the space *between* these two historical-theoretical resonances, and in so doing, it poses new demands on thinking, demands not incurred by either deconstruction or neo-transcendentalist thought. For this very reason, media theory marks a chance for us to move forward in our thinking, to displace definitively (at least in some sense) the empirical-transcendental divide that has structured western meditation on thinking, including the thinking of technics. Put another – perhaps more polemical – way, media theory comprises the contamination of thinking by technics; it offers an opportunity for reversing the longstanding subordination of technics paradigmatically expressed in Heidegger's (1982) maxim that 'the essence of technology is nothing technical'. To repeat, the reason for this chance, this opportunity, is indeed the fact that *media conditions our situation*, though in a manner perhaps quite dissimilar to what Kittler intended: by giving the empirical-technical infrastructure for thought, by specifying a certain technical materiality for the possibility of thinking, media remains an ineliminable, if unthematizable, aspect of the experience that gives rise to thought. This revelation of media's fundamental irreducibility underscores the insufficiency of any theoretical stance that fails to interrogate the oscillation itself, that remains content to treat it solely and simply as a radical challenge to hermeneutics and not as the very configuration of the admittedly complex condition for whatever hermeneutics might be in our world today. In seeking to interrogate this oscillation here, I shall make an effort to address both the theoretical and the historical dimensions of media, even though – in the end – these will prove inseparable, if not in fact indistinguishable, from one another. For if, in one sense, the particular opportunity just outlined for contemporary theory stems from the specific state of media today, it also marks an 'originary' correlation of technics and thought, one that comes 'before' history and that is, for this very reason, necessarily expressed by history, by the history of technics as much as that of thinking.

Mediation

To begin interrogating this oscillation with which contemporary media challenges theory – the oscillation between materiality and phenomenality – let us return to one important (if partial) source for Kittler's media history, namely Marshall McLuhan's formalist conception of mediation. In *Understanding Media* (1964), McLuhan famously identified the medium and the message, or rather more exactly, he defined the message as the medium itself. By this, he meant to effect a conceptual shift from the content of a message to its technical form, such that the content simply became the technical form. In a series of concrete analyses proceeding from orality and writing to electric lighting and automobiles, McLuhan in effect demonstrated the hermeneutical prowess of what is potentially a most radical anti-hermeneutic conception. Indeed, the neat dialectic proceeding from orality all the way to the computer demarcates a well-nigh pop-Hegelian project for understanding media – a veritable hermeneutics of mediation – that would find its first principle in the incessant and ongoing shift from message to medium, from informational content to technical form.

Notwithstanding the abstract formality of his conception of mediation, McLuhan's thinking is driven by an insight into the profound continuity of informational meaning and technical expression – of message and medium – that has important implications for our understanding of media today. One might even want to say that his neat dialectics was always a bit too neat, that the shift from message to medium never fully takes place, or even that it is not a shift at all, but more of an expansion in the scope of hermeneutic analysis to include the material-technical support for the message. (In this sense, McLuhan's hermeneutics of media comprises a vastly different cultural assimilation of information theory than that of Kittler; specifically, it takes stock of the role of embodied reception – that is, the active role of embodiment – in what Donald McKay calls a 'whole theory of information', rather than focusing, myopically in my opinion, on the technical circuit as it was theorized by Claude Shannon, and by, literally, every information theorist following in his wake.) And if this dialectical incompleteness finally detracts from the success of McLuhan's theory, so much the better since it bequeathes to us the opportunity to explore the 'transduction' of message and medium that, I would suggest,

becomes generalized in our contemporary media age. (Transduction, following Gilbert Simondon's conceptualization, is a relation in which the relation itself holds primacy over the terms related.) Understood in this way, McLuhan takes his rightful place as one of the most important thinkers of the inseparability of culture and technics and, consequently, as a figure deeply resistant to the polarizations that have shaped and that continue to shape debates over media. From his standpoint, there simply is no such thing as technical determinism, not because technics don't determine our situation, but because they don't (and cannot) do so from a position that is outside of culture; likewise, there is no such thing as cultural constructivism – understood as a rigid, blanket privileging of ideology or cultural agency – not because culture doesn't construct ideology and experience, but because it doesn't (and cannot) do so without depending on technologies that are beyond the scope of its intentionality, of the very agency of cultural ideology.

Medium

Yet another dimension of McLuhan's theory helps to underscore the profound continuity that underlies the perhaps too differentiated dialectics of (his version of) media history. By linking the medium – and the operation of mediation per se – to the (sensory and perceptual) 'ratios' of human experience, McLuhan underscored the 'essential' correlation of the human and the technical. Though never an explicit theme for him, this correlation inheres in his conception of media as prosthesis of human experience, and it implicates human embodiment in media history in a way that makes common cause with some important contemporary media theorists and philosophers of technics. Thus, in deep resonance with N. Katherine Hayles's (1999) defense of embodiment against its reduction to informational pattern, McLuhan's conception of media as prosthetics necessarily places it in a transductive relation with the human body; yet unlike Hayles, who doesn't sufficiently differentiate the way information is embodied in humans and in nonhuman media, McLuhan sees the two distinct forms of embodiment as necessary correlates of one another. While he would hold that the human body cannot be understood as a first or primary medium, as (at least) some proponents of the posthuman advocate, McLuhan's conception stands rigorously opposed to technicist manoeuvres – like Kittler's and those of his compatriot 'media-scientists' – that would grant technics a wholesale autonomy over against the human and its sensory-perceptual ratios.

In this respect, McLuhan's work converges with the position of another important contemporary critic, philosopher Bernard Stiegler, whose extension of phenomenology and deconstruction into the domain of technics is rooted in a rigorous refusal to subordinate technics to thinking (philosophy). Following paleontologist André Leroi-Gourhan, Stiegler argues for the co-originary of technics and the human, in the sense that the break giving rise to the human as a distinct species simply is the invention of technics. With the earliest fossil remains of proto-humans being contemporaneous with the earliest remains of primitive flint tools, Stiegler finds important empirical support for his own theorization of the human as an originally prosthetic being. Human beings, he contends, evolve by passing on their knowledge through culture; and this means that humans are 'essentially' technical and have been so from their very 'origin'. In order to differentiate it from strictly zoological evolution, Stiegler thus defines human evolution as irreducibly both biological and cultural; it occurs as a process that he dubs 'epiphylogenesis', evolution through means other than life.

Stiegler's work, to which we shall return, is important in the present context because of its implications for our effort to understand the concept of medium. More exactly, his claim regarding the inaugural coupling of the human and technics supports a conceptualization of the medium as an *environment for life*. Such a conceptualization draws explicitly on the implications of recent work in biological autopoiesis (which, among other salient claims, demonstrates that embodied life necessarily involves a 'structural coupling' of an organism and an environment), but it does so, importantly, in a way that opens the door to technics, that in effect contaminates the logic of the living with the distinct and always concrete operation of technics. From this perspective, the medium is, from the very onset, a concept that is

irrevocably implicated in life, in the epiphylogenesis of the human, and in the history to which it gives rise *qua* history of concrete effects. Thus, long before the appearance of the term ‘medium’ in the English language, and also long before the appearance of its root, the Latin term *medium* (meaning middle, center, midst, intermediate course, thus something implying mediation or an intermediary), the medium existed as an operation fundamentally bound up with the living, but also with the technical. The medium, we might say, is implicated in the living as essentially technical, in what I elsewhere call ‘technical life’; it is the operation of mediation – and perhaps also the support for the always concrete mediation – between a living being and the environment. In this sense, the medium perhaps names the very transduction between the organism and the environment that constitutes life as essentially technical; thus it is nothing less than a medium for the exteriorization of the living, and correlatively, for the selective actualization of the environment, for the creation of what Francisco Varela calls a ‘surplus of significance’, a demarcation of a world, of an existential domain, from the unmarked environment as such.

Such a conceptualization of medium as an environment for life (or more exactly, as a support for the transduction of life and environment) differs crucially from conceptions of the medium as a specifically and narrowly technical entity. Before it becomes available to designate any given, technically-specific form of conversion or mediation, medium names an ontological condition of humanization – the constitutive dimension of exteriorization that is part and parcel of the transduction of technics and life. The multitude of contemporary critics who focus on the medium – and on media (that is, medium in the plural) – as part of an objective domain or thing-world that is autonomous (or potentially autonomous) from the world of human action and communication simply fail to take stock of this difference. They fail, that is, to recognize that the medium, and mediation as such, *necessarily involves the operation of the living, the operation of human embodiment*. Attending to the concrete embodiment of information in contemporary machines, as Hayles does in her important and ground-breaking work, or focusing on concrete storage technologies as the ground for what can be inscribed in a given historical moment, as does Kittler in his equally important and ground-breaking work, thus addresses only one side of a bi-directional circuit that has only become more complex, more mutually-imbricated, and more productive as the evolution of technics has accelerated to disorienting speed.

If Hayles, Kittler and the host of their respective legatees (not to mention yet other contemporary critics and critical currents that similarly focus on media artifacts) can easily be excused for their neglect of the living basis of technics, it is precisely because of the disorientation that has accompanied technical change since the industrial revolution. As Stiegler has argued, expanding the important analysis of Gilbert Simondon, the industrial revolution marks a massive acceleration in the evolution of technics, understood as a (third) domain – that of ‘organized inanimate matter’ – in between the animate and the inanimate, the living and the inert. However much this massive acceleration, and the resulting increase in disorientation, has impacted human experience, it does nothing to alter the theoretical correlation of the human and technics. For even in this most recent phase of its ongoing and constitutive correlation with technics, the human continues to evolve by exteriorization, by means other than life, which is, let us recall, precisely what constitutes it as human in the first place. What the massive acceleration of the evolution of technics makes overwhelmingly clear is that human evolution is necessarily, and has always been, co-evolution *with* technics. Human evolution is ‘technogenesis’ in the sense that humans have always evolved in recursive correlation with the evolution of technics.

Since this also means that the concept of the medium retains a stability across this destabilizing epoch – it continues to designate the necessity for exteriorization, the support for the transduction of the human and technics – our understanding of the medium as environment for life comes into conflict with efforts to historicize media via technical artifactuality. The semantic history of the term medium evinces the signs of this conflict from the moment that the term ‘media’ emerges as a distinct substantive; clearly indebted to the instrumental sense of ‘medium’ that arose from the post-classical Latin phrase *per medium*, media carries with it

the sense of circulation, a meaning that, from the 18th century onwards, became that of mass circulation (hence the term ‘mass media’). With the expansion of concrete media in this instrumental sense, it is easy to see why the sense of medium as environment for life would become obscured: to wit, it brings a shift in emphasis from the ‘origin’ and operation of mediation to its artifactuality, a shift that has been reinforced by the general rise of mass media and by the ever-increasing proliferation of new media technologies that has characterized western history (at least) from the Renaissance onwards.

When Kittler argues that, prior to the differentiation of media in the 19th century, there was only one universal medium (alphabetic writing) and hence no concept of the ‘medium’ as such (since, being a differential concept, this would require that there be at least two media), he betrays his allegiance to a notion of media artifactuality in the sense discussed above. Gramophone, film and typewriter are technical embodiments of different possibilities for storing everything that can be technically inscribed; in this respect, as Kittler suggests, they provide the technical infrastructure – the technical transcendental ground – for Lacan’s three registers, namely, the real, the imaginary and the symbolic (respectively), and thus, for all possible experience from the mid-19th century onward (that is, as Kittler, here following, and all-too-indebted to Lacan, understands it). Yet by fetishizing the triumvirate of gramophone, film and typewriter, Kittler ignores the thick history of western representation (isn’t painting a storage medium that, to some extent at least, rivals alphabetic writing?). Still more importantly, he turns away from the essential correlation of storage with life, a correlation that is at the heart of McLuhan’s, Leroi-Gourhan’s and Stiegler’s work. Thus the triumvirate of media artifacts do not comprise technical exteriorizations of the human body so much as they furnish the technical basis for the ideology of the human; and if the essential anti-humanism of such a media history (here completely of a piece with the epistemological anti-humanism of the early Foucault) must await the technical de-differentiation of the digital to appear in all its clarity, it nonetheless motivates the entirety of Kittler’s analysis, which, for that very reason, gains its purchase through the *epoche* of the medium’s function as environment for life, its role as support for the transduction of technics and life.

That said, there is an important sense in which the digital – and specifically the possibility for a total convergence of media in the ‘super-medium’ of digital code – allows us to reframe media history in an extremely constructive way. Far from demonstrating the superfluousness of the human in the technical circuit, however, what such reframing can teach us is precisely that and just how much media has always been correlated with the living: we learn, specifically, that what all media mediates is life, and that (human) life is mediation, that is, the concrete actualization of the living via exteriorization in an environment, in a medium. Thus, rather than forming a universal, properly ‘post-medium’ storage form, digital code comprises the most recent, and certainly the most complex, stage of the ongoing evolution of technics; as such, it impacts the human not from the outside (as Kittler’s posthumanist fantasies suggest), but rather as an expansion of the very exteriorization that is constitutive of the human, that lies at the innermost core of the human as a form of the living.

Given that our interest here is to move beyond the opposition between artifactual and transductive conceptions of the medium (an opposition itself imposed by the fetishizing of the former among certain contemporary critics and reinforced by the massively accelerated evolution of technics in the last two centuries), it behooves us to explain the complementarity of media artifacts and human technogenesis, and, toward that end, to differentiate two concepts of autonomy. It is true, and here we must agree with Kittler and Hayles, that technologies now perform extremely sophisticated cognitive labor both in the production of everyday life and the reproduction of species life. Indeed, they are often so sophisticated that they give the appearance of being fully autonomous, of developing an entirely new form of life altogether, a new form of life variously theorized, for example, as artificial life (Chris Langton and Thomas Ray) and as an entirely new kind of systemic coupling and a new form of autopoietic reproduction (Niklas Luhmann). But in the face of this *lure* of autonomy, it is important to remember that no matter how cognitively sophisticated these technologies

become, they operate *only through their coupling with the human*, even in instances (and these have become ever more routine) where this coupling is complexly and multiply mediated. (From this perspective, if ‘we’ do one day succeed in artifactually generating artificial life, a truly new evolutionary lineage, or rather, if out of the process of cosmic life in which we participate, such an artifactual genesis of artificial life emerges, it will be one that is no longer correlated – via the species-constituting transduction of the human and technics – with the human, and thus one that may well lay claim to true autonomy.)

Simondon’s work on the evolution of technics as a third ontic domain between the animate and the inanimate furnishes a different, weaker notion of autonomy, or perhaps more accurately, of quasi-autonomy. This notion is defined by the double fact that, on one hand, technics enjoys an evolutionary lineage of its own (even if it is one that has always been, and that continues to be, assisted by human intervention), while on the other hand, it is essentially correlated with the human, as a distinct (similarly quasi-autonomous) evolutionary lineage. This quasi-autonomy of technics supports a conception of the mutual correlation of human evolution and technical evolution by reciprocal (though asymmetrical) *indirection*. According to this conception, rather than operating through causal interference, technics impacts the human being and the human impacts the technical as respective perturbations to the organization-maintaining (and hence system-preserving) operation of the other. Technics and the living impact one another by triggering crises in the organizational closure of the other, such that each must change, and change not through submission to external forces, but through self-(re-) structuring that follows operational rules and preserves constitutive organizational principles. What results then is a mutual, bidirectional, asymmetrical dialectic of indirection: a punctuated, nonlinear, and extremely complex recursive catalysis of the living by technics and of the machinic by embodiment.

As I have suggested elsewhere (Hansen, 2005), *Son-O-House*, a joint endeavor of Dutch architect Lars Spuybroek and Dutch sound artist Edwin van der Heide, offers a perfect and, in my opinion, perfectly prophetic, example of this complex dialectic. Indeed, it forms something of a recipe for how to stimulate human-machinic cross-fertilization through what we may want to call artificial, that is, non-living (or at least, non-genetic) means. Beginning with the captured data of human movement through domestic spaces, the project proceeds through several stages of de-formation – including the construction of a paper model, the digitization of this model, and its transformation into a sound environment – each of which comprises a ‘stage’ in the dialectic of indirection. What Spuybroek and van der Heide thereby achieve is a performative declaration-demonstration of the state of human technogenesis today: they show, on the one hand, how the quasi-autonomy of the technical (here exemplified not only by the digital computer but by the role of paper as a ‘material machine’, a machine with certain autonomous properties that may be said to be emergent – here what develops from the capacity to be cut, bent and stapled) challenges the habits of embodied occupation of space. And, on the other hand, they show how the principles of human embodiment – and specifically the principle of operational (or organizational) closure, the very principle of quasi-autonomy itself – retain a certain privilege in the transductive dialectic of the living and the machinic, namely the privilege of furnishing the very rules according to which each can change, and thus, the privilege of providing a model for the capacity of both to impact the other. This is why the transductive dialectic is asymmetrical: as an ‘originary’ correlate of the living, a condition for the production of life itself, media technics remains and can only remain within the history opened by the inauguration of (human) life.

All of this comes together beautifully in the second, performative or interactive component of the project, namely the sound environment. Quite literally a ‘house where sounds live’, *Son-O-House* is a warped space, constituted out of curving ribs that force the visitor to bend and bow her own body, and filled with speakers and motion sensors that create a feedback between movement and frequency and yield various emergent forms of frequency interference. To cite my own description of the environment, *Son-O-House* ‘brings together body, sound, and space into a positive feedback system that creates two kinds of emergence: of new bodily

movements and of new frequency interferences. And while both emergences – human and machinic respectively – are only possible through the perturbation introduced by the other, each occurs solely through a reorganization that respects its constitutive principle of operational closure. While both follow the same basic rule – let movement create space – each does so in a manner entirely particular to it. This is equally to say that both retain the crucial investment in indirection. . . . Just as the sounds themselves do not directly cause changes in bodily movement, but influence the internal processing that yields such changes, visitor movement has an impact on the *composition* of the sound, and not simply on the sound as already existent, which is to say, on the event of frequency interference itself. In this way, the ‘autonomy’ of the digital sound-generating (compositional) system combines with the (distinct) autonomy of embodied enaction to support the complex interactivity produced by this work’ (Hansen, 2005: 161–2).

Media Critique

Spuybroek and van der Heide offer *Son-O-House* as a critical intervention into our contemporary, globalized media system. Designed as a space of retreat from the dominant rhythms of the Eindhoven corridor, the hub of the Netherlands’ information technology industry, *Son-O-House* exploits the quasi-autonomy and material creativity of paper as an ‘analog computer’ and of the digital computer itself as a transformation of analog processes. (In so doing, incidentally, it lends support to Brian Massumi’s important claim for the ‘superiority of the analog’: by showing how the modes of co-operation of the digital and the analog – ‘transformative integration, translation and delay’ – are themselves analog operations, Massumi offers a different, but corroborating, account of the certain privilege embodiment enjoys over technics [Massumi, 2002: 143].) Taking advantage of the excess of the analog, of the excessive materiality of embodiment, *Son-O-House* introduces deferral and delay into the smooth flow of the industrialized paradigm of contemporary real-time media networks. It thereby exposes the complex and highly artifactual pre-programming underlying the model of real-time interaction that, as Bernard Stiegler has shown, is intended to produce docile viewers by, literally, highjacking and standardizing the time of their consciousness. What, in my opinion, makes *Son-O-House* so effective and so interesting as a critical intervention in the contemporary media system is its return to the domain of embodiment, and specifically, its explicit effort to exploit the superiority of the analog, together with the certain privilege of the human that it conveys: because it treats the indirection that is the hallmark of embodied enaction as the very source for deferral and delay, *Son-O-House* facilitates a reprogramming of interactivity that exploits the material creativity of human embodiment and that yields radically emergent human sensations and (following from the coupling at issue in the transductive dialectic) radically emergent machinic processes.

More important even for our purposes here, *Son-O-House* comprises a more general example of a (potential) politics of mediation, what I call (in a forthcoming book of the same title) the politics of presencing. At the heart of such a politics is an effort to exploit the possibilities offered by digital technology, and specifically new technical capacities for analysis and synthesis of images and sounds that afford access to and control over the contemporary mediation (or media artifactualization) of the flux of consciousness (which is to say, over the flux of life itself). This politics of presencing finds a point of origin in Stiegler’s analysis of contemporary real-time global media (with ‘cinema’ in the age of the internet being its prime exemplar); according to Stiegler cinema comprises the paradigmatic ‘temporal object’ in relation to which consciousness is able to take a distance from itself and reflect on its own temporal flow, the inner self-affection by time that, for western philosophy from Kant onward, constitutes the very content of ‘inner sense’ or ‘internal time consciousness’.

By updating Husserl’s account of time-consciousness – and specifically his identification of musical melody as an exemplary temporal object – Stiegler is able to demonstrate how the contemporary culture industries operate by controlling and directly capitalizing the time of consciousness itself. What emerges from Stiegler’s updating is the fact that today’s temporal

object, while retaining its function as surrogate for the self-reflection that constitutes time-consciousness, is incontestably a media artifact in the sense in which we have been using the term here. Unlike Husserl's melody, cinema in the expanded scope intended by Stiegler is in every respect the object of a media system that aims precisely and in the most calculated manner imaginable to subordinate the subjective flux of thinking to pre-programmed and thoroughly standardized temporal patterns of media artifacts. In this sense – and here is where politics enters the scene – the contemporary temporal object/media artifact constitutes the very site for a struggle over who controls the flux of consciousness, or more precisely for a struggle over secondary retention and its selective (and thus determining) impact on primary retention or the production of new presencings. As Stiegler has shown, the contemporary culture industries strive to exercise and maintain a stranglehold on cultural memory (secondary memory) by offering pre-programmed, media artifactual memory objects (tertiary memories) that, because of their seduction and their ubiquity, work to erode the role of personal consciousness and to displace lived experience as the basis for secondary memory. This is precisely how (say) television functions today as a temporal object and as a cultural industry, and it is more and more how – so Stiegler argues – tradition is handed down to new consciousness, which is to say, as something that *has not been lived* by personal consciousness but is available for adoption – and increasingly *required* to be adopted – by that consciousness.

The possibility for a critical interruption of the media system thus concerns the question whether there is any way to resist this industrialization of consciousness. For if the culture industries offer media artifacts that succeed in displacing the role of personal memory on the production of new experiences, on new presencings, then they will have succeeded in controlling the future itself, to the extent at least that the future arises out of anticipations or expectations – protentions – which are themselves projections of secondary retention. Now it is easy to see how digital technologies – and precisely the capacities for analysis and syntheses of image and sound fluxes – might offer some hope here. For by facilitating personal control over the flux of time – whether this be the flux of the television in one's living room (think of the potential of TIVO and other digital storage systems) or the flux of global broadband networks and informational databases – digital technologies empower personal secondary memory to reassert some control over the production of new presencings, and thus, over the projection of the future. More simply still: because they allow personal lived consciousness control over the flux of the media artifact that is its surrogate temporal object, they allow consciousness to live time (at least to some extent) according to its own rhythms. In sum, digital technologies restore some of the agency that personal lived consciousness has (apparently) lost over the past two centuries of rapidly accelerated technical evolution; by exemplifying the way that technologies function as correlates of embodied life (as our above account of the concept of mediation argued), digital technologies help personal consciousness intervene creatively and substantively in the production of presencing that constitutes – and constitutes *as an essentially technical process* – lived reality itself, including the lived reality of (constituting) consciousness.

This political deployment of digital media technologies raises two related historical differentiations that directly concern the topic and the future prospects of the culture industry. First, there is the question of the *newness* of new media, which is equally to say, its differentiation from some other form of media, be it 'old' media or simply media per se, media as an unmarked term. One thing our discussion thus far has demonstrated is that new media is not (and cannot be) new simply because of its technical specificity. If, as we have argued, technics is always correlated with the living, and the digital with an analog excess, analyses of *new* media like Lev Manovich's that focus on the formalist or technicist dimensions of programmability and computation (and here one could equally include analyses of Kittler and his fellow German media scientists) remain positivist and extremely partial. Another way of making this point is to say, as we have said above, that the singular plural term new media cannot simply designate a new kind (or some new kinds) of media artifact(s), but rather must designate a new phase of human technogenesis, one that is perhaps catalyzed first and foremost by new

technical capacities (precisely those just analyzed) and one that will become old or unmarked in its turn. The use of the term ‘new’ here is, of course, a way of marking the historicity specific to modernity, but at the same time, it is a way of marking *the technical specificity* of this modernist dialectic: as a techno-historical phenomenon and lineage, media simply is the perpetual, that is, repeated invention of the new.

A second historical differentiation – of new media from mass media – brings the open-endedness, and thus the political potential, of this understanding of media as the perpetual invention of the new to bear on the fraught topic of the consciousness industry. Many recent critics have welcomed new media as a new infrastructure – and indeed a new media system – that would succeed mass media. Thus Félix Guattari (1995) speaks of a post-mass media culture that would tap the singularizing potential of digital media, and specifically, its actualization of living affects; similarly, Pierre Lévy (1998) develops an entire aesthetics out of the various concrete capacities digital technologies afford to intervene in and reappropriate mass cultural artifacts (the technique of sampling being a key example). While these accounts are important and do contribute to a critical media politics, they remain partial in the sense that they fail to grapple with the continuing force, indeed hegemony, exercised by the mass media today. In this respect, one of the merits of Stiegler’s analysis (and Stiegler, let us reiterate, also appreciates the critical potential of digital technologies) is its resistance to any utopian hope (or delusion) that new media would somehow displace and succeed mass media, that mass media would simply wither away.

What is perhaps most striking about Stiegler’s analysis is its success in diagnosing what he calls the ‘symbolic misery’ of contemporary cultural existence (or ‘subsistence’) without losing hope for the future. In this respect, I would suggest, Stiegler’s departure from the thoroughgoing pessimism of Adorno and Horkheimer’s famous critique of the culture industry is inspiring: for by treating the contemporary culture industries – or more precisely, the technologies that form their material infrastructure – as (potential) sources for the reassertion of personal control over secondary retention and the temporal flux, Stiegler does more than simply ‘post-modernize’ the grim picture painted by the German philosophers. Indeed, he bears witness to the deepest insight of the concept of human technogenesis, to the most profound dimension of the transductive coupling of the living and technics, at least as it concerns us today, in our current phase of dizzying technical development: namely, the risk that accompanies, and has always accompanied, human life as essentially-technical, as epiphylogenesis. In a way that goes far toward redeeming Walter Benjamin’s (1969) peculiar appreciation for mass culture and his insight into the tenuous balance between aesthetics and politics, Stiegler’s work shows – and is indeed premised on the very notion – that this risk is a risk that is simply not worth taking, but a risk that *simply must be taken*. The very hope for a viable future, the hope of keeping open the future, requires a struggle with today’s culture industries and with the media artifacts that they produce; and this struggle is a struggle for control over the source that is living singularity, which is to say, the source of the very transductive dialectic – between the living and technics – that constitutes the being of the human. That is why finding new ways to tap the creativity of human embodiment – to rediscover the singularity of embodied temporal fluxes – comprises the most pressing challenge, and the most inspiring task, for media theorists today.

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Network

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Abstract Network is a device for organizing and conceptualizing non-linear complexity. Networks defy narrative, chronology and thus also genealogy because they entail a multiplicity of traces. Networks problematize boundaries and centrality but intensify our ability to think in terms of flows and simultaneity. As a concept, network has been highly conducive to theorizing phenomena and processes such as globalization, digital media (Internet), speed, symbiosis and complexity. This in turn enables us to rethink what constitutes the foundations of intelligence, knowledge and even life itself. One particularly useful application of network as a concept is the notion of the gift, which is often seen as the archetypical figure for understanding the nature of economics and social relationships.

Keywords capital, complexity, flow, gift, network, symbiosis

Network as a Trope

As a term that has become an established element in the vocabulary of knowledge both inside and outside the academy, 'network' has a complex and inherently unmappable genealogy. This is because it is not simply a theoretical concept, whose origins can somehow be traced back to a particular original thinker. Instead, the usage of the concept of network is in the first instance metaphorical. It is a trope.

Network consists of three elements: (1) nodes, (2) links and (3) mesh. The nodes are the easiest to identify. They are the points where links are being concentrated; the crossings that bind different tangents together. The links are the most basic unit of the network; they are what constitutes the difference between what is and what is not 'bound'. Finally, the mesh is the overall structure, pattern and shape of the network; it is that which gives each network its particular dimensions and shape, and from which the deployment of the network derives its functionality (e.g. the size and shape of the holes in fishing nets determines the type of fish that can be caught and contained by them).

Node, link and mesh are essential elements of a net and they have the capacity to resist manipulation (and therefore can be said to be 'real'). That is to say, they form the 'essence' of a network, without which that which we are attempting to represent as network would not be recognizable as such. The trope of network, therefore, has to have a basic consistency with the reality it alludes to.

The first observation one can make about the trope of a network is that it does not have any direction. In contrast to the trope of the chain and its associations with linearity (as in 'chain of command' or 'chain of events'), network is a trope deployed to depict a non-linear grid of multiple connections. As a trope, network is at odds with a basic literary device: the narrative. Network also disrupts our dominant vernacular of understanding time, i.e. the chronology. Indeed, the logic of networks is at odds with the basic premises of western metaphysics. A consequence of this is that while networks are deployed as a trope in genealogy, there is no distinctive genealogy of networks.

Alongside its resistance to linearity and chronology, a second distinctive aspect of the

network is an ambiguity about its finitude. That is to say, whereas a mesh does indicate that there are limits and boundaries separating what is within from what is beyond the network, the ontological status of the network-boundary ('the rim') is unclear. It is only when we come across problems of accessing networks that we discover that there are boundaries that mark inclusions and exclusion.

A third characteristic of networks is the relativity of a centre. In contrast to a (spider's) web which is often concentric and has an identifiable centre, networks have multiple central nodes, whose centrality is not necessarily defined by its location (e.g. the centre), but by the relative concentration of links. The more links make up a node, the more central the node. Finally, networks are marked by multiplicity. That is to say, their complexity is defined by a holistic unity of a diversity of connections.

Reflexive awareness of the trope of network is not an achievement of western (modern) thought. In Chinese cultures, for example, the term *guanxi* which in essence means the same as network, is an age-old metaphor referring to a form of social capital (see below) that is embedded in the knowledge of and being known to significant others. *Guanxi* is partly established through common ancestry and kinship relations, but further extended through friendships, political and strategic alliances and economic exchanges (including gifts and favours). Indeed, even in western societies, networks were already existent well before they became analytical concepts. Relationships between patrons and clients in feudal systems, for example, involved a complex of exchanges, obligations, rights, duties and dependencies that often resembled those of *guanxi*. Of course, the Christian ethos of 'love thy neighbour' also shares a *guanxi*-type sense of obligation, which in the teachings of Jesus was being extended beyond tribal relationships, as expressed most clearly in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Therefore, apart from what one might call 'essential' parameters that are derived from the trope, the conceptual deployment network is also indebted to its historical, socio-political-cultural lineage. From this diverse history, one could deduce that there is an intrinsic association between on the one hand network and strategic relationship and on the other hand network and moral codes (or 'the Law').

Network as a Concept

Network is not an exclusive social science concept. It has a strong presence in various branches of mathematics, physics and biology. In relation to the latter, considerable work on translating the trope of network into a concept has been done by neuroscience, particularly regarding conceptualizations of how the brain works.

In the social sciences, network is a key component in political economic analyses, including international relations, where it is used to refer to, for example, strategic alliances (Ohmae, 1989). This type of conceptual usage of network is of central importance to understanding how processes of globalization are not 'haphazard' or self-steering, but intentional, engineered and managed along specific strategic lines, intersecting the flows of power, wealth and knowledge. It is here that we can see an alliance with Marxism and its concern over the role of reproduction, but also with certain strands of political science, especially regarding the role of elites (Dahl, 1961). Indeed, network is a concept that is now firmly established in a range of disciplines and domains of western thought such as social and political theory, cultural studies and political economy.

Its recent rise in popularity has to be understood in the context of globalization, as a means of conceptualizing non-linear complexes of structures and flows. The structures of multinational corporations are modelled on networks, and so are the flows of capital, goods, people, symbols and information. The digital revolution has further provided a major impetus for conceptualizing 'networks' with the rise of an increasingly dense grid of electronic-based information flows, facilitated by both cable and satellite, of which the most famous example is of course the Internet.

The Internet provides a digital grid of information flows that have a potential global-instantaneous reach and immediacy. Originally called ARPANET, it was developed in the 1960s

as part of a military defence strategy to decentralize communication structures to make them more immune from targeted attacks. The non-centralized character of the net would enable new centres to emerge if old ones were to collapse without damaging the overall integrity of the mesh (Martin Murphy, 2002).

Plant (1996: 178) stresses that the nature of the Internet is intertwined with that of 'text'. Indeed, the basis of the Internet is 'hypertext'. The etymological origins of text lead us back to the Latin 'texere' meaning 'to weave'; indeed 'text is woven fabric' (Barthes, 1977: 159) and thus by its very nature already a 'network'. It is perhaps therefore not surprising that for most people today Internet is 'the net'. Hypertext induces non-linear forms of mediation, which in turn transform the relationship between 'author' and 'reader'. There is no longer a single process of mediation (governed by the text), but instead a continuous process of remediation (Bolter and Grusin, 2001). Through remediation, the self becomes itself like a network, dispersed through connections it can no longer find a home in a projection of integrity (Haraway, 1997). As McLuhan (1964) had already predicted in *Understanding Media*, electronic media engender an externalization of our neural networks. It is only with the arrival of the Internet that we have begun to realize the full extent of this prophetic insight (Levinson, 1997).

Dirk de Kerckhove (1996) extended this basic metaphorical idea into a reflection on the way in which knowledge and intelligence would be transformed by such extensive networks, which he referred to as *Gekoppelde Intelligentie* (articulated intelligence). Networks provide higher-order intelligence because of the multiple points of reflection and feedback; they enable a collective learning process that is much faster and more far-reaching than the more old-fashioned linear (primarily paper-based) forms of communicating intelligence, which are derived from centralized forms of authorization and legitimation. Indeed the whole New Encyclopedia Project on Global Knowledge effectively deploys a network-based strategy to accumulate articulated intelligence.

It is this combination of connected knowledge-production and dissemination with worldwide structures of information and communication that informs the logic of Castells' *Rise of the Network Society*. For Castells (1996), in today's society networks form the basic grid of social structures; they are both territorialized in particular centres of economic activity and trade, but also deterritorialized in global flows of capital, goods, information, symbols and people. As the accumulation of wealth, power and knowledge takes place through these networks, the location of 'nodal points' becomes of essential strategic importance. Castells argues that the concentration of such nodal points, particularly in western capitalist societies, with the USA at the top, ensures the perpetuation of global economic, political and social inequality.

A surprisingly similar view on the strategic nature of networks can be obtained if we look at a current theoretical body of work that also deploys the concept of network as a central feature of its analytical apparatus, namely 'Actor Network Theory' or ANT (Latour, 1987). This approach perceives agency as a multiplicity of connected forces or actor networks. Actor networks are established around series of relationships between humans, animals, technologies, artefacts and spirits. In abandoning the anthropocentric preconceptions of western humanism, such an emphasis on the interconnectedness of a multiplicity of agency sits quite comfortably alongside non-western belief systems, of which animism is perhaps the 'archetypical' example. However, ANT itself is firmly rooted in a western philosophical tradition that can be traced back to a pre-Socratic materialism (e.g. Parmenides). More specifically, we can find traces of inspiration from more off-centre thinkers such as Nietzsche, Bergson and Alfred North Whitehead.

The primary focus of ANT is on understanding patterns of 'ordering' which we recognize as 'structures' or 'organizations' of ideas and matter without relying on an a priori (Kantian) dualism of subjects and objects. That is to say, ANT does not presuppose that order, or perhaps better continuity, is a reflection of some reality 'out there', but instead that it is the consequence of a (temporary) stabilization of a particular set of forces that can be conceptualized

as a network. This stabilization is achieved by a temporary closure of possibilities and is highly dependent on the density of the mesh, and thus on the strength of the links and the connectedness of the different nodes. However, rather than focusing on network-structures, ANT shifts attention to *networking* as a continuous practice of enrolment, translation and redefinition. Especially in response to challenges from within, ANT moved towards a more post-structuralist ethos stressing fluidity, transformation and ambivalence.

The Matter of Networking: Reproduction and Gifts

In writing on *guanxi*, Kipnis (2002) makes a distinction between networks as strategic alliances and networks as moral systems. He accuses western thought of privileging the former over the latter. Indeed, it can be argued that if we consider the writings on networking in contemporary political and social theory, there is an implied rationale which conceives of networking as motivated by a desire to increase wealth (Castells), power (Latour) and knowledge (de Kerckhove). All three types of motivation are instrumental in relation to networking activities. They presume that networks will only flourish insofar as they serve the direct interests of those who form and take part in them.

However, if we look at earlier notions of networks in social theory and particularly anthropology, we see that the moral dimension had not been entirely ignored within the western tradition. For example, network is central to one of the key methods of traditional anthropological research, i.e. genealogy. The purpose of anthropological genealogy is to map the links between different members of a society or tribe, to visualize kinship relations and to establish patterns of associations between members. The form in which genealogy is displayed is like a simple net, with horizontal lines depicting marriages and sibling relations and vertical lines depicting inter-generational (parent–child) relationships. Especially for nomadic clans solidarity and loyalty are essential resources for military success and economic prosperity. Such strategic alliances could not be created by means of economic exchange, i.e. gifts or wage, but had to be forged by means of moral obligation derived from blood-bonds.

Genealogy highlights networks of biological and social reproduction and it is this theme that has been the primary concern of early-modern western thought. That is to say, the kinship-networks of non-western societies were analysed and interpreted from the vantage point of the Euro-American (western) tradition, which was intrinsically biased towards finding similarities with its own familiar modes of operation.

In such a viewpoint the nodes of the network are discrete individuals, the links are kinship ties, supported by moral codes, and the mesh is the structure of social reproduction that characterizes a particular society or culture. Anthropological research concerned with structures of reproduction was primarily interested in what constitutes the nature of the links (the person – the node – was taken to be an unproblematic and self-contained universal; Strathern, 1997).

The concept of the gift stood out as having a particularly fundamental appeal to providing a universal language that – at least genealogically – would inaugurate one dimension of the ground zero of contemporary academic debates on networks, for example as in writings on *guanxi* (Yang, 1994; Yunxian Yan, 1996). What makes the concept of gift seminal to understanding networks is that it provides a tangible referent (matter) to the abstract idea of ‘link’ or ‘relationship’.

The British anthropologist Marilyn Strathern (1997: 295) is critical of the very idea of ‘moral economy’ as a generic concept by pointing out that it implicitly universalizes the consumerist viewpoint that is embedded in modern Euro-American culture. That is to say, gift relationships in modern Euro-American culture tend to take place in small settings of family and friendship-based relations, thereby foregrounding a moral-voluntarist familiarity with intentional acts of generosity that can take on a ‘moral stature’. The ‘normal’ vantage point of interactions between strangers is not that of the gift, but of commodities, which are exchanged in anonymous market-style settings and for which we reserve the term ‘consumption’. In other words, she does not necessarily want to dispute that in modern Euro-American culture the difference between gifts and commodities is of huge importance,

but she wants to resist its usage as a universal model for understanding sociality and reproduction.

The misconceived universalism of moral economy is reflected in subsequent romanticized conceptions of gift-economies which have ignored the importance of the contingency of strategic action in favour of an allusion to a timeless moral necessity (Strathern, 1997: 294). However, whereas this might be a fair comment on the nature of understanding gift economies in western anthropology, it does not apply to a rather different Euro-American tradition of understanding networks – that of political theory.

Western political theory has never really enjoyed a hegemonic paradigmatic unity. Before the official birth of political philosophy, there were already distinct traditions in understanding the nature of political relationships. The first is derived from the Platonic tradition and understands politics as virtuous in the moral sense (as expressed in the thinking of, for example, Cicero, Hobbes, Kant and Hegel); the second was its antithesis and acquired fame by virtue of thinkers such as Machiavelli and, from a non-western perspective, Lao Tze. These thinkers emphasized the virtue of strength rather than righteousness. For them, the key motivation of the political was always the maximization of force.

It is from this second tradition, which on the way also includes Nietzsche, Pareto, Michels and Schmitt (the latter three were all contemporaries of Mauss), that modern political theory has derived its depth. In the very idea of political struggle lies a preconception of relationality (allies versus enemies). For such thinkers, the social does not really exist except as a strategic resource. A well-known expression of this type of thinking is the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's famous claim that 'society does not exist'. The 'homo economicus' of neo-liberalism is an equally obvious example.

Perhaps it was in an awareness of the dominant modes of political thought of his contemporaries that Mauss sought to reassert the centrality of the social, which for him – just like his mentor Durkheim – was essentially moral in nature (in the sense of the binding nature of duties and obligations). It is from within this tradition that the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1979) sought to re-articulate a sense of the political, not as external or oppositional to the social, but as co-constitutive realms of modern, capitalist society.

Like Mauss, Bourdieu was interested in the *matter* of social relations, i.e. networked links. Rather than gift, however, Bourdieu deployed the notion of 'capital'. This gave him the ability to understand the intrinsic relationship between social relations and economic practices. That is, he enabled a conceptualization of networks as being formed on the basis of *valorization*. Networked operations thus involve evaluations and value estimations in terms of various kinds of exchanges between nodes. The mesh of such networks becomes a complex set of value estimations, translations and transferences.

In his famous work *La Distinction*, for example, Bourdieu (1979) shows how different forms of capital are being translated into one another: financial capital into cultural capital, cultural capital into social capital, social capital into symbolic capital, symbolic capital into financial capital, etc. What emerges from this approach is the idea of a multiplicity of flows which enable the accumulation of wealth, power and knowledge. Furthermore, Bourdieu showed how such valorizations and translations are related to distinctive fields, which are institutionally maintained and thereby obtain an almost natural sense of self-reproduction. His earlier work already established quite convincingly how, in the field of education, the selective accumulation of cultural capital was maintained by an elaborate system of evaluation (including formal examinations) which naturalized the basic arbitrariness of what counts as 'valuable knowledge' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970)

Bourdieu's analysis offers us a critical perspective on networks as selective and self-reproducing devices for the maintenance of particular social orderings. It thereby also fits a more loosely Marxist paradigm focusing on class struggle as the engine of social ordering and social change. However, underneath lies a much closer association with Durkheimian sociology than is often acknowledged. The link with Mauss is particularly revealing. The gift that establishes an obligation to return is being transformed into capital, thereby unfettering the moral

prohibition on profiting from the gift (Sahlins, 1997). This is the shift that marks networks in western societies. The *hau* which Sahlins translates as ‘profit’ in Maori culture is not dissociated from a moral coding. In modern Euro-American culture, however, the *hau* is no longer bound. Instead, it can flow freely and thereby inaugurate infinite possibilities for networking and accumulation of different types of capital.

It is along similar lines that we can interpret Derrida’s philosophical intervention in *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*. Derrida (1991) seeks to trace a new depth, below Mauss’ more structuralist leanings so to speak, to argue for a sharper distinction between gift and exchange. For Derrida, the essence of the gift is that it cannot be returned, for returning – even if merely in the form of recognition – would annihilate the gift. Hence, the gift has to be passed on as something else. The peculiar nature of the German word *Gift* is that it can also be translated as *poison*, thereby making a link with *Pharmakon* which in Greek means both poison and medicine (Derrida, 1972).

Derrida argues that what makes the (indeterminate and ambivalent) Gift unique is that it creates an event. He uses Baudelaire’s story of counterfeit money to illustrate the possibilities that a particular (poisoned) gift could set in motion. This takes us well beyond the use of gifts to establish, affirm or maintain social relationships, because the ‘return’ on the real gift is not reciprocity, friendship or trust but an opening up of time, an inauguration of unknown consequences, an affirmation of being as an event.

Combining Bourdieu and Derrida, we may argue that the gift highlights the central associations between networks, capital and flow. What constitutes the essence of networks is therefore not the consolidation of a complexity of social bindings between individuated nodes. Instead, it is the indeterminability of the events, opened up by the non-linear constellation of gift-based associations. Network links are not best conceived of as exchanges, and hence the very notion of ‘strategic alliance’ is seriously problematic. Without a sense of obligation, without an appreciation of the bound nature (*hau*) of value, networks are unlikely to sustain themselves. Their basis is neither the Contract (e.g. Hobbes, Rousseau) nor Force (Machiavelli, Nietzsche), but the Law. This is not the law of a state, or of man in general, but a natural law that we can already sense from the Maori use of the *hau*, resonating with a wide cultural diversity of belief systems, including, for example, Judeo-Christianity.

This Law is not external to networks but immanent in them. It is inaugurated by the very nature (spirit) of the gift. The obligation to reciprocate, which is to take place in time, is moral in nature and bound to our very being in the world. From this perspective, networks include a wide variety of social relationships, not simply mutualism but also parasitism and even predation (as expressed for example in the Machabees’ zeal for the purging of heretical desecration). The Law is not finite but, like the networks it maintains, ever in flux.

Finally, as Strathern has maintained, western thought often works with a concept of an isomorphic, isolated, independent and integral sense of the self. Such a self is usually equated as nodes in a network. Network relationships are drawn around such individuated entities. This sets up a very strange dichotomy between self-entities (nodes) and ‘others’. As western concepts of networks can only identify other self-entities as nodes, questions arise about what constitutes non-entities such as ‘the environment’ and ‘nature’. It is perhaps not surprising that western thought usually entails an implicit dualism between environments defined as ‘other entities’ and more abstract non-entities. The term society, for example, contains this dualism very clearly.

In contrast, Strathern argues that Malinesian thought does not make such distinctions because here selves are never self-contained and isomorphic. Instead, they are open. Moreover, environments are never abstract but always themselves constellations of parts and particles which can in turn function as both nodes and as gifts (the ‘matter’ of links). In a similar vein, much of European thought has strongly embraced a non-individuated concept of ‘action’. Here ‘actors’ are not necessarily human or self-contained. In fact, the very nature of this open and fluid networking is bound up with a partialization of entities, which are thus always multiplicities. As multiplicities they are able to generate connections across temporarily associated

constellations (we can still call these networks). This brings ‘life’ to the networks and allows us to talk about entire networks as themselves – in Latour’s terminology – actants.

Latour’s undifferentiated notion of actant (which could be human, animal, technological or spiritual in nature), however, also exposes a final weakness in his concept of actor network. Because he inadequately interprets the motivation of networking as the accumulation of power, Latour tends to be too focused on networking as a means of stabilization and consolidation. Strong networks then are identified by their relative rigidity. It is here that the trope starts to break. If Latour’s model is followed to the extreme, the most resilient networks are not networks but cages. This defies the nature of the network which instead requires suppleness and a certain degree of fluidity and amorphousness. The mesh has to be open to instant modification to adjust to emerging contingencies and requirements.

For Latour, networks evolve, but their evolution can only be understood as relatively continuous. It follows the Darwinist line of natural selection of intra-species hereditary changes. However, as a result, Latour’s ANT is unable to conceptualize and address more radical (r)evolutionary processes such as the emergence of a new type of species (let alone a higher order of classification). This problem is of course not unique to sociology but also central to biology (Ryan, 2003). It is from biology, and particularly the work of Margulis, that we can perhaps derive a more radical notion of evolution, namely that of *symbiosis*. In symbiosis, it is not the integrity of the nodes that matters but how they redefine themselves and each other through an intensive ‘exchange’ of molecular information (this could be at the level of cells or even below that, at the level of genes). In this type of networking, it is unlikely that any node will stay the same for very long.

Such a concept of networking comes much closer to that of assemblage. It is no longer confined to a rigidity that means that networks will disintegrate – but only in terms of their links – before new ones can be established, but looks for patterns of emergence, transformation and revolution that affect the nodes and mesh as well as the links.

This forces us also to rethink the nature of the mesh. Unlike Latour’s actor networks, the primary motive of the network may not be self-preservation, but transformation. Networked intelligence, then, is perhaps most astute if it is most ignorant of itself. As soon as an overall concept of ‘self’ starts to emerge (as for example is the case in defined academic networks), boundaries marking inclusion and exclusion become visible; the network becomes reified and its mesh loses its fluidity. Such networks invite parasites, operating ‘at the rim’ as brokers for the importation of viral material which could seriously undermine the integrity of the network. Of course, even these networks may still evolve and rediscover their vitality, but this will be done in spite of themselves.

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Social Networks in East Asia

Shujiro Yazawa

Keywords contextualism, *guanxi*, Japan, social network, *yeon-jul*

What is a network? Shumpei Kumon defined it as 'one in which, no matter whether it is a complex actor or a social system, the major type of mutual acts is consensus/inducement oriented' (Kumon, 1992). Recently, Manuel Castells (2001) defined it rather simply: 'A network is a set of interconnected nodes. Networks are very old forms of social organization.' Yet how central is the concept of social network to East Asian societies? Will social networks disappear as they become more market-oriented (Lin, 2002)? The answer would seem to be no. East Asian societies will continue to retain this dimension and use it extensively.

Social Networks in Japan

Eshun Hamaguchi (1983) remarks that a key characteristic of the Japanese is that they only become self-conscious in human relations and tend to regard them as part of the self. This is referred

to as *Aidagara* 問柄 (interdependence), suggesting mutual dependence and mutual trust, which are seen as the defining quality of the human relationship itself. He calls this characteristic *Kanjinshugi* 問人主義, or 'contextualism', and sees it as the fundamental form of human existence in Japan. This is neither the individual nor the group, but a specific part of a de-localized *Ba* (*Ba* meaning context or situation) (Hamaguchi, 1983).

Ronald Dore (1983) analysed relational contracting as the best example of a network. According to him, networks of relational contracting in Japan are characterized by risk-sharing, long-term advantage and goodwill. 'It is that sense of duty – a duty over and above the terms of written contract – which gives the assurance of the pay-off which makes relational contracting viable' (Dore, 1983: 470). He pays special attention to the difference between Japanese relational contracting and Durkheim's non-contractual elements of contract. In this case, 'Durkheim was talking about the intervention of *society* both in enforcing the basic principles of honesty and and keeping promises and regulating the content of contracts, deciding what was admissible and what offended social decency or basic human rights' (Dore, 1983: 470). In

contrast, in the case of Japanese relational contracting, there is a sense of diffuse obligation to the individual trading partner, not to society. People in Japan do not much like openly adversarial bargaining as these are inevitably low-trust relationships in which information is hoarded for bargaining advantage and each tries to manipulate the responses of the other in his own interest. Anyone seeking to understand the competitive strength of the Japanese economy today would like to ask whether this institutionalization of relational contracting contradicts economic efficiency or not. According to Dore, there is a loss of allocative efficiency, but countervailing forces, the abilities to plan and programme, outweigh the loss. The problem is the relationship between trust and economic efficiency in the instrumental adoption of relational contracting (network) forms.

The Problems of the Japanese Social Network

Nowadays researchers on Japanese networks tend to reach a number of conclusions. First, networks in Japan tend to be closed and selfish, working via long-standing relations of mutual trust. Homogeneous members tend to be selected who share the same basic worldview and values, whose goals are often defined narrowly in terms of their member's welfare (Kumon, 1992). A second negative aspect of Japan's networks is the overemphasis on emotion and value judgements, rather than on facts and reasons, in their process of communication. A third problem is the tendency for the Japanese to put too much emphasis on consensus/inducement. As a result, decision-making often tends to become indecisive, time-consuming and inefficient.

Another account of Japanese networks is from Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1994) who draws attention to the way in which technological research and development in Japan tends to be dispersed among a large number of small institutions which are linked together in a way that allows information to flow easily between one institution and another. This network structure, originating in the late Meiji period (1890s) onwards, has helped Japan to become a world leader in certain branches of technological development. In the high-growth era, technological change was supported by a diffuse research and development system, with a flexible structure, in which outside ideas could easily be absorbed and adapted, and various firms could combine in different ways to generate innovation. But as Japanese firms have moved towards cutting-edge high-technology and developed larger and more sophisticated research programmes, the research and development systems have started to become more concen-

trated in specific high-tech areas and in a few leading firms. One of the most important problems facing Japan today is that it does not have flexible social networks fitted for the new information technology paradigm. This is why social networks have become alienated and bureaucratized.

But if we can solve this problem by high levels of care and trust, and if we can take *Ba* seriously, social networks in Japan have enormous potential. Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi's theory of knowledge management is based on it. They define *Ba* as a shared context in motion. It is not a physical space. 'It should be understood as interactions that occur at a specific time and space.' 'Ba is an existential space where participants share their contexts and create new meanings through interactions' (Nonaka and Toyama, 2002: 1001). It is a dynamic space of mutual construction and collective self. It is a completely different space from Cartesian space.

Social Network in Korea and China

According to Yee Jaeyeol (Yee, 2003), the English term 'network' corresponds to two different Korean words, *Yeon-gyeol* (연결) and *Yeon-jul* (연줄). Whereas the former is a neutral word referring to open relations among objects or people connected by universal rules, the latter means particularistic relations maintained by kin, school or regional ties. Yee sees two types of Korean networks: 'weak' and 'strong'. A 'weak' tie means a network with wide range but low density. People with 'weak' ties tend to have higher socioeconomic status. They tend to show a deep distrust of institutional justice which has been monopolized by authoritarian establishments, and they take a post-materialist, progressive attitude on social issues. But they are also adept at utilizing these instrumental networks and have a strong tendency to utilize their relation capital for instrumental purposes. 'Weak' networks tend to be used instrumentally for information transfer. A 'strong' tie means a network with narrow range and high density. People with 'strong' ties tend to belong to a lower socioeconomic group, such as farmers or the older generation, and be embedded in traditional authoritarian kin networks which take the existing social order for granted. Their social networks provide emotional support, but can also apply strong pressure on members to conform.

According to Yee Jaeyeol, during Korea's rapid modernization, strong ties have been gradually replaced by weak ones, especially among the educated young middle class. This entails emancipation from the restraints of traditional kin networks and diffusion of a universalistic attitude. But this new educated group is also very 'adept at

developing instrumental networks conceptualized as *Yeon-gyeol*. Yee Jaeyeol suggests that these two contradictory roles of weak ties have come from the fact that secondary associations are fragile in Korea. He goes on to argue that without the discovery of a new moral basis compatible with an increasingly complex society, Korea will suffer from social fragmentation, and become divided and occupied by *Yeon-jul* networks. This suggestion, which is problematic, is similar to Lee Jaehyuck's (2003) position on the replacement of *Yeon-jul* by a modernizing and democratizing civil society.

Social networks in China are called *guanxi*, 关系 關係, and entail a set of interpersonal connections that facilitates exchanges of favours between people. According to Yanjie Bian (1997) the following points are relevant. First, for any two individuals to develop *guanxi*, they must enjoy familiarity and intimacy. Second, trustworthiness is necessary, which results from long-term interactions. Third, there is reciprocal obligation, which is often translated into emotional feelings of attachment (*gangqing* 感情); people who do not reciprocate lose face (*mianzi* 面子). Even in western societies people are beginning to understand that *guanxi* as more than the lack of bribery and corruption, especially in an information network society. They realize that '*Guanxi* relationships can reduce uncertainty, lower research and other transaction costs, provide usable resources, and increase interpersonal pleasure and a sense of connectedness'. *Guanxi* networks can be seen as 'flexible, efficient, available', and use social capital with low financial cost (Wellman, 2002: 236). *Guanxi* relationships also offer social support, which is often given for the general benefit of a household or a network rather than for the individual. *Guanxi* is rarely a zero-sum game, but builds a fund of network capital.

Conclusion

Kosaku Yoshino (1992) shows how the cultural stereotypes of *Nihonjinron* (Japanese uniqueness) are reinforced in English language education, tourist brochures and academic writings, to the extent that the commonality between the Japanese and non-Japanese is forgotten. The same can be said of East Asian Studies: now we have to shift the emphasis from specific characteristics to universal ones. As Barry Wellman (2002) pointed out, in the West the network society is changing. In the East too, we are experiencing weakening of 'within-household ties', closely associated with a change of marriage patterns, increased geographical mobility and individually oriented communication technologies. Therefore we need to examine the relationship between these changes and social networks.

Nan Lin (2002: 227–8) remarks that 'In the currently pervasive dominance of "received theories" derived mostly from western experiences, discrepant evidences from other societies are often questioned for their generalizability or treated as contingencies. For paradigmatic theoretical contribution by the East to be possible, several conditions have to be met. There must be consistent and persistent evidence, a critical mass of scholars who support the claim, and demonstration that alternative theory may supplement or supersede the received theory.' Lin finds that this is the case with relational rationality, arguing that there are two ultimate rewards for human beings: economic standing and social standing. Economic standing is based on the accumulation and distribution of wealth, whereas social standing is based on the accumulation and distribution of reputation. Economic standing and social standing are complementary in that the former requires social legitimation and enforcement for its symbolic value (money), and the latter builds on the economic well-being of the group (or embedded resources in the network) in which the reputation is sustained. Each form of standing can be seen as an independent motive in exchanges. Exchange can be used to extract economic capital (resources through transaction) or to extract social capital (resources through social relations). Transactional rationality sees relationships as part of transactional gain–loss calculations and relational rationality sees transactions as part of relational cost–benefit calculations. Relational rationality favours the maintenance and promotion of the relationship even when the transactions are less than optimal. Transactional rationality favours the optimal outcome of transactions, even if it is necessary to terminate specific relations (Lin, 2002).

As we can see clearly, the East meets with the West in Lin's theory of social exchange, with its grounding in East Asian and Chinese experience such as *guanxi*. The knowledge management theory of Nonaka and Takeuchi based on *Ba* 場, or social networks in Japan, provides similar insights. These approaches not only enrich our knowledge, but can further the process of theoretical development in the current global context.

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Protocol

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Keywords algorithm, control, data, interactivity, Internet, organization, protocol

Protocol is a technological problematic. That is to say, the concept of protocol is an intellectual terrain on which one may contemplate a number of overlapping, sometimes contradictory and often interrelated theoretical problems at play today. I aim in this somewhat idiosyncratic entry to describe briefly a few historical waypoints for the concept, to identify some of the normative claims inherent in using the term today, plus suggest a few issues with which, going forward, any theorist of computers or networks will have to contend. Because of this, I deliberately avoid any discussion of the etymology of the term in diplomatic affairs, or the current institutional structure in place today for the creation and maintenance of Internet protocols. Instead I offer a singular perspective on the theme, one that could be contested as much as it could be confirmed.

A distributed network is a specific network architecture characterized by equity between

nodes, bi-directional links, a high degree of redundancy and general lack of internal hierarchy. Protocol refers to the technology of organization and control operating in distributed networks. Protocol functions largely without relying on hierarchical, pyramidal or centralized mechanisms; it is flat and smooth; it is universal, flexible and robust. Protocol exists in contemporary computer networks, but it is also at play in a variety of biological and bioinformatic networks (see Thacker, 2004).

There exists a constellation of theoretical influences from science and philosophy that helps inform today's cybernetic, networked environment. 'If I were to choose a patron saint for cybernetics out of the history of science, I should have to choose Leibniz', wrote Norbert Wiener (1965: 12). Indeed both Gottfried Leibniz and Baruch Spinoza from modern philosophy articulate early approximations of machinic and network-like arrangements. Leibniz, with his *Monadology*, describes a smooth, universal network of 'monads', each of which is singular but also contains within it a mirror of the totality. In the *Ethics* Spinoza identifies a universal substance, from whose

infinite attributes thought and extension emerge to form the human body. The affections of the human body superimpose onto substance a type of distributed network of relations and counter-relations. In the 20th century Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1976), with the science of general systems theory, and Wiener, with the science of cybernetics, helped describe open versus closed systems, how subsystems are nested within systems, and how communication and control pass from one part of a system to another. In roughly the same period Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver (1998) put forth their information theory which defined communication not solely in terms of semantics but in terms of the relative integrity of symbolic patterns. In mathematics, graph theory is also a key influence. It provides a vocabulary for understanding systems of nodes and links, known simply as graphs.

At the same time there also exists a faint counterpoint resonating within this historical overview that must be pointed out. This is the general assumption that networks have the potential to dehierarchize, disrupt and generally dissolve rigid structures of all varieties. This thread runs from Hans Magnus Enzensberger's chart of emancipated versus repressive media, to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's 'rhizome' (1987), to Peter Galison and his war against the center, and even to the RAND researchers John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt and their theory of netwar (2001). All these thinkers share the assumption that networks exist in an antagonistic relationship to authority, that networks are the sole form of organization that can possibly threaten entrenched, fortified power centers.

This trend was articulated distinctly in the 1960s by Paul Baran (1964) with the concept of the distributed network. Baran's network was based on a technology called packet-switching which allows messages to break themselves apart into small fragments. Each fragment, or packet, is able to find its own way to its destination. Once there, the packets reassemble themselves to create the original message. The ARPAnet, started in 1969 by the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) at the US Department of Defense was the first network to use Baran's packet-switching technology. In fact, the term packet-switching was not invented by Baran, but instead by British scientist Donald Davies who also invented a system for sending small packets of information over a distributed network, all the while unknowing of Baran's work. It was Baran's institutional affiliation with RAND and his proximity to the newly emerging ARPA network in America that solidified his historical legacy. I consider Baran to be the 'father' of protocological systems, not simply

because of his position in the historical emergence of distributed networks, but because he explicitly understood that distributed networks create new, robust structures for organization and control; they do not remove organization and control. Compared to pyramidal hierarchies, networks are indeed flimsy, ineffective and disorganized. But this relationship of asymmetry is precisely what, in the long run, makes networks so robust. Baran understood that the Cold War model relied upon a decentralized system of targets – cities and military bases, mostly – and so, if a new targetless model of organization could be rolled out (the smooth, distributed network), then precisely through the inversion of the Cold War model a new strategic advantage could be gained. Distributed networks have become hegemonic only recently, and because of this it is relatively easy to lapse back into a time when the network was disruptive of the power center, when the guerilla threatened the army, when the nomadic horde threatened the citadel. But this is no longer the case today. The distributed network is the new citadel, the new army, the new power.

So the assumption above, that networks have the potential to dehierarchize, disrupt and generally dissolve rigid structures of all varieties, must be resolutely resisted. It is not the case that networks produce a general waning of organization and control. In fact, it is the opposite: distributed networks produce an entirely new system of organization and control that, while perhaps incompatible with pyramidal systems of power, is nevertheless just as effective at keeping things in line. This new system of organization and control, protocol, is adept at regulating flows, coding objects and sculpting life forms. Thus, the problematic of protocol suggests that in recent decades there has been a change in the nature of organization and control, not an 'emancipation' from it, as Enzensberger so hoped. The imperative today, then, is to understand the nature of this new logic of organization, and as Michel Foucault once said about power, not to become enamored of it.

Indeed Foucault and Deleuze are quite useful for thinking about the protocological system of organization and control. Foucault, through his concept of biopower, was able to articulate a new form of total saturation of organization, one that penetrated not only the institutions of modern life, but also the very networks of human interaction, be they domestic, familial, sexual, or even intra-human at the level of 'raw' biology. Deleuze, in his book on Foucault, and additionally in a series of fragments and interviews he produced late in life, identified a historical epoch, concurrent with Foucault's rise of biopower, called the society of control. The society of control is characterized not

by the power of the institutions of modernity or pre-modernity, the army, the prison, the university, the church, but instead by what he called the ultra-rapid forms of free floating control that are inherent in distributed networks. These networks may be computer-based, but, Deleuze suggested, one must also look to the biological networks of the life sciences. Indeed the informatic and the biological become intertwined under the societies of control such that the biological is always already understood as an informatic network of data (the genome), and at the same time the digital is always understood as a type of artificial life system which may produce ‘intelligent’ emergent properties just as organisms do.

The Internet protocols themselves are interesting as historical documents. A computer protocol is a set of recommendations and rules for implementing a technical standard. The protocols that govern much of the Internet are contained in what are called RFC (Request For Comments) documents. The expression derives from a memorandum titled ‘Host Software’ sent by Steve Crocker on 7 April 1969, which is known today as RFC 1. The RFCs are published by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). They are freely available and used predominantly by engineers who wish to build hardware or software that meets common specifications. Since 1969, a few thousand RFC documents have been released, and they, along with a larger constellation of global technological standards, constitute the system of organization and control known as protocol. Protocols are systems of material organization; they structure relationships of bits and atoms, and how they flow through the distributed networks in which they are embedded.

A close reading of the RFCs is outside of the scope of this encyclopedia entry; however, I would like to identify a few details of this system that should have important ramifications for cultural workers of all varieties. The first is that informatic networks are relatively indifferent to semantic content and interpretation. Data is parsed; it is not read. Media objects are defined at the intersection between two protocols (two technologies), not as a result of some human being’s semantic projection onto that data. (Any machinic understanding of the ‘content’ of data is derived as an epiphenomenon of human behavior, as seen in the page rank algorithm of search engines like Google.)

The second ramification is what might be called the political tragedy of interactivity. Interactivity and bi-directionality of media was famously held up as a sort of utopia by Bertolt Brecht in his short fragments on radio, and later reprised by Enzensberger as the heart and soul of

an ‘emancipated’ media. However, today interactivity is one of the core instruments of control and organization. Today, organisms must communicate whether they want to or not. Organisms are ‘captured’, to use Phil Agre’s terminology, using any number of informatic codes and rubrics. Behaviors are mined for meaningful data, tracked for illegal data, even the genome is prospected for rare or otherwise useful sequences. This is the political tragedy of interactivity, that what was so liberating for Enzensberger is today the very site of informatic exploitation, regulation and control. Today, interactivity means total participation, universal capture.

The third ramification is the tendency to privilege surface over source. I mean this in an entirely non-normative way, and indeed have little understanding of this above and beyond that it is merely happening. By ‘surface over source’ I mean the struggle between open source software and proprietary software, but it is also much more endemic than that. There is a certain philosophy in computer science known as encapsulation that pervades a whole variety of computer languages and programming environments regardless of whether that code is open source or not. Encapsulation is a technique whereby one segregates code into specific modular units, sometimes called objects or libraries, then provides a surface interface for that object or library. The interface acts as the sole conduit for communication into and out of the object or library. The source of the object or library itself is hidden. Computer scientists use encapsulation for a variety of reasons, all of them practical. It makes the code easier to maintain and simpler to implement. As stated previously, the ramifications of this are not altogether clear to me yet; however, I identify the tendency to privilege surface (or interface) over source at the level of code as quite significant and worthy of further critique. At the very least it should convince us that the open source movement is not enough, and that something like an ‘open runtime’ movement might be required.

Connected to this is a fourth concern: the problem of the de-politicization of algorithms. There is essentially no intellectual movement today dedicated to the political critique of algorithms. Likewise there exists no alternative movement dedicated to the creation and development of alternative, or ‘progressive’, algorithms. For the most part the political development of algorithms revolves around a philosophy of utility and efficiency. These being but a minute slice of the human condition, I call for the creation of an experimental school of alternative algorithms modeled around a variety of political and social goods. We need a viable critique of

collaborative filtering. We need a language in which to appraise the Google page rank algorithm. An examination of the de-politicization of algorithms will help.

A final ramification of protocological organization and control is that it mandates the creation of new models for political intervention. Networks, rhizomes, 'grass roots' movements – these were all effective diagrams for political control under modernity. But after the powers-that-be have migrated into the distributed network, thereby co-opting the very tools of the former Left, new models for political action are required. A new exploit is necessary, one that is as asymmetrical in relationship to distributed networks as the distributed network was to the power centers of modernity. In the meantime anti-protocological movements have emerged such as Hakim Bey's model of the temporary autonomous zone (2003), or the Electronic Disturbance Theatre's system of online electronic swarming. And in the realm of the non-human, computer viruses and worms have innovated, perhaps totally haphazardly, a new model of protocological infection and disruption that takes advantage of the homogeneity of distributed networks and their ability to propagate information far and wide with ease. At the same time hackers seek out logical exploits in software that allow for inversions and modulations in the normal functionality of code. These techniques, if not fully formed themselves, will provide a way forward for understanding protocological control and counter-protocological practices.

Hackers

McKenzie Wark

Keywords class, computing, ethics, information, intellectual property

The figure of the 'hacker' is a new and distinctive one in the social history of the late 20th century. The hacker probably first emerged out of the electrical engineering labs at the Massachusetts Institute for Technology (MIT). As on many campuses, MIT students had a tradition of creating attention seeking pranks –

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which at MIT were called 'hacks'. The term hack migrated from this general student inventiveness to a more specific sense of creative invention with given materials in the context of electrical engineering, out of which computing as a distinct discipline was to grow.

Not all computing at MIT or elsewhere qualified as 'hacking'. It had distinct qualities. 'To qualify as a hack, the feat must be imbued with innovation, style and technical virtuosity' (Levy, 1994: 23). Hacking was at once an aesthetic and an ethic, in which cooperation among hackers

was achieved through their mutual desire for recognition, achieved via improvements or modifications to each other's programming code. As Richard Stallman, a legendary figure in hacker culture, says: 'It was a bit like the garden of Eden. It hadn't occurred to us not to cooperate' (Williams, 1992: 76).

The academic environment in which hacking first emerged contributed greatly to the ethic of collaboration on shared goals via competition for recognition. What was distinctive was the extension of recognizably academic social processes into this new technical area. Hackers were, at the same time, largely indifferent to formal recognition within the academy or industry. The recognition of one's peers was what mattered.

Early development of computing at MIT, Stanford and elsewhere was heavily dependent on funding provided by the Pentagon, which offered very broad support for basic computing research in the 1950s and 1960s. This certainly contributed to the rather special culture of hacking. As the Pentagon narrowed its research interests, and commercial computing industries grew, hacker culture came under pressure from administrative and commercial imperatives. It survived, for a time, due to the high demand for scarce computing skills.

Hacking persists as something of a governing ideal in programming. A 'hacker ethic', with roots in early computing research experience, exists as something like a craft sense of what programming as a kind of labor ought to be. Hackers, who 'want to realize their passions', present 'a general social challenge', but the realization of the value of this challenge 'will take time, like all great cultural changes' (Himanen, 2001: 7, 18, 13).

As computing became a pervasive force with the rise of the Internet, 'hacking' developed a second meaning – it named the process of exploring computer networks. In many cases this was benign. The Internet was a new and not well-understood phenomenon, and hackers in this sense were explorers of this new terrain. However, once computer networks were conceived as a new form of 'property', transgressions of these putative property boundaries were quickly criminalized (Sterling, 1993). A 'moral panic' ensued, in which the hacker appeared as a new kind of folk devil, recklessly invading networks, interrupting essential services, stealing state secrets or credit card numbers. In order to preserve the original meaning of the term hacker, those who exploit weaknesses in computer networks for criminal reasons are sometimes referred to as 'crackers'.

Nevertheless, even the most benign, creative, ethical and aesthetic version of the idea of the 'hacker' presents something of a challenge to the

social order, for the hacker is a figure that speaks to the ideal of a kind of labor that finds its own time, that sets its own goals, and that works on common property for the good of all. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue, many of the new kinds of labor processes that emerged in the late 20th century have a distinctively cooperative element. 'The central forms of productive cooperation are no longer created by the capitalist as part of the project to organize labor but rather emerge from the productive energies of labor itself' (Hardt and Negri, 2004: 113). The hacker is the embodiment of this self-organized labor.

The rise of the hacker meets an antithetical development in the rise of strict and extensive intellectual property law. At MIT, hackers worked freely on each other's code, gave code to others and did not secure their files – to do so would only invite others to circumvent the security. This model of free, self-organized labor took place under very special conditions – in research labs with large amounts of Pentagon funding. Yet it provided an ethic of working with information that spread far beyond this academic setting. The sharing of information became a hallmark of early Internet culture. This was perceived to be an obstacle to its development as a commodity by the new forms of business that wanted to invest in it.

The crackdown on hacker culture in its more transgressive sense, and the containment of the hacker ethic in its more benign sense, are two parts of the process of the commodification of computing networks in the interests of restricting the free movement of information and the expansion of the concept of information as private property. If an early slogan of hacker culture has it that 'information wants to be free', it finds itself, to borrow from Rousseau, 'everywhere in chains' (Wark, 2004: 126).

With the rise of corporations based on computing as labor and information as property, hacker culture responded with new legal models within which hacker culture might survive. These would include the Free Software Movement, and its more corporate offshoot, the Open Source Movement (Moody, 2001). The Creative Commons Movement seeks a broader platform for collaborative labor with information (Lessig, 2004). Where corporations dependent on information generally seek policy solutions that turn copyrights and patents into absolute private property rights, the Creative Commons Movement extends the hacker ethic to all information, seeking forms of legal protection for collaborative labor.

More broadly still, the hacker may be the symptom of a broader class struggle over information, which pits those who produce it – hackers in the very broadest sense – against those who own

the means of realizing its value – the corporations whose value is increasingly defined not by tangible assets, but by portfolios of patents, copyrights and brands. Thus, the hacker may turn out to be a very important social category for understanding labor, the commodity and private property in the information age.

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Life (Vitalism)

Scott Lash

Abstract This entry is about the concept of *vitalism*. The currency of vitalism has re-emerged in the context of the changes in the sciences, with the rise of ideas of uncertainty and complexity, and the rise of the global information society. This is because the notion of life has always favoured an idea of *becoming* over one of *being*, of movement over stasis, of action over structure, of *flow* and *flux*. The global information order seems to be characterized by 'flow'. There are three important generations of modern vitalists. There is a generation of 1840–45 including Nietzsche and the sociologist Tarde; the generation of 1860 including the philosopher Bergson and the sociologist Simmel; and the generation of 1925–33 including Deleuze, Foucault and Negri. Vitalist or neo-vitalist themes are particularly useful in the analysis of life itself, but thinkers such as Donna Haraway and Katharine Hayles put things in reverse. They understand not the media in terms of life, but life in terms of media. Thus a mediatic principle or algorithmic principle also structures life. If classical vitalism conceives of life as flow and in opposition to the structures that would contain and stop it, then neo-vitalism would seem to have its roots in something like a media or information heuristic. Thus there is talk today that 'information is alive'.

Keywords flow, information, media, vitalism

This entry is about the concept of *vitalism*. Yet we will see at the end of the entry that it applies to *life* more generally, and in particular life in the age of microbiology. Discussions of 'life' and 'vitalism' disappeared very much from the rise of the Third Reich. This is because many associated it and its foremost proponents – Friedrich Nietzsche and Henri Bergson – with Nazism and the extreme right. The currency of vitalism has re-emerged in the context of (a) changes in the sciences, with the rise of ideas of uncertainty and complexity and (b) the rise of the global information society. This is because the notion of life has always favoured an idea of *becoming* over one of *being*, of movement over stasis, of action over structure, of *flow* and *flux*. The global information order seems to be characterized by 'flow'. This stands in contrast with the more structured and bounded character of the nation-state and the manufacturing order. *Lebensphilosophies* – or ideas of life – though, can never be ideas of pure flow. Thus Buddhist doctrines or similar philosophies like Schopenhauer's of endless flow and quiescence are not vitalist. This was noted by Georg Simmel, whose sociological vitalism was characterized more by the tensions of 'flux' than the smoothness of flow. Vitalism also normally has implicit notions of power or struggle. Finally, all notions of vitalism presume some sort of emergent *form*.

'Life', in this sense, can be understood in its opposition to *mechanism*. One could trace this opposition, and that between 'being' and 'becoming', back to that between Heraclitus' metaphysics of flux and Plato's predominance of form. There are dimensions of vitalism also in Plato, as there are in those seen as the most 'mechanistic' of thinkers such as Descartes or Kant or, say, the late Emile Durkheim. There are especially important elements of vitalism in Aristotle. The primary distinction between mechanism and vitalism may be in terms of

vitalism's *self-organization*. In mechanism, causation is external: the paths or movement or configuration of beings is determined. In vitalism causation is largely *self-causation*. And beings are largely indeterminate. In Aristotle there is a sort of hierarchy of self-organization. Inorganic matter has the lowest level of self-organization, though it also is partly self-organizing. Organic matter in plants has higher levels of self-organization; animals still higher; human beings still higher; and immortals the highest. This sort of hierarchy repeats itself in subsequent vitalists, the most central of whom are perhaps Spinoza and Nietzsche. For Spinoza, and indeed Leibniz, it is God (which is also nature) that has the highest level of self-organization; for Nietzsche the *Übermensch* has such levels of self-organization. Vitalism is *not* humanistic. Vitalists are normally also interested in animals and other organic and inorganic non-humans. Humanism normally contrasts the ideality of the human to the materiality and mechanism of the non-human. Mechanistic and vitalistic heuristics are often 'imperialistic'. The mechanistic heuristic invades the study of human life itself in the varieties of positivism and behaviourism, while in vitalism, the power of self-organization is extended from humans to all sorts of matter.

Vitalism normally presupposes philosophical monism. Doctrines of mechanism are typically dualistic, such as in Descartes or Kant. This dualism lies in a mind–body polarity in which body or matter is conceived as mechanistic. Here, classically, mind is composed of ideal substance and matter of material substance. In this, mind is detached from matter. And such mind comprises a reflective gaze that looks, as it were, two ways. As externally looking or reflecting on matter, it enters into positivistic subject–object relations. In such a relation, mind is 'objective': it has no 'interest', no 'attitude' towards matter. When we relate to matter like this, matter is determinate, and we are – as Kant noted – ourselves caused and determinate. If we shift our gaze, our reasoned thought, from external objects to look internally (or 'intensively'), however, we are transcendental and indeterminate. We are so, Kant argued, as moral beings. In a third instance – as in the non-scientific perusal of nature or in art – we look at nature not objectively, which is also conceiving nature as something instrumental. We instead direct our gaze on nature as a *finality*. In this case, the doors are opened for more vitalist thought. Once nature becomes a finality it can potentially attain powers of self-organization. Although some vitalists like Bergson call themselves dualists, and others like Deleuze speak of a 'transcendental empiricism', *Lebensphilosophie* tends to be monist. Vitalism is also always happier with empiricists like Locke and especially Hume than it is with rationalists like Descartes. Vitalism always has a very important idea of 'sense' – in which sense is more fundamentally a question of sensation than it is of meaning – and a notion of knowledge that will be based on sense. Thus theories of knowledge that are classificatory – i.e. that tend to subsume a particular under a universal – are rejected by vitalists as dualistic. Knowledge-theories, in contrast, that stress sense, and in which sense is understood largely as sensation, tend to be vitalist. The idea of experience for dualists (mechanists) tends to be classificatory, and subsuming particulars under universals, while experience for vitalists tends to be much more sensory and works through *affect* (Massumi).

There are three important generations of modern vitalists. There is a generation born about 1840–45 including Nietzsche and the sociologist Gabriel Tarde; the generation born about 1860 including the philosopher Bergson and the sociologist Simmel, and the generation born about 1925–33 including Gilles Deleuze, Foucault and Antonio Negri. Contemporary neo-vitalism can in many respects be understood as Deleuzian. There seem to be two vitalist genealogies. One connects Tarde to Bergson and Deleuze, and the other runs from Nietzsche through Simmel to Foucault. The Bergsonian tradition focuses on perception and sensation while the Nietzschean tradition focuses on power. Now power is always for vitalists (from Spinoza) a question of *potentia* (puissance) and *potestas* (pouvoir). Puissance is power to and pouvoir is power over. 'Sensory' vitalists like Bergson and Deleuze are theorists of puissance, while the more 'agonistic' tendency in vitalism focuses on pouvoir. In Nietzsche, puissance is life itself. It is energy: a sort of self-generating life-force. But puissance and pouvoir are closely intertwined. Nietzsche's will to power is puissance. Yet the will to power as puissance often ends up in pouvoir. Simmel and Foucault take two different directions from Nietzsche. For

Nietzsche as for Foucault, ‘slave moralities’ (or Foucault’s ‘discourses’ which are the equivalent of Nietzsche’s slave moralities) as forms have unhappily become pervasive. Foucault describes the system of *pouvoir* through which they work: the clinic, the asylum, sexuality, etc. Foucault is a vitalist only from the point of view of *pouvoir*. His idea of subjectivity is not vitalistic. But Foucault’s idea of *pouvoir* or knowledge-*pouvoir* describes a shift from an era when such power is basically mechanistic to one in which power is vitalistic. In what Foucault calls the ‘classical’ era, knowledge is mechanistic and classificatory: power, for its part, is through surveillance. In both cases knowledge-power is from above and transcendental. It is also ‘reproductive’ as distinct from productive. Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of power – as symbolic violence – is also reproductive: it reproduces the class system. So is Marx’s in *Capital*. Foucault in *The Order of Things* – whose French title is *Les mots et les choses*, literally words and things – describes a transition of knowledge-power from classification-surveillance to *life*. In ‘life’, knowledge is less mechanistic and more ‘physiological’. Words are no longer classificatory from above but enter into the logic of things themselves. It follows that knowledge is no longer transcendental but immanent. Power, for its part, shifts from surveillance to ‘bio-power’. It too is no longer transcendental but now immanent. The biological – and not the mechanistic surveillance – paradigm is always self-organizing. It is thus not reproductive but productive. Many vitalists see *puissance* as non-linear and productive but power as linear and reproductive. Foucault’s vitalism of domination – which is not reproductive but productive – is thus very useful in understanding the information age, in which *pouvoir* does seem to work in such a non-linear manner.

Georg Simmel too is concerned with the relation between life, on the one hand, and form, on the other. If Nietzsche’s slave moralities become for Foucault ‘discourses’, for Simmel they become ‘social forms’. Life for Simmel is what Deleuze and Bergson understood as the ‘virtual’ and form is the ‘actual’. More specifically, life or *puissance* can actualize into two types of forms: on the one hand, into life-destroying dualistic or mechanistic forms like Christianity, Platonism and Cartesian thought; or, on the other hand, into life-enhancing forms. The latter are self-organizing forms.

A number of vitalists seem to start from the problem of *perception*. ‘Perception’ is linked here with sensation, affect and experience. At stake again is a radically empiricist (and not classificatory) idea of knowledge. Gabriel Tarde has a strong idea of ‘perception’. Indeed sociologist Maurizio Lazzarato understands Tarde’s theory in terms of a ‘psychological economy’ because of the centrality of perception and affect in Tarde. Vitalism presumes a *monadological* rather than *atomistic* ontology. In Leibniz’s ‘monadology’ all substances are *different* from one another. Cartesian ‘atomism’ presumes that matter comprises identical parts (atoms). For Gabriel Tarde any monad has a ‘psychology’ and thus relations of affect and perception. Monads also communicate with each other rather than enter into relations of cause and effect. These monads can be subatomic particles, human beings, societies or other entities. Vitalism usually starts from a relation between entities, a relation between monads. Tarde’s monads connect to one another through the equivalent of willing and cognition. Here ‘affect’ is the overarching dimension embracing willing and cognition. Simmel for his part starts from a basic intersubjectivity, before there is a social or forms, connecting it would seem two singular (monadological) subjects. Here we must insist that though vitalism has a great amount in common with complexity theory, the latter lacks the metaphysical dimension that is central and indeed necessary to vitalism.

Bergson is perhaps the most seminal vitalist thinker who features perception. In his *Matter and Memory* (1988), Bergson starts from pure perception. He starts from a relation between two material bodies. The bodies relate to each other through perception: each relates to the other as an *image*. The image that a material body has of the other material body varies according to its ‘interests’. This is Bergson’s ‘matter-image ontology’. This image is also a force that acts on the material body. As such it sets it in motion. So far we are in the realm of action and reaction, the realm of mechanism. This is where Bergson introduces the equivalent of life or ‘memory’. We have life or memory when there is an *interval*, an *écart* between reaction

and action. This *écart*, which is an inward flexion, is memory. This interval is what gives memory to matter. It is the reflexive moment of self-organization. As such it is *life*. And consistent with the discussion above, there is no life without self-organization. This is the transition from nature to culture, from brain to mind, from matter to spirit for Bergson. For many vitalists immanence is flatness; for Bergson it is this inward flexion, also known as *the virtual*. Deleuze takes this on in a major way. Deleuze develops his notion of the virtual most explicitly in what he calls the ‘plane of immanence’. This plane has such as inward flexion. It thus comprises an empiricism, but a ‘transcendental empiricism’. Deleuze is the leading contemporary vitalist. His and Felix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) work not from mechanism but instead from what is called ‘*machinism*’. This is influenced by Marcel Duchamp’s *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)*. There is something of the order of a bachelor-machine in Duchamp’s vitrine. Deleuze and Guattari similarly speak of ‘desiring-machines’. Here they re-cast – through mechanism – the much more organicist and vitalist force of desire. This fusion – under the sign of *potentia* (*puissance*) of mechanism and the vitalism becomes Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘*machinism*’. ‘Desire’ here replaces labour as the driving force of contemporary capitalism. The subtitle of *Anti-Oedipus* is *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, in which the schizophrenic plays the vitalist hero in response to the deadening alliance of psychoanalytic law and the capitalist commodity. Deleuze and Guattari could be criticized for not going far enough. It is not just the resistance to capitalism which is schizophrenic: capitalism and capitalist power themselves have become schizophrenic. Indeed normalized, or normalizing, capitalism has transformed into schizophrenic-capitalism. This new phase of capitalism is no longer based on the principle of the (mechanistic) commodity. Capitalism itself has become one big desiring-machine. Such notions resurface in 21st-century neo-Marxism, in the work of Antonio Negri for whom contemporary capitalism, unlike earlier versions, works from a principle of life.

In vitalism life is not at all counterposed to death. Instead death is part of life. Our future is always inorganic matter. Death is seen as entropic, and part of a recombinant life process. Hence vitalism will never spend overly long on the issue of human finitude as will phenomenology. Post-Christian and post-Enlightenment humanism will focus on human death in a way that vitalism will not. In an important sense the Heideggerian drama of ‘being against death’ is very much the humanist other side of the contemporary mechanism’s denial of death. We see this denial of death in, for example, the fetishism of physical fitness, plastic surgery and other technologies of putting off ageing. So vitalism defines itself mainly against mechanism but also against humanism, which itself is the other side of always dualist mechanism. But it does not define itself against death. Vitalism will sit well with the idea of death, the virus, etc. in David Cronenberg’s films such as *Crash*, *Scanners*, *Videodrome* and *The Fly*. Indeed Freud, whose orderly and civilizational ego prevents him from being a vitalist, is at his most vitalist with the death drive, which he understands in terms of entropy and a drive towards the state of inorganic matter. It is in the death drive that we see what would be the psychoanalytic concept of ‘the real’ as distinct from the symbolic. Vitalism always defines itself against the symbolic and with the real. Indeed the *Anti-Oedipus* was a question of the destruction of the psychoanalytic symbolic by the machinic real.

There are some important convergences of vitalism and phenomenology. Both stand of course in opposition to mechanism and positivism. Thus we should understand the notion of *life-world (Lebenswelt)* that is found in phenomenology. *Lebenswelt*, or ‘life-world phenomenology’, came to be contrasted with transcendental phenomenology, beginning with Husserl’s *Crisis of European Sciences* (1970). No longer would the knowledge of the thing-in-itself (i.e. the thing’s ontological structures) take place through the transcendental reduction, but instead in the grounded ‘life-world’ itself. Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology has already broken with the disembodied neutrality of the subject in Descartes, Kant, classical science and positivism. Thus for classical subject-object thinking the neutral subject had no ‘attitude’ to the object of its knowledge. For Husserl, the knowing subject instead has intentionality, an attitude, an ‘aboutness’ towards its objects. So in a first step Husserl puts the subject of knowledge in

such a *natural attitude* towards the objects of its world. In a second step, the transcendental reduction, this subject or 'ego' then brackets this relation and moves from the 'natural attitude' into the *reflective attitude*. It is here that the ego has knowledge of the object. But now this is no longer the *epistemological* knowledge of appearances, but the *ontological* knowledge of the thing-in-itself. Husserl's later work in *Crisis* now gave such ontological knowledge, no longer transcendently but in the life-world. It was such a life-world that was at stake in Heidegger's *Being and Time*, in which the being of beings would be revealed by human being or Dasein through Dasein's very being in the world. Thus also can be understood Alfred Schutz's *Phenomenology of the Social World* (1967). Though Schutz speaks of life-world, it loses its nature as deep ontology that it had in Husserl and Heidegger and Hans Georg Gadamer. Schutz's phenomenology is fully sociological in that the life-world is rendered as the social world. Subsequently Jürgen Habermas spoke of the opposition of 'system' and life-world. The system here includes the state and capitalist economy. The grounded and integral life-world stands in resistance to the capitalist system. Later Habermas would understand this system in terms of 'strategic rationality' and the life-world in terms of 'communicative rationality'. Communicative rationality featured speech-acts that were 'discursively redeemed' through legitimating arguments. This too lost the ontological dimension of the life-world. Further, the foregrounding of speech-acts and argument was reminiscent of much of analytic philosophy's positivism that critical theory was designed to displace. Sociological phenomenology and ethnomethodology drew not only on 'world' and 'life-world' in Husserl, Heidegger and Schutz but also on the late Wittgenstein's *forms of life*. 'Forms of life' is here more an empirical 'way-of-doing', and has to do with how a society accomplishes things. If positivist knowledge is knowledge of the 'what', then knowledge of forms of life is knowledge of the 'how'. Here again the deep-ontological dimension is absent. But this knowledge of the 'how' in Schutz, Wittgenstein and Harold Garfinkel is not knowledge of the epistemological 'what'. Knowledge of the 'how' is already arguably ontological. At stake, however, is not a 'deep' but a 'social ontology'. Heidegger's 'existence' opens up a deep and more somehow universal ontology, while the social existence of the life-world or forms of life opens up a social ontology. Social ontology is the point of view on the world, or better, point of operationality, of a given society, language group or community. It can be the basis of identity for a national or ethnic group. Walter Benjamin contrasted language in its positivist, or what he called 'semiotic', mode with this sort of more metaphysical or ontological language. The structures of forms of life or a social life-world are thus ontological. Thus we can see the contrast of Husserl's 'reflective attitude' with Garfinkel's more sociological idea of 'reflexivity'. Husserl's reflective attitude has to do with still theoretical knowledge that still yields knowledge of more universal ontological structures. Garfinkel's has to do with practical action or talk that is reflexive in that it, at the same time, 'glosses' (or points a reflexive vector at) the forms of life (or social ontology) of members of a social group.

Vitalism has consistently distinguished itself from mechanism and positivism. Thus in the early 20th century there was a sort of mutual antagonism between Bergsonian vitalism and the positivism of Durkheim, as in the early 21st century there is a sort of antagonism between the neo-positivism of scholars influenced by Pierre Bourdieu and the neo-vitalism of those influenced by Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri. But phenomenology is also a target for today's vitalism. Deleuze wrote famously in *Cinema 2* (1989) that for phenomenology consciousness is of a thing, while for vitalism consciousness *is* a thing. In classical positivism or classificatory mechanism consciousness is not of a thing. It is detached from the thing, knows it objectively and in an abstract instrumental, utilitarian way. In phenomenology there is a move to things themselves, from epistemology to ontology. Consciousness is of a thing in the sense of concretely perceiving an aspect of a thing, of the thing-itself. Yet consciousness is still of a different substance or nature than the thing. Things do not know one another's ontological structure: only consciousness does. In immanentist vitalism there is less concern with the depth of ontological structure. Hence vitalism does not subscribe to the phenomenological or neo-phenomenological (from Heidegger to Derrida to Levinas) assumptions of 'ontological difference'. Vitalist monadology is an 'ontology of difference'.

A serious critique of vitalism has developed, not so much from the point of view of positivism, but instead from the point of view of such 'ontological difference'. This critique is voiced by Giorgio Agamben and also by thinkers such as Gillian Rose. Agamben in *The Man Without Content* (1999) suggests that vitalist thinking is thinking without content. This is an attack on the seemingly unrestrained hubris of vitalism: its refusal to accept human and non-human limitations. In a similar vein, Agamben attacks much of vitalist-influenced modern and contemporary art and art theory as without content. He rejects especially its assumptions that the artist produces everything out of his or her subjectivity. The Faustian artist is thus the 'man without content': the missing content being an ever already existing materiality and sociality. This is not to say that the artist should produce social art, but that he or she is charged with revealing ontological structures of the content of such a sociality and materiality. What vitalism embraces is a metaphysics of *praxis* as distinct from the *poesis* that Agamben advocates. 'Poesis' is always with content: material and social. 'Praxis' is without content. Agamben contrasts to vitalist praxis Heidegger's poesis in which Dasein as human being deals with content or beings, and whose task is to illuminate the being of such beings. He can set against praxis also Walter Benjamin's theory of language in which it is man's task – which is also the task of the translator – to give proper names to beings. Man is the naming being. But man does not just invent these names. The being or essence (*Wesen*) of these beings is already given, and man's naming is essentially a passive process. There is a very strong activism in vitalist praxis and a sort of passive attitude of the artist in notions of poesis. Agamben says this notion of praxis that is already present in Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* is still there in contemporary vitalism. Gillian Rose has made a similar criticism of vitalism whose lack of content or 'middle' is for her nihilistic. Her and Agamben's rejection of vitalism as praxis and without content is similar to Hegel's rejection of Kant's ethics for its lack of social content. There must be social content to any meaningful ethics says Hegel.

Given these problems, vitalist or neo-vitalist themes are particularly useful in the analysis of life itself. Here vitalism influenced thinkers such as Donna Haraway and Katharine Hayles who put things in reverse. They understand not the media in terms of life, but life in terms of media. The study of life becomes a question of 'biomedia'. Thus genetic coding almost seems to be an extension of the coding of media and messages. If media in the age of digital media are increasingly algorithmic or are forms generated by sets of instructions, then so are forms of life, by genetic instructions. Thus a mediatic principle or algorithmic principle also structures life. If classical vitalism conceives of life as flow and in opposition to the structures that would contain and stop it, then neo-vitalism would seem to have its roots in something like a media or information heuristic. Thus there is talk today that 'information is alive'. On this view life itself as much informational as information is living. If vitalism, as Agamben and others quite rightly state, is without content, then this is perhaps not so much a fault of contemporary artists and theorists. It is perhaps because content itself and indeed life itself is swept up in the global flows of finance, information and media.

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Life – After Canguilhem

Paul Rabinow and Carlo Caduff

Keywords biology, genomics, information, knowledge.

Georges Canguilhem's history of science investigates life as both form (*le vivant*) as well as experience and knowledge of that form (*le vécu*). Hinting at James D. Watson and Francis Crick's paramount discovery of the double helical structure of the deoxyribonucleic acid molecule, Canguilhem identified in his 1966 essay 'Le concept et la vie' a shift in the understanding of life. Dropping 'the vocabulary and concepts of classical mechanics, physics and chemistry, . . . in favor of the vocabulary of linguistics and communications theory', life had acquired a new language, Canguilhem observed. Operating with terms such as code, information, instruction, message, meaning, and program, molecular biology resembled neither natural history, nor architecture, nor mechanics; it resembled grammar, semantics and syntax. The problem took a different form; life was now framed in terms of organization through information. 'If we are to understand life, its message must be decoded before it can be read', as Canguilhem put it (2000: 317). The structuration of matter and the regulation of functions was set to be explored on a different scale.

In response to the ascendancy of the biosciences, the completion of the Human Genome Project, and a series of gene mapping and DNA sequencing initiatives, commentators have time and again pointed out that a shift has occurred in the epistemology of biology. Human and non-human life, it is argued, is now envisioned at a molecular scale. Recent developments in bioscience and biotechnology have enabled the re-engineering of organisms, organs and cells by way

of manipulating their molecular make-up. In contemporary biomedicine, the diagnostic and therapeutic endeavor seems increasingly anchored at the molecular level. Biology has come to 'visualize life phenomena at the submicroscopic region – between 10^{-6} and 10^{-7} cm', Nikolas Rose recently remarked. For Rose, this momentous shift of scale amounts to nothing short of a molecularization of life. 'This molecularization was not merely a matter of the framing of explanations at the molecular level. Nor was it simply a matter of the use of artefacts fabricated at the molecular level. It was a reorganization of the gaze of the life sciences, their institutions, procedures, instruments, spaces of operation and forms of capitalization', concludes Rose (2001: 13). Tantamount to the capacity of contemporary biotechnology and biomedicine to reshape life at a molecular level is the advent of a new type of biopolitics, or so it seems.

A closer look at contemporary events in post-genomic biology offers a different perspective. Today, we are not witnessing a linear progression towards a general molecularization of life, but rather, and more interestingly, inflections of a re-biologization of life. A series of gene mapping and DNA sequencing projects have revealed the genetic constitution of bacteria, yeast, worms, flies and chimps. The systematic production of genomic data performed on an industrial scale has generated a slew of information. That information, however, has not led to immediate biological understanding. The problem biologists and biomedical scientists face today is how to utilize genomic information to gain biological understanding. It has become clear by now that DNA sequence information does not reveal gene regulation. The specification of when, where, and for how long a gene is turned on or off is still missing. Additionally, it is not always possible to deduce

protein function from DNA sequence information. As Roger Brent, a molecular biologist, pointed out in 2000, 'the most important observation from genome sequence is probably that . . . the function of between 15% and 40% of the proteins encoded by any genome is not apparent from their sequence' (2000: 170). Identification of polymorphisms in coding sequences, regulatory sites, and splice junctions often yield more questions than answers. The function of non-coding regions, and the consequences of variation in non-coding regions, is unclear.

The recent discovery of non-coding RNA genes that produce functional RNA molecules rather than encoding specific proteins has revealed the limits of the information paradigm of molecular biology. Ironically, as Sean R. Eddy (2001) remarks, a considerable class of genes has remained invisible in the era of complete genome sequences. The mass production of genomic information, moreover, is prone to errors. Roger Brent more generally admonishes that 'genomic data of all types are typically lower value adding than those obtained from classical ad hoc experimental approaches; they typically do not immediately address the questions about regulation, mechanism, and decision making that are of greatest interest to contemporary biologists' (2000: 173). The problems are explicable on the ground of the configuration of the project itself. Brent argues that 'the underlying logic used to make inferences from genomic data [is] in a primitive state characteristic of an observational stage of science' (2000: 173). Perhaps, then, the definition of life as information was tantamount to that observational mode of biological inquiry.

Today, as is well known, molecular biology re-assembles around functional genomics, proteomics and transcriptomics. In the emerging world of post-genomics, the generation of genomic information provides the ground for the biologization of life, making the complex interactions between cells, systems of cells, multicellular organisms, populations of organisms and their environment a focus of heightened attention. In order to understand genomic information, biology reaches out and moves beyond the limits of the molecular scale. It resituates DNA sequences and RNA regulatory mechanisms within highly differentiated cellular networks. It shifts attention from linear causal chains to non-linear dynamics. And it moves from deterministic frameworks to probabilistic explanations. Accordingly, the challenges of post-genomic biology are not only technical, organizational and financial; they are increasingly scientific. Post-genomic biology is driven not so much by efforts in decoding DNA sequences, but rather by testing hypothetical propositions in

experimental settings. Electron microscopes, ultracentrifuges, electrophoresis, mass spectrometry, isotopes and scintillation counters are now increasingly utilized not for observational but for experimental purposes.

Reflecting on the implications of the revolution under way in the molecular biology of the 1950s and early 1960s, Canguilhem identified a shift in the epistemology of biology. The definition of life as organization, Canguilhem claimed in 1966, lost ground to a new conception: life as information. Today, this conception has not been totally discredited, to be sure, but its limits have nonetheless become apparent. The accumulation of genomic information has not led to immediate biological insight. The very epistemic status of genomic information is currently shifting from an end to a means of research: in post-genomic biology genome sequences are used as giant reference tools. Research, moreover, increasingly pays attention to complex interactions across multiple scales. The past decade, finally, has witnessed an intensification of the experimental bent of biological inquiry.

Reflecting on the implications of the conceptualization of life as information, Canguilhem was referring to a series of early successes in the endeavor of molecular biology. He was not referring to a particular science when he claimed that mankind makes mistakes when it chooses the wrong spot for receiving the kind of knowledge it is after. Clearly, that knowledge is only partially to be found by way of the molecularization of life. Today, biologists are experimenting with a broad range of spots so as to turn genomic information into biological knowledge. Contemporary inflections of the biologization of life are nothing but an attempt to move things around, once again, in a different manner, so as to flourish and survive. History has moved on, and history will continue to move on – and so should our inquiries. Nonetheless, Canguilhem's project remains relevant if it is taken as what it was meant to be: a reviving invitation to investigate the unexpected emergence of objects and the unpredictable reconfiguration of forms as they assemble into an ever-shifting understanding of life.

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The Determination of Life

Steven D. Brown

Keywords communication, life, vitalism

Eight Incommensurable Propositions on the Determination of 'Life'

Life is a term which enables the rupture of existing categories

When Daniel Dennett claims that evolutionary theory is akin to a 'universal acid' which is capable of corroding extant systems of thought and epistemic preoccupations, he is merely restating the central thrust of vitalism – that the thinking of 'life itself' necessarily undercuts established dualisms (e.g. nature/culture; mind/body). The cultural premium which is accorded to contemporary Darwinism and to the 'life sciences' may be seen as in direct proportion to the extent to which they are able to present themselves as having taken charge of 'life itself' as a problem. Critical interrogators of the life sciences, such as Donna Haraway, therefore confront the problem of analysing a practice which often disappears into its own gestures of boundary-blurring (a problem which she proposes to counter through poetics and reflexivity).

Life is a term which enables the preservation and 'future proofing' of existing hierarchies

The notion of a 'tree of life', typically found in high school biology textbooks, neatly retains the principal features of the medieval 'great chain of being' by substituting the ramified branching of a centrifugal movement of evolution away from the 'primeval soup' for the centripetal movement of sentience from the lesser beings towards the Prime Mover. Hierarchy is nevertheless retained, when either scheme is considered from an implicit notion of the 'perfectibility of life'. This latter

notion may be innocuously presented as 'good environmental fit'. In either case, the logic is one well described in Deleuze and Guattari's characterization of 'arboreal thought'.

Life is the object of a superior mechanism

Although vitalism and mechanism are often considered as separate poles of thought, the forms of mechanism which emerge in the wake of 20th-century postwar cybernetics authorize themselves in relation to their ability to grasp 'life' as merely the most complex of a series of imagined mechanisms. In his popular writing, Norbert Wiener, for instance, displays such confidence that life is capable of being rendered as 'system' that he proposes an ethical debate on the powers which are newly accorded to 'the human' as a consequence. Of the many paradoxes that this creates, surely none is finer than the attempt to restore dignity to the human subject by atomizing its humanity into the Cantor dust of classical communication theory.

Life is reducible to communication

The rise of molecular biology is premised, as Jacques Monod and François Jacob beautifully display, on the positing of 'information' as the basic biological unit. Which is to say, by holding the term 'life' to be only a folk category which denotes the complex ontogeny of coding biological materials within an emerging functional assemblage. However, the recognition that such elementary forms of communication are interdependent with 'noise' – or, put slightly differently, that much of the genetic 'junk' actually contributes in hitherto unknown ways to embryonic development – problematizes the notion that life could be reproduced on the basis of communicative rationalization.

'Life is not alive'

Adorno's citation of Kürnberger's pithy phrase is meant to capture the subjection of the living (here given an oddly humanist bent) to the inhuman practices of modern organized capital. Life then becomes a naturalized category for proposing points of resistance and disruption. Yet, as Antonio Negri, reworking Spinoza, argues, life can only perform this work if it is given determination in an ontological unit which undercuts any simple humanist subject. Much of the debate around Negri's work has then turned on the extent to which his proposed unit – *multitude* – can mediate between the local production of subjects and the transhuman forces which it articulates. The plausibility of this proposition turns on a preparedness to accept the analogy of life as fundamental ontology with 'lived experience'.

Life is either origin or destination

The term 'transhuman' presents some interesting challenges. It may be taken as marking an appeal to monadism couched in vitalist terms – as expressed in the line of thought that links Spinoza, Nietzsche and Deleuze. In which case, 'life' is the ceaseless movement of becoming that finds a provisional form or arrangement of forces in 'the human' (an arrangement that finds its harshest critic in Antonin Artaud). Or, 'life' marks a progression which has its ultimate cosmic destiny in some form which is produced by the human in order to preserve its particular determination of 'living'. The transhumanist movement expressed this eschatological notion with some force, albeit with little credulity.

Life confers authority on she or he who speaks in its name

Science studies has analysed at length the means by which the contemporary life sciences claim privileged access to 'life' through technique and method (see esp. Clarke and Fujimura, 1992). Of particular importance is the array of technologies which make it possible to render visible 'life' in its most inchoate states (e.g. coloured 3-D foetal imaging techniques). The strangely beautiful images which result have been at the centre of

public debate around abortion rights. What remains often mysterious is the rhetorical gesture whereby 'life' is not only claimed to be accurately represented but also thereby exhausted in the images which are only brought 'to life' by she or he who thereby claims authority to speak on their behalf.

Life is precisely the condition of the determinable, and as such is not determinable in itself

Henri Bergson famously proclaimed that a theory of knowledge would have to be erected upon a theory of life itself. This suggests that vitalism becomes the programme which distributes the basic categories of knowing. But, for Bergson, such a scheme would imply that life is, in itself, already given in its determinations. It is precisely because life is not and cannot be given in this way that it ought to be accorded centrality. As movement, as change, life eludes and serves as provocation to any given determination. It is the mobile horizon that presents itself to the 'logic of solids' that characterizes the intellect. To imagine that the movement which characterizes life can be stilled in such a way as to be fully clothed in the latest epistemic garb is to share in the illusion of the child who believes they can catch smoke in their hands. Clap-trap.

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Biopolitics

John Marks

Keywords bioethics, biology, biopolitics, biotechnology, eugenics, life, molecular biology

Foucault introduces the notion of biopolitics in *The History of Sexuality* (1978). Here, it is essentially a complement to his earlier formulation of discipline, whereby sovereign rule – the ultimate right to take life – is increasingly overlaid by a new focus on the life processes of the population. From the 18th century onwards, biological existence is no longer a neutral, unchanging substrate upon which political existence is superimposed. Consequently, a new politics emerges which relates to what it means to be a living species in a living world: biology is drawn into the domain of power and knowledge. The establishment of norms, hierarchies and statistical analyses gain in importance in relation to the creation of legal frameworks. Rather than exercising its sovereign right to curtail life in periodic, spectacular manner, politics focuses increasingly on the fostering and direction – the *government* – of life.

Biopolitical processes as defined by Foucault have become part of the fabric of everyday reality in advanced capitalist economies, and the industrial era was in some senses characterized by the growth of a biopolitical consensus, whereby the norms of welfare – health, education and various forms of insurance – were articulated with the demands of mass, organized industrial and commercial activity. Today, the globalization of capital means that previous biopolitical norms, such as the rights attached to labour, including the duration of working life and pension rights, are being reassessed. It is in this context that Hardt and Negri (2000) have recently proposed an analysis of the ways in which power in contemporary post-disciplinary ‘control’ societies has become entirely biopolitical. In their reading, power is expressed as a form of control that pervades the entire social field. However, at the same time, they argue that this very pervasiveness means that resistance is no longer marginal, but rather multiple and active. For Hardt and Negri, the positive focus of potential for resistance to biopolitical control resides in the *multitude*: a widespread attitude of dissent and refusal in reaction to biopower’s grip on all aspects of life.

The development of the industrial biopolitical

dispositif which articulated labour, welfare and capital was also, of course, punctuated by significant periods of international armed conflict. These periods of conflict, and most particularly the First- and Second World Wars, highlighted the genocidal counter-tendencies of biopolitics. Materially and ideologically these wars were fought not only by armies, but by *populations*. In this sense, the Second World War in particular was characterized by two highly significant aspects of biopower, which remain as spectres haunting the construction of viable future global biopolitical structures: the drift to ‘total war’ pitting population against population, and the elevation of eugenics to a brutally racist state policy.

Leaving aside the complex issue of war, which would necessitate a lengthy discussion in its own right, we will concentrate here on the issue of eugenics in an era of biotechnology: an issue which is implicit but not developed in Foucault’s work. In the postwar era, developments in medicine and molecular biology have led to fears that eugenics might make a return in new forms. In reaction to this, the conceptual resources of thinking on biopolitics have been seen by many as a useful analytical tool for looking in particular at the ways in which the postwar development of molecular biology has provided new pathways for politics to penetrate the material components of ‘life’. From the discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA in 1953 onwards, molecular biology has claimed to render not only visible, but also accessible, the code of life itself: a new dimension of matter that appears to be increasingly available for observation and manipulation. In this sense, biotechnological issues such as gene therapy, pre-implantation and pre-natal genetic screening, stem-cell research and therapeutic cloning, the widespread corporate patenting of genes, the Human Genome Project, and the general economic issue of data control and access in the light of genomics and bioinformatics, all raise significant *biopolitical* issues.

In the light of these technologies, there is an increasing sense that we are entering an era of biopolitical problematization. This era is characterized not only by an uncertainty over the way in which these new technologies reconfigure the natural world epistemologically and even ontologically, but also by what Paul Rabinow (1999) identifies as a ‘purgatorial’ dimension. By this, he means the fact that most of these technologies

promise much more in terms of material interventions that they can currently deliver. The possibilities for genetic therapy are currently extremely limited, and it is still the case that pre-natal and pre-implantation genetic testing can only screen for a very small number of genetic ‘abnormalities’. In this sense, as Rabinow indicates, the biopolitical stakes are uncertain: there is a widespread sense that we may be on the verge of significant shifts in our ability to manipulate and transform life, combined with the knowledge that we do not yet know the limits of these new capacities.

Following the French political and social theorist Pierre-André Taguieff (2001), three areas of what we might call biopolitical anxiety are raised by these areas of activity, all of which develop out of the molecular biology revolution. First, there is the widespread fear of the gradual reappearance of eugenic practices and eugenic approaches to social ‘deviancy’. As far as human reproduction is concerned, it is claimed that the gradual increase in genetic testing may be leading to a new, ‘liberal’ eugenics led by consumer choice. This new eugenics may not correspond to the state-controlled racist eugenics of National Socialism, but it nonetheless threatens to create a radical new set of social divisions. According to such scenarios, social groupings that distinguish between genetically enhanced and non-enhanced individuals will revive the racist rationale of previous eugenic projects.

Second, related to anxieties over eugenics, there is a widespread concern to defend the integrity of the ‘human’ in the face of biotechnological advances: in other words, the attempt to prevent a key component of life – namely DNA – from being subject to modification and manipulation. From a religious standpoint, this determination to maintain what we might consider as the ‘genetic contingency’ – or, as popular parlance would have it, the ‘genetic lottery’ – of human reproduction is conventionally expressed as a defence of the *sacred* nature of human life and procreation. From a secular perspective, as in the recent work of Jürgen Habermas, this suspicion of genetic testing and the biotechnological spectre of so-called ‘designer babies’ is expressed as a defence of human *dignity*. Drawing on Arendt, Habermas presents the contingent nature of human birth, undetermined by genetic manipulation driven by parental choice or societal/familial expediency, as the metonymic basis for the fundamental existential human freedom to act. The prospect of a ‘posthuman’ future is also seen as a threat by those conservatives, such as Fukuyama (2003), who are attached to what they see as an essential and relatively unchanging ‘human nature’.

Finally, there is the apocalyptic fear that the

collective human genetic inheritance – the germ line – might be irreparably damaged by genetic modification or manipulation. As far as the natural world is concerned, this anxiety finds expression in the fear that the combined effect of genetic patenting and genetically modified crops might be, at the very least, a significant reduction in levels of biodiversity. The American political and scientific commentator Jeremy Rifkin (1999) has talked of a process of ‘genetic enclosure’ that is analogous to the land enclosures of the 17th century. It should be pointed out that the alarm and anxiety occasioned by the possibilities for molecular intervention and biopolitical control in contemporary societies is not universally shared. Following sociobiology in the 1970s, subsequent ‘post-humanist’ inheritors of this strand of thinking such as Lee M. Silver (1997) have posited a more genetically ‘efficient’ bio-engineered human future. Silver seizes upon the opportunities offered by biotechnology to achieve control of human evolution, and predicts a future version of American society in which 10 percent of the population – the ‘GenRich’ group – will be bioengineered individuals, constructed from entirely synthetic genes. This genetic elite will control all aspects of society, while the remaining 90 percent of ‘naturals’ will have a subservient social role.

As Eugene Thacker (2004) points out, much current bioethical deliberation on the biopolitical issues raised by biotechnological advances is concerned with the legal and ‘philosophical’ definition of categories such as ‘potential life’, as well as the sociological and anthropological analysis of issues such as risk assessment in the handling of genetic information. However, he also points to a form of bioethics that is orientated more towards critique and problematization, and which is, consequently, more genuinely *philosophical* in approach. Thacker argues that this ‘cultural bioethics’, as he calls it, is concerned with fundamental epistemological and ontological questions. It asks, for example, whether the body as a *subject* can be made commensurable with the body as an *object* of experiment, diagnosis or commodification. It considers the ontological status of the cyborg and the relation of life and the body to information. Thacker goes on to suggest that the conventional use of a version of Kant’s categorical imperative as a basis for bioethics leads to the construction of somewhat rigid ethical protocols. In contrast to this, he draws attention to what he calls ‘bioethics’ – and what others have labelled a ‘transhuman’ approach to bioethics – that takes Spinoza’s treatise *The Ethics* as its starting point, rather than Kant’s *Metaphysics of Morals*. Taking its cue from Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza, bioethics asks a threefold question in relation to the

'body': what is a body?; what can a body do?; what can you do to a body? Whereas bioethics strives to define a morality that can be applied to the body as a discrete, quantifiable entity with relatively well-defined boundaries, bio-ethics conceives of bodies as much less stable and quantifiable entities and attempts to assess *ethically* the affective relations between bodies.

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Experience

Scott Lash

Abstract For Kant, experience is *epistemological*, whereas *ontological* experience (Gadamer) is in the first instance poetic and Romantic (Schiller, Goethe). In contradistinction to Kantian *Erfahrung*, it is most often called *Erlebniß*. We note further that *Erfahrung* is cognitive experience while *Erlebnis* is also aesthetic experience. Dilthey and Husserl understand experience pertaining to knowledge through *Erlebnis*. In epistemological or classificatory knowledge the parts add up to the whole. Ontological knowledge instead is holistic in which the whole is present in each of the parts. In ontological knowledge we can know things themselves. Ontological experience is particularly important for *global* knowledge. This is because knowing another culture is not reducible to a culture's qualities or predicates. Culture as a way or form of life is a thing-itself. A third type of experience is *informational* experience. This collapses the epistemological into the ontological and is also increasingly present today. This sort of experience of non-linear information theory can account for the experience of societies, of individual humans, of digital media, of neuronal networks, of phenotypes, urban forms, of cellular organisms, or of inorganic matter.

Keywords aesthetics, classification, creation, destruction, epistemology, *Erfahrung*, *Erlebnis*, information, knowledge, ontology, predicates

Experience

Most commonly encountered in everyday life, *experience* is spoken of in terms of travel, tourism, adventure. Though also of course we say that a doctor is well qualified and point to his or her many years of 'experience'. We want prime ministers who already have had some ministerial experience. The first type of experience is a question of undergoing one-off

encounters of intense stimulation. In Germany indeed it has been argued that with the decline of tradition and the influence of narratives passing from one generation to another that we live indeed in an *Erlebnisgesellschaft*, the ‘experience society’, in which the whole of social life has become increasingly a question of searching for one exhilarating experience after the next. But when we speak of a player who has had long experience in international football we refer to a more empirical experience, one in which the person has encountered a number, a series of cases of a relatively similar type. This second type of experience has more to do with learning; with tradition; with practical knowledge. These are the everyday usages of these terms. But these throw some light on the more theoretical considerations that follow.

The idea of experience as most commonly encountered in the social and human sciences is through, for example, ‘gendered experience’ or ‘ethnic experience’. This will often come in terms of a general criticism of objectivity in the social sciences. This would be typically two-edged. It would presume that perhaps it is not objective facts that we study, but experience. It would presume that we should study the experience of people whose situation differs from the middle-class, white male norm. Hence to study working-class experience is different from collecting a random sample of facts from a population. To focus on experience seems to point to a certain method: perhaps to qualitative, ethnographic or phenomenological method, rather than to positivism. Here we want to get a grasp of actual experience that we cannot seem to tap with statistical data from surveys. Second, this experience has to do with not just the object of study but with the human scientific observer. It points to the relevance of the more or less concrete experience of the observer. Thus there is a literature on ‘standpoint epistemology’. This is largely from the late 1980s and early 1990s. At stake mainly is feminist epistemology. This could be compared with earlier epistemologies based in social class from Marxism. This is a criticism of the objective observer, and goes part way towards embedding this observer in a set of social relations. But it only goes part way. That is because there are only a few standpoints that are discussed: class, for example, or ethnicity, or gender. Further, the observer is only very slightly embedded in social relations. It is as if instead of one sort of objectivist positivism, we now have, say, three somewhat less objectivist positivisms: working class, feminist and ethnic positivisms. Surely it makes more sense much more fully to embed our observer in forms of social and cultural and, today, media and informational life. The human sciences could learn from models from the natural sciences starting with Einstein in which the observer is already situated in a system.

In philosophy, discussions of the idea of experience often start with Kant, and in particular Kant’s departure from empiricism. We will address Kant in some detail, because it is at the root of knowledge through classification (Durkheim) as well as knowledge through ideal types (Weber). Kant’s notion of experience comes from *The Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant began his academic career in mathematics and physics and at stake is primarily experience in physics. Kant was first and foremost influenced by Newton as he entered his Critical period. This was his major break with metaphysics. It is a major move away from Leibniz’s metaphysics and towards Newton’s physics. Kant’s knowledge in the First Critique is physical knowledge. Kantian experience is only of phenomena or appearances. More ontological experience must also be of noumena or things themselves. Kant’s phenomenal experience and knowledge presumes a priori categories. It presumes also the importance of empirical data. We recall that this is somehow a middle ground between Cartesian rationalism and Lockean empiricism. Kant’s ‘categories’ are categories of logic, taken from Aristotelian logic. They presume a unified subject of experience. This is not an empirical subject. It is an a priori condition, not an empirical psychological subject. This a priori condition is Kant’s ‘transcendental *unity* of apperception’. Nothing could be less embedded than this notion of experience.

Kant asks the question in his first Critique: How is experience possible? *Wie ist die Erfahrung möglich?* By this he means how is *empirical* knowledge possible. ‘Empiricism’ in German is translated as *Erfahrungswissenschaft*. The idea of ‘experience’ here comes from Hume. Kant wants radically to revise Hume’s notion. For Hume our knowledge is far from certain. Kant assumes that we have knowledge. He asks what are its conditions of possibility.

For Hume experience is largely sensory. We have sense impressions. They are feelings. Ideas are just pale impressions of feelings (Hume). For Kant it is more a question of the senses and the intellect. Knowledge in Humean *Erfahrungswissenschaft* is inductive knowledge, a posteriori knowledge. And *Erfahrungsbeweis* is a *posteriori* proof. *Erfahrung* is empirical knowledge in philosophy. *Erfahrungsgemäß* means empirically in philosophy, or more practically from previous experience. Kant wants knowledge that is not just a posteriori but *a priori*. Empiricism's judgements are a posteriori. Kant gives us a priori judgements as in rationalism. Yet whereas rationalism's judgements are 'analytic', Kant's also deal with the empirical material and are hence 'synthetic'. At stake for Kant in experience and knowledge is the *intelligibility of objects*. For Kant, Humean sense impressions are not sufficient for such intelligibility. For such intelligibility Kant needs to introduce the intellect, and more specifically the faculty of the understanding. This faculty, which engages in the acts of judgement that comprise knowledge (and experience), is the (most important) a priori for the intelligibility of objects. The other main a priori conditions were the representations of time and space. Note, these are time and space as representations or appearances rather than time and space in themselves. It is only later with the radical break with Kant of phenomenology and vitalism – in Nietzsche, Husserl, Bergson and Heidegger – that time and space in themselves come to replace their representations or forms.

There have been many categorical theories of knowledge. In each case the categories deal with *predicates* of things that such theories presume are fundamental to our thought about objects. These predicates correspond to Kant's categories, and which he calls the forms or functions of judgement. They abstract from the content of a given object and through this abstraction make the object intelligible. Yet the various representations of the categories must come under another function be given unity in a judgement. This synthetic unity comes from the transcendental unity of apperception. Hume spoke of his sense impressions in terms of content. Kant's categories function in the abstraction of form from such content. In this sense, for Hume there is no important distinction between appearances and content: between appearances and things-themselves. It is only when experience (and knowledge) starts to presume such representations are necessary for object-intelligibility that we get this dichotomy. We note also that not just the categories, but time and space too are such predicates. Thus objects have time and space as attributes or qualities, rather than material or social objects having their own intrinsic temporality and spatiality. What are for Kant – as well as for the classificatory knowledge of Durkheim and Weber – epistemological predicates become for phenomenology and hermeneutics ontological structures: that is, intrinsic to the (social) things themselves.

In terms of the discussions of the problem of knowledge in this volume, we note that although the Kantian categories are not themselves *classifications*, they presume that we know through classifying. This is why in metaphysical knowledge of Leibniz, the subject includes its predicates; that is, the substance or thing includes its qualities. So Leibniz is saying we can have knowledge of things. Kant turns against such metaphysics in his categories. The categories correspond to the thing's predicates. The thing no longer includes its predicates, but categorical thought abstracts the predicates from the thing. We know through such abstraction. The predicates of the thing are its appearances. For Kant this is what knowledge and experience are. Experience is only intelligible under these conditions. We know through acts of judgement. In each of these acts a number of categories as forms or functions are in play. These are unified by another function that Kant calls the transcendental unity of apperception. It is the category that coordinates and looks after the other categories.

Classificatory knowledge consists of bringing particulars under universals. Indeed Durkheim and Mauss, in their *Primitive Classifications*, sketch an evolution starting from the most embedded of primitive, totemic categories of classification, that become increasingly abstract, eventually leading to the Kantian categories. Classificatory knowledge is also knowledge through the predicates of the objects. We abstract these predicates from these (this time, social) objects. Not just Durkheim's classifications but Weber's ideal types work through such abstraction.

What Gadamer calls *epistemology* works through such abstraction. Kant's experience is thus epistemological experience. *Ontological* experience (Gadamer) is in the first instance poetic and from Romanticism (Schiller, Goethe). It is most often called *Erlebniß* and in contradistinction to Kantian *Erfahrung*. We note further that *Erfahrung* is cognitive experience while *Erlebnis* is also aesthetic experience. The poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) may have been the first to contrast *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*. This is a departure from the Kantian Enlightenment, musing that modern man is no longer capable of *Erlebniß*. *Erlebniß* here is metaphysical experience, standing in contrast to *Erfahrung*'s physicality. Wilhelm Dilthey puts a more systematic idea of *Erlebniß* forth in the context of *Lebensgefühl*. We note here too that whereas *Erfahrung* presumes that subjectivity is distanced from the object, *Erlebnis* has also to do with feeling. Even the verb *erfahren* means to learn as if to accumulate knowledge, to come to know, etc. But not *erleben*. *Erfahren* has *fahren* in it like 'Mit dem Zug zu fahren'. To travel, to drive, to go a distance. *Erlebnis* has *life* in it. *Erlebnis* resembles Joycean epiphany. At stake is always the transcendental in the transitory. *Erlebnis* has something of the event (*Ereignis*) to it. 'Event' happens with *Erlebnis*. It is like having an aesthetic experience. Or having indeed a religious experience. Normally there is no event with *Erfahrung*: only an act of abstraction, an act of judgement.

Dilthey and Husserl also understand experience pertaining to knowledge through *Erlebnis*. Their – and Heidegger's and Gadamer's – ontological knowledge is one of the main forms of knowledge at stake in this volume of the New Encyclopaedia Project. In epistemological or classificatory knowledge the parts add up to the whole. Ontological knowledge instead is holistic – and the antonym of holism is atomism – in which the whole is present in each of the parts. In ontological knowledge we can know things themselves. Ontological experience is particularly important for *global* knowledge. This is because knowing another culture is not reducible to a culture's qualities or predicates. Culture as a way or form of life is a thing-itself. We lose through abstraction. A third type of experience and knowledge, which we will address briefly below, is *informational* experience. This collapses the epistemological into the ontological and is also increasingly present today. The point is, though, that classificatory knowledge is not 'over' in any sense. It has been with us for millennia. And it will continue along with the other two types of experience and global knowledge that we address in this entry and this volume.

For cultural theory today it is perhaps Walter Benjamin who has most influentially focused on experience. Benjamin has not one but two theories of experience. Both are aesthetic and a question of *Erlebniß*. Benjamin's earlier, 'metaphysical' theory of experience is very much influenced by Goethe but also by the cabbalistic German language philosopher Hamann. Its keywords are creativity and creation. His second, 'materialist' theory of experience is influenced by Baudelaire, Marx and surrealism. It is based not on creativity but destruction and not on *Erlebnis* but *Shockerlebnis*. Both are very anti-Kantian. Benjamin's first notion of experience owes something to Goethe's colour doctrine. Goethe's doctrine was critical of Newton on colour. For Newton there is the generation of colour in a spectrum through the refraction of a ray of light through a small pinhole. Goethe instead generated a spectrum through a prism, the point of whose triangle he held up to a horizontal light-dark boundary. Whereas Newton's spectrum was linear, Goethe's was circular, the two ends joined by a new colour. Goethe also focused on feelings, on our emotional relation with colour. For him we experience, for example, red as the darkening of light and blue as the lightening of dark. We should note that Chinese film directors such as Tian Zhuangzhuang have underscored the more abstract significance on the level of feeling in regard to colour in China in comparison with the Western rationalism of colour as quality. The early Benjamin was influenced by the notion of creation as generative of singularities that was indebted to a more general Goethean poetic. This was central to Benjamin's youthful notion of experience. Here he looks at creation in *Genesis* in the Old Testament. He points to a paradisiacal language of the name, of the proper name. In this God created man as the naming animal. Man names through proper nouns: all things that he names are thus singularities. This was man's task as God assigned it: it was also the 'task of the

translator'. This also is indeed poetic language. With the Fall, man's language becomes dominated by the common noun, i.e. experience after the fall comes through classification by such common nouns and judgement. Not only had man fallen into a language of common nouns and judgement but also into a Babel of chatter, of meaninglessness, of tabloid journalism. This was previously remarked upon by Kierkegaard and later by Heidegger. Any hope of redemption is Messianic, but is at the same time through poetic language, a poetic language of singularities. This is classical *Erlebnis*. It is quintessentially hermeneutic. It connects not only to Goethe's poetics, but to Dilthey's idea of *Erlebnis*. Gadamer calls this sort of ontological experience that is also aesthetic, paradoxically, not *Erlebnis* but *Erfahrung*. He seems to do so because of his own focus on slower historical processes and tarrying. This is also very much Heidegger's idea of aesthetic experience in 'The Origins of the Work of Art'. Even when disentangled from the religious, it is 'authentic' and somehow also 'natural', hence the strong notions of the unfolding of nature and our subjective experience thereof in Goethe and the centrality of not just 'world', but 'earth' in Heidegger on art.

The later Benjamin radically breaks with this. This is particularly well defined in his seminal essay 'Karl Kraus'. Now we move from aesthetics of creation to an aesthetics of *destruction*. Goethe and the Genesis are displaced by Baudelaire, Aragon and Bataille. The singularity and naming language of the Genesis and Romantic poetry is rediscovered in the *poètes maudits* and the unconscious of the surrealist dream. German authenticity – Benjamin despised Wagner and Heidegger – was displaced by French irony. The metaphysical Benjamin was becoming materialist. He contrasts thus Kraus's 'materialist humanism' with classical humanism. Materialist humanism promotes less nature than the technological *destruction* of nature. This is no longer an aesthetics of nature, but now an aesthetics of technology. Benjamin says we are now no longer on the side of the natural iron ore but on the side of the foundry that destroys the iron ore and yet makes something else. Hence art, and the work of art, also becomes 'proletarian'. This is the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction: it is also Baudelaire's flaneur. It is indeed *shock experience*, whether experienced by the disorienting shocks of the assembly line or the close-ups and jarring images of the cinema. Chatter (*Geschwatz*), which was once reviled as part of the Fall from Paradise, now becomes the object of the poet's and theorist's gaze. The advertisement, previously reviled, becomes more important than the treatise or the classical critic as a prism onto the social world. Benjamin and Baudelaire and surrealism thus work through the cast-offs and disused material that was previously relegated to chatter. This is not an aesthetics of pure destruction because a kind of redemption will come through this otherwise discarded matter. This of course is Benjamin's dialectical materialism. Through the everyday of discarded matter, he will open out onto a transcendental (and dialectical materialism was of course always about the generation of the transcendental from the material). Now, however, the transcendental is not so much heavenly or supernal as it is infernal à la Sade and Baudelaire. Indeed it is *animal* as much as human: in his performances Karl Kraus's voice, Benjamin observes, descended into an animal humming: Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus* was also as much animal as man. It is this notion of 'shock experience' that speaks most directly to contemporaries.

A third, informational and post-human idea of experience can be found in the work of and Francisco Varela – and the non-linear systems sociology of Niklas Luhmann. For all of the thinkers addressed in this entry experience is a mode of sense-making. Experience is surely a mode of sense-making for Varela. But such sense-making is informational. What we see in Luhmann and Varela is a sort of neo-phenomenology or post-phenomenology. It is a phenomenology of non-linear systems. For Husserl the phenomenological 'act' is an intentional *Erlebnis*. Intentionality means consciousness is of an object. This breaks radically with Kantian experience. Husserlian experience is intentional; Kantian experience is as it were unintentional. For Kantian experience the object is intelligible only with respect to the object's predicates or qualities. These are only appearances, and the object appears as intelligible not in terms of its content but in terms of these forms. Husserl forgets the a priori categories, the forms and the predicates. We will not understand experience, he says, if we look at these.

Experience becomes intentional for us precisely in our latching onto the content of the thing itself. This is not necessarily the thing's deep ontology but its content, i.e. the substance or subject that has the predicates. Through bracketing the a prioris, through bracketing the predicates, we perform the phenomenological reduction and are able to describe the structure of experience. Now the reality of the object is not a mere appearance, but it unfolds itself in the phenomenon. Further, Husserl speaks of an 'inner temporality of *Erlebnisse*'. This converges with Bergsonian time, as Alfred Schutz noted. This inner temporality may have the overlay of past, present and future and may be a stream or a flow of consciousness. But what concerns us here is how this inner temporality of what Husserl calls 'internal time consciousness' comprises *Erlebnisse*. Or of experiences that consciousness has. In inner time consciousness experiences follow one another. No distinction can be made between these successive experiences unless they are different than one another. So no *Erlebnis* without difference. This makes intuitive sense too. That is, even if it is the 'same' object, each *Erlebnis* must have change in its *Bewußtseinzusammenhang*, i.e. its consciousness-relation.

Now Luhmann and Varela will read Husserl's intentionality as a sort of 'structural coupling' of subject and thing. They will replace this with the *structural coupling* of system and environment. With Varela and Luhmann, Husserl's consciousness is replaced by system and the object by its environment, perhaps another system with which it structurally couples. It is now information that is taken in. This is an informationalization of experience and a moving away of it from the human subject towards post-human experience. Every structural coupling is like a Husserlian *Erlebnis*. Indeed systems must 'bracket' dealing with one another via their predicates in order structurally to couple. A system couples with its environment in such acts of bracketing that involve 'operational closure'. A system only notices and takes in information that is different. Hence again we see the principle of difference. For Varela, there are neuronal patterns, that is patterns of action, of networks, of brain cells. This is a brain no longer composed in a rigid part/whole relation, but a bit of a brain without organs, a molecular brain. No longer is it the hippocampus, the thalamus, etc. that counts but more firing-patterns, networks of plastic, networks of brain cells. This is a sort of a cellular neuro-psychology replacing the more organic one of the 1960s and before. It's all about neurons. Yet our *experience* is something we can describe. And in Varela's 'neurophenomenology' experience is on not the neural but the phenomenological level. How do these firing-patterns of neuronal networks map onto specific experiences that the subject can describe? Varela studied selection and structural coupling in computer designed single cell automata. These systems are operationally closed and comprise histories of structural coupling. These histories determine how these automata select from the environment. Yet Varela does not hold that such automata, that are so much simpler than living cells, have experience. In many ways Varela's and Luhmann's operational closure applies to humans, non-humans and machines.

This is often a question of the co-evolution of systems. Here each system processes the information – as differences; it, as it were, absorbs from the other system. Each of the systems is 'open' insofar as it is self-organizing and coupling with other systems. Yet such coupling takes place through operational closure. Each system also couples with the other on a deep structural level, that is, on the level of information generation, whether this generation is algorithmic or involves another form of coding. This sort of experience of non-linear information theory can account for the experience of societies, of individual humans, of digital media, of neuronal networks, of phenotypes, of urban forms, of cellular organisms, or of inorganic matter. Such a notion of experience is central to complexity theory and will be increasingly pervasive in the global information society.

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Lifeworld

Austin Harrington

Keywords globalization, humanism, life, lifeworld, post-humanism, social theory

'Lifeworld' entered the vocabulary of 20th-century philosophy and social theory with the publication of Edmund Husserl's *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* in 1936, although Alfred Schütz earlier adopted the term following correspondence with Husserl in the early 1930s in his *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* of 1932 (translated in English in 1967 as *The Phenomenology of the Social World*) (see Srubar, 1988). By the 'lifeworld', Husserl meant the tissue of intersubjective background understandings that first makes scientific objectifying knowledge meaningful. In Husserl's thesis, the lifeworld had become occluded under the impact of the norms of naturalistic positive science set down by Galileo and Descartes in the 17th century and enshrined in Leibniz's project of *mathesis universalis*. This threatened to fuel the general disaffection from all rational critical inquiry unleashed by fascism in Europe in the 1930s.

For Schütz the lifeworld was the taken-for-granted 'common-sense reality' of the social world as it is lived by ordinary individuals. In the daily course of their lives individuals produce typifying constructs of their fellows' actions which, though frequently faulty or short-sighted, are the only legitimate basis on which social scientists can advance toward what Max Weber called genuinely 'meaningfully adequate' explanatory accounts of social action and belief.

The concept of the lifeworld returned in later 20th-century social theory in Jürgen Habermas's uneasy fusion of phenomenological philosophy and

Parsonian functionalist theory in *The Theory of Communicative Action* of 1981. The lifeworld then became the world of everyday communicative interaction which gradually differentiates over the course of processes of social evolution into distinct rationally articulated spheres of 'cultural validity'. When the spheres of moral-practical and aesthetic-expressive communication start to become narrowed down by the sphere of science and technology under conditions of advanced capitalist administration, the lifeworld is threatened with 'colonization by the system'. Instrumental, purpose-rational imperatives and expedients operative in the institutions of the market, the state, the juridical system and other expert apparatuses invade and disfigure that space of social antagonism whose only sources of legitimate resolution lie in inclusive uncoerced dialogue in the public sphere.

Today we are invited to raise numerous questions about the currency of this conception of the lifeworld. In what sense is the concept a 'transcendental' one, as Husserl held, or a 'quasi-transcendental' one, as Habermas sometimes writes? Does 'transcendental' imply 'universal', i.e. invariance across cultures? How is the *life* of the lifeworld to be rethought after the biotechnological revolutions of our present age? How is the *world* of the lifeworld to be rethought after globalization? Can phenomenological philosophy address a virtualized world of near-ubiquitous digitalized information systems? Is the notion now a redundant 'old European' naivety – after post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-colonialism, post-humanism? Or could the notion in fact gesture in some way toward the ultimate question to which all these issues seem to return: the possibility of life and the possibility of world?

European vitalist philosophers of the turn of

the 19th century thought of life as the a priori horizon of all conscious experience. Not Kant's 'concepts and categories of the Understanding' but *life* made all experience of the world and all worldhood possible. For Nietzsche, Dilthey, Simmel and Bergson, the world was given to the ego only in the flow of life and its temporal historical continuum. But today we must ask: whose world, and whose ego? What happens when the cognizer moves from *one* ('transcendental') lifeworld to *many* ('quasi-' or 'semi-transcendental') lifeworlds – from 'our' lifeworld to 'their' lifeworld, and back? How can a lifeworld be both empirical object and transcendental precondition of our ability to cognize it? And how is the lifeworld given in a world mediated by writing, television, the Internet and a dozen other means of electronic simulation? What might be the lifeworld, say, of the Amazonian tribesperson who lives from the fruits of the forest, uses a mobile phone and accesses the Internet? Derrida's worries about Lévi-Strauss's worries about lost originarity in the *Tristes Tropiques* here seem more pertinent than ever (see Derrida, 1967).

German anthropological philosophers of the mid-20th century saw the essence of human existence as revolving around what they called 'world-openness'. For Helmut Plessner (1950) the rational human animal was an 'ex-centric' animal, one capable of standing outside of its centred embodied being and comprehending other worlds from which it was physically absent. Logos implied consciousness, memory, imagination, creativity, linguistic inventiveness, freedom from simple stimulus-and-response – all of what Wilhelm von Humboldt called *energeia* or what Chomsky used to call 'generative grammar': the child's ability to understand and to produce syntactic strings never previously registered or uttered. Contemporary thinking encourages us to be sceptical of such essentialism after the revolutions in neuroscience and information technology and the practical penetration of a great many people's everyday lifeworlds by artificial intelligence, intelligent medical prostheses and the possibility of genetic cloning. The interventions of philosophical anti-humanists from Foucault and Deleuze to Luhmann, Haraway and Latour are now familiar articles of this onslaught on what Charles Taylor (1989) called the 'expressivist model of the subject'.

But still the issue nags, on a number of fronts, political as well as epistemological. According to Giorgio Agamben (1995), the Jews at Auschwitz died *before* they reached the gas chambers because what the camp stripped away from them before they entered the chambers was the possibility of having and being in a *world*. With the removal of worldhood went the removal of life. Or more precisely, with the removal of worldhood went the collapse of life qua *bios* – life lived in and with the

world – into 'bare life' qua *zoë*. Though Agamben grossly distorts the historical specificity of the Holocaust by extending it metonymically to all modernity tout court – as do some other Holocaust books such as Zygmunt Bauman's – still the question left unanswered in much of the anti-humanist ridiculing of old European technophobia is the one first raised by Husserl and Heidegger: how is it that we can find the fact of our existence and our being-in-the-world a *question for ourselves* – rather than spin around on a groove like automata or like bare life awaiting extinction? If globalization is about anything, it is about the possibility of world, of having and being in a world which is open to us and to which we can be open. *Entweltlichung*, or 'world-privation', was the term Hannah Arendt (1958) took from Heidegger to describe the closure or flattening out of the apparently open vista of infinite possibilities that was modern technical civilization. Today with Jean-Luc Nancy (2002) we can ask a similar question: is *mondialization* the extension of *monde* or the diminution of *monde*? For all the difficulties of regarding globalization as homogenizing and destructive of texture and diversity, one possibility cannot be brushed aside: perhaps the more we extend the world beyond itself, the more we collapse it within itself, and the more we raise the power of life, the more we raise the life of power.

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Leben

Josef Bleicher

Keywords Bergson, Dilthey, form, *Geist*, life, metaphysics, Nietzsche, Simmel

Leben (Life), together with *Geist* (Spirit), represent the core defining concepts in German philosophy in the 200 years of its most flourishing period, marked at either end by the names of Kant and Heidegger. These concepts together define a shared ground that also helps to characterize German philosophy: concern with activity, development, history, tension and resolution, and a transcendental mode of inquiry. One of the difficulties of tackling *Leben* is that Life runs counter to form, yet somehow has to be captured or described through form, which means there will necessarily be a lack of clarity and precision. Georg Simmel (1858–1918), one of the foremost exponents of the *Philosophie des Lebens*, saw it as the third stage of western philosophy. In the first place there was Greek philosophy, resting on the concept of Substance: a persisting substratum as the core of all being and cognition. Secondly, there was modern philosophy with its stress on movement and mechanical form, which aimed to uncover the laws that render it calculable and thus comprehensible. More recently, the third stage suggests a redirection in the form of a *Verlebendigung*, an enlivening of the conception of the world and our knowledge of it. *Leben* is the metaphysical principle that issues forth subject and object, and provides their ontological and epistemological common ground (Simmel, 1912).

At its core, *Leben* serves as the antithesis to static conceptions and a one-sided focus on consciousness or reflexivity. Formal constructs themselves issue from *Leben*, and are its expressions. *Leben* ‘throws up’ intellectual activity, and no amount of internal, self-oriented ruminations will gain any insight into the true grounding of this enterprise. The contrast between the calculative reductionism found in the mechanistic

universe of Newton and Kant is developed by Simmel in his essay on Kant and Goethe. The pantheistic reverence of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) for the ceaseless creativity of nature provides the grounds for his refusal to write a conventionally ‘philosophical’ account of *Leben*. But during his life-time, the *Verlebendigung* of philosophy started to take root. Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), an ardent admirer of Goethe, is considered by Simmel the first Philosopher of *Leben*. He reflected on ‘*Leben as such*’, rather than enquiring about the meaning or value of an aspect of Life. *Leben* as such is characterized by a ‘will to Life’ which engenders all manifestations of the human and natural world. Yet, in its urge to come into realization, it causes pain and suffering, false hopes and disillusionment as it stimulates desire and striving. The higher developed the species, and within humanity as the apex of creation the individual, the more sensitized, hence exposed to suffering, they will be. While art, as self-sufficient insight into Life, and in particular music, can provide genuine but brief respite, the only lasting solution lies in renunciation and the denial of the will – and thus of Life. Schopenhauer is indebted to Indian philosophy in his account of *Leben* as futile illusion and as suffering, until the taming of the will through self-discipline, withdrawal from the world, and its meditative contemplation become effective.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) responds to the problematic of *Leben* in a diametrically opposite way. Rather than renouncing Life’s quests, our task is to give full expression to them. As the stream of Life propels us forward, its energy should be drawn on also to move upwards, to transcend transgressively all conventionalized normalcy with its Life-inhibiting norms and precepts. This is the progression which Nietzsche famously encapsulated in the notion of the *Übermensch*. For Nietzsche, all intellectual and aesthetic content and values are merely realizations of the process of *Leben*, with the ‘will to

power' having *Leben* itself as its real essence. While Nietzsche's philosophy of *Leben* is focused on human existence and the specific values and merits engendered by the former, Henri Bergson's (1859–1944) ambitions are more wide-ranging. In one respect, he retains a link with earlier Romanticist critiques of the newly emerging scientific ethos (echoing Goethe's reservations against the reformulation of reality in terms of mathematical science); on the other, he articulates a vitalistic conception of Life that reverberates in present neo-vitalist discourses. All that exists, whatever its form or content, represents a specific emanation of the *elan vital*.

Bergson counterpoises mechanistic conceptions that privilege fixed spatial relationships and, through acts of cognition, dissect the stream of consciousness into isolated segments, to his holistic and vitalistic insights. Here 'intuition' can access Life as livingness (*être vivant*) by immersing itself into the flow of life, or life as flow (*durée*), a dynamic, 'organic', inter-connectedness of whole and part and as the absolute continuity of psychological reality. Bergson's *lebensphilosophic* outlook stresses the primacy and centrality of Life, as the unity within continuous change. As such, it situates itself in relation to the Ur-dichotomy, forever associated with the names of Parmenides and Heraclit, of assigning primacy to either the substantively fixed and durable or the eternally flowing. Pointing beyond Bergson, Simmel (1914) suggests that perhaps philosophy will take its next step and place itself beyond this opposition to see these as two modes of revelation of the unity of metaphysical *Leben*.

Wilhelm Dilthey (1831–1911), too, insists on the crucial insight that *Leben* can be made intelligible only from within *Leben*. Bergson pointed to Intuition as the mode of understanding that can immerse itself into the flow of Life. Dilthey draws on the *verstehen*, everyday understanding, which he re-defines and develops into the mode of cognition characteristic of the *Geisteswissenschaften* (human sciences/humanities), in contra-distinction to the descriptive and analytical methods of the natural sciences. As a mode of participating in *Leben*, *verstehen* leads us 'inside' the objectifications of *Leben* which, as such, are in themselves meaningful forms. This privilege, that is the direct internal access to the meaning of the object (another human being, history, art, etc.), on the basis of shared *Leben*, involves Dilthey in the problematic of objectivity. Wedded to the Kantian project of establishing the scientificity of the human sciences, in the shape of a 'Critique of Historical Reason', Dilthey remains tied to methodological presuppositions of the natural sciences, and in particular the Cartesian separation

of subject and object. Reluctant to take the full step into *Leben* and thereby move beyond the abstractions and methodological artifice of the empirical-analytical sciences, as Bergson had demonstrated, Dilthey remains caught within the antinomies that a courageously consequential *Lebensphilosophie* should have undercut. His later work does, however, see a shift from a psychological conception of *verstehen* as introspection and empathy towards a hermeneutic one. The subject-matter of history and other objectifications arising out of the flow of *Leben* are here related to their structuring context that imparts them with their meaning. This way, *verstehen* is an act of interpretation, of relating a part to its overarching whole, thereby elucidating the meaning of both reciprocally. *Leben* constitutes the ultimate meaning-context and horizon, as well as the preceding fundament on the basis of which subject and object (as co-subject) can enter into the communicative process that is *verstehen*.

It was his younger colleague and earlier protégé, Simmel, who undertook the step towards an ontology of *Leben*. His final work, *Lebensanschauung*, contains as the first chapter 'The transcendence of *Leben*', in which he moves towards the concept of 'absolute *Leben*' as the grounding of Life's flow, its trials and tribulations, creations and boundaries. A core feature here is the opposition of *Leben* and Form that he had analysed in 'Der Konflikt der Kultur' (1918) as one between the unceasing flow of Life and the Forms it needs to assume, which then come to oppose this very flow as hardened objectifications (Simmel, 1997). Now this opposition is dissolved in the sense that both appear as moments in the totality of absolute *Leben*. The latter provides the 'absolute unity' between the continuity that is *Leben* and the individuality that is predicated on Form. But under the sign of the 'absolute *Leben*', all such dichotomies melt back into it. The central schema of the opposition of subject and object that announced the core question of modern philosophy itself appears as a retroactive construct, a crystallization of thought emerging from the flow of Life that misunderstands itself as an original epistemological problematic. *Leben* is self-transcending; it is ahead of itself, reaching beyond itself. Simmel offers the complementary definitions of *Leben* as *Mehr-Leben* and *Mehr-als-Leben* to elucidate this central point.

As 'More-Life', (absolute) *Leben* incorporates within itself all relativities; it encompasses any oppositions the intellect may establish as it freezes elements of dynamic Life into detached Forms. Past and future melt into the present moment as Life refuses to be dissected abstractedly and asserts its enveloping dynamic. Even 'human immortality',

suggests Simmel, could be just the accumulated sense, directed into an immense symbol, of the transcession of *Leben* beyond itself (Simmel, 1997 [1918]: 15). It is 'more-Life' since, at every moment, it draws something into itself in order to transform it into *Leben*. Life requires Forms, yet it needs more than Forms. As 'More-than-Life', *Leben* encompasses both physiological Life and the Life of the mind, as it expresses itself in the meaningful forms of its creations. The latter possess independence from the stream that generated them, and autonomy as to their content. They stand outside Life, as it were. Yet this paradox disappears with the realization that in the field of the intellect, as in all products of human creativity, *Leben* has elevated itself beyond itself, and thereby remained with itself. The intentions and meanings contained in autonomous objectifications of mental Life it comes to recognize as its very own.

Simmel's contribution to the analysis of *Leben* reaches beyond the confines of philosophy proper, and into the fields of biography, aesthetics and sociological diagnosis of his times. Here, Goethe serves as an exemplar of a successful life, an organic unity of life and work, which Simmel considered the hallmark of true *Leben*. In his major monograph of *Goethe* (2003, orig. 1913), and numerous essays written on this subject afterwards, Simmel uses Goethe in contrast to 'modern man', the *Sachmensch* and the exigencies of 'professionalism'. The purposive habitus of the *Sachmensch* (the expert functionary) has come about through the focus on goal orientation, rather than growing from the roots (Simmel, 2003: 151).

But what is the place of *Leben* in a civilization that, with increasing success, is learning to manipulate the very essence of human existence while endangering this, and other forms of life, through the heedless degradation of the living environment? From Goethe through Bergson to Simmel, the critique of 'mechanistic' Science and its effects on social and intellectual life provided the agenda for the philosophy of *Leben* and *Lebensphilosophie*. Now the 'life sciences' themselves have taken over as the lead sciences. They are

reshaping the parameters and preconditions of human existence, and their transformative drive has been announcing itself in the growth of biomorphic conceptualizations and jargon that have entered the social and natural sciences as well as everyday talk (Fraser et al., 2005). In an already largely objectified social world they are about to complete the scientific project and are assuming to play God.

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Animation/Re-animation

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Keywords animation, art, media, science, technology

As science became more enamored with not only finding the secrets of nature but of mastering them and turning the natural world to the will of human society, the concept of animation, converting dead tissue into a living being again, captured the imagination of artists and scientists in Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This fascination, of wresting the power of life from death by means other than the divine or the metaphysical, was perhaps most memorably evoked by Mary Shelley's gothic novel *Frankenstein*, and is contextualized within a larger desecularization of European society, and thus constitutes the human as having power over life and death, over nature, and thus becoming God himself. The 1931 James Whale film version of *Frankenstein*, which provided the monster with his iconic bolts in the neck, explored many of the issues about animation and re-animation found in Shelley's novel but the medium, cinema, and the immediate cultural-historical context of the film, the 1930s and Europe creeping toward war again, provides a repetition of and concerns about the powers unleashed by technology, especially those that can animate or provide the illusion of re-animation. Cinema, as with *Frankenstein's* monster, is composed of an array of lifeless pieces (film stock for the former and body parts from corpses for the latter) that are sewn together (editing, suturing) and infused with the simulation of life through electricity (the projector in the theater, the lab equipment in the laboratory). The unconscious anxiety addressed in the film is that the life it has created might be monstrous, and that the very technologies that deliver humans this divine-like power might not always deliver what they promise.

The film further thematized the capacity

found in various recording and projecting technologies from the 19th century onward, the capacity to provide the presence of that which is absent (often through death or time-space distance). Representation, itself, provides such a technology: the presence of that being represented through the act or trick of the representation. Early visual culture, such as magic lanterns, zoetropes and photodromes, often depicted ghosts or spirits, as if in acknowledgement of the power of technology to animate and overcome time and space. Similarly, the effects of early audio technology can be seen in the icon known the world over of 'Nipper', the corporate logo of HMV music and video shop. The image comes from a late 19th-century painting that became popularly but incorrectly known as 'His Master's Voice'. The painting depicted the dog, as in the current logo, cocking its head in recognition of his master's voice coming out of the horn (speaker) of a gramophone. But the dog is sitting on a coffin, clearly indicating that the master is dead yet, through the capabilities of aural technologies, his voice remains present. Though inanimate himself, the voice is re-animated by the gramophone.

From the Second World War to the present, technologies of animation and re-animation repeat and intensify the simulation of re-animation, as well as its attendant ambivalence of empowerment and dread, in computer-based virtual realms, IT and tele-technologies. Many of these were developed through and for military use, intensifying the connections between animation and re-animation – the living and the dead – and which have now become an increasing part of global consumer culture.

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Nature

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Keywords embodiment, the environment, global nature, technology, temporality

It is commonly asserted that the boundaries between culture and nature are in the process of dissolving. The idea of an autonomous nature, separated and divorced from culture, is no longer tenable. Or at least, this is how the argument runs. A number of variants are available.

One variant can be seen in the kind of millennial arguments proposed by Bill McKibben (1988) and his claim that we have now reached 'the end of nature'. McKibben claims that human activity, driven by the technological-industrial complex, has now altered whatever we once thought nature was. Wilderness no longer exists in a pristine state, anywhere; forests and farmland have become thoroughly domesticated; even the climate appears to be altered, possibly irrevocably, as we face the threats of climate change. Global nature is here confronted by an array of human-imposed threats, from acid rain to global warming, from the extinction of species to the destruction of the rain-forest. A new variant emerges with the advent of new genetic and nano-technologies, with the ability to alter and re-work DNA into new forms of life, evoking images of the 'post-natural' and, indeed, the 'post-human' (Hayles, 1999). Denuded of any external referent, nature becomes merely a sign, commodified and preserved by consumer culture, often Disneyfied, devoid of any legitimacy (Wilson, 1992). This kind of argument appeals to a discourse of nature as both global and original, and of human activity as intrinsically separate from, and antithetical to, a state of nature. Most commonly this discourse is to be found in the writings of environmentalists and conservationists, as well as in environmental studies, environmental ethics and environmental philosophy. And, according to this discourse, 'nature should be conserved in a pristine state, unaffected, as far as possible, by human activity' (Milton, 1999: 438).

On the other hand, and currently in vogue in some popular science writing, is the proposition that nature refers to a chain of being to which human beings and everything else belongs. Current changes to the environment represent simply a new advance of an ongoing process that has been unfolding since the beginning of life some 4 billion

or so years ago. Humans are here seen as animals, as part of nature, and while they may possess unique qualities of language, written culture and opposable thumbs, all animal species are unique in their own way. As Matt Ridley (2001: 76) recently wrote, 'there is nothing unique about being unique'. This critique of 'human exceptionalism' is supported by strands of intellectual thought informed by evolutionary theory, not least in socio-biology.

A third variant, common among many social scientists and historians, is that ideas of nature are, and always have been, informed, shaped and even constituted by culture and history. Raymond Williams (1980), in a seminal essay on the subject, undertook a socio-historical analysis of some of the key transformations of people's understandings of and relationships with nature in the West. Numerous other writers have written about changing attitudes towards and relationships with nature from the time of the Greeks to the present, but it is Williams who most provocatively examines the proposition that ideas of nature contain 'an enormous amount of human history'. Informed by such an approach are various social constructivist studies on environmental issues and controversies, aimed at identifying the ways in which what is taken as 'natural' is in fact shaped by social forces.

A variation of the above is the argument that the dominant enlightenment 'culture of nature' appears to have stopped working so well. Premised on a misguided metaphysics in which the world of facts (i.e. the domain of science) could be separated from the world of values (i.e. the domain of values and politics), nature has been dislocated from due political process with all sorts of unforeseen political consequences ranging from the unseen and unknown effects of 'mad cow' disease and genetically modified foods, to the ethical and societal dilemmas posed by gene therapy and the cultivation of human embryos (Latour, 2004). Arguing that political ecology has to let go of nature, Latour develops the proposition of rekindling a new politics of nature, involving a constitutional agreement in which all kinds of actors are involved, both human and non-human.

Such arguments all tend to support the proposition that the idea of nature as a unit of analysis – and indeed, of politics – is diminishing in potency. Yet, if this is indeed the case, how can such analytical frameworks help explain the

continuing and, arguably, increasing appeal of 'nature' and 'the natural' in everyday life? It is instructive to ask how the popular appeal of 'nature' and 'the natural' is configured within each of the broad discourses highlighted above. In the first and second variants it would appear that people have been duped, in that either nothing is natural or everything is natural. In both cases people are clearly deluded; in both cases the perceptual category of 'the natural' is of little utility, at least in terms of how it is used in public discourse. In more socially constructive accounts it would appear also that people are being tricked in that they are mistaking nature for what is in reality shaped by culture. Indeed, this is the putative power of the natural, to naturalize, and hence to hide from view, its effects in terms of reproducing, legitimating, classifying, excluding and validating certain dominant ideas in society (Franklin et al., 2000).

How might one develop alternative, and possibly more culturally resonant, frameworks to help account for the potency and enduring qualities of the idea of nature in everyday life? Following Goodin (1992) and his 'green theory of value', we can concur that people want to see some sense and pattern to their lives, that this requires their lives to be set in a wider context, and that nature on many occasions provides that context. This theory can be used to explain the appeal of nature when it becomes embodied in particular localized practices, whether this is walking, gardening, fishing, even hunting. In all such activities we – in the West, at least – appear to be striving towards a relationship in which we can interact with nature in a way in which we are only a part of nature, and where nature goes on, more or less, regardless of our own actions.

The depiction of nature as 'the environment', as a set of issues, global in scope and physical in substance, is a configuration that remains universal and abstracted from life. Ingold (1993) usefully critiques the conception of 'the global environment' as one that separates the human from their environment, positioning the subject as if he/she was looking at the globe, detached and outside. By contrast, the nature of the 'lived-in' world is active and changing, and experienced through practices that actively connect to 'life'. Perhaps this is one explanation.

The temporal aspects are further highlighted by Barbara Adam who distinguishes between nature as a thing (*natura naturans*) and as a process (*natura naturata*). Adam (1998: 33) argues that: 'we need to reconnect the externalised phenomena to their generative processes, the countryside to its re/production, the forests to their formation. We need to bring into conceptual

unity *natura naturata* and *natura naturans* . . . We need to see the "product" produced, nature natured, life lived.' Take the tree as an example. Trees live a long time, ranging from hundreds, even thousands of years. The life of a tree commonly exceeds that of humans. Trees change both seasonally and annually, at a pace that unfolds often in symmetry with the unfolding relationships of people, families and communities. Trees are regularly a central feature in people's sense of place; they are alive yet also fixed in the landscape. Trees mark history in 'lived' terms. As Ingold (2000: 204) points out, 'people . . . are as much bound up in the life of the tree as is the tree in the life of the person'. Trees thus exhibit a rhythmic pattern of persistence and change, from the swaying, bending and twisting of branches, to the growth of leaves and ripening of fruit, to eventual death and decay. Like humans, each tree is unique, exhibiting an underlying form or character that transcends the vagaries of illness, the weather and the seasons. In this sense the popular appeal of trees, and the common symbolism of trees as nature, can be seen as a prime site where people can connect with nature as a living process.

This type of analysis of emerging nature–culture relations is at odds with many of the arguments outlined earlier. Goodin's theory does not require any fundamental divide (or convergence) between a state of nature and one of humanity; nor does it seek to focus on how we commonly confuse nature for what is shaped by culture. However, perhaps there is a wider societal context in which to situate the current appeal to nature. Environmentalism emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as part of a cultural response to unease with technological modernity. The urgency of the appeal to nature today is largely a reflection of, and reaction to, new forms of technological advance. For example, the promise of new genetic and nano-technologies lies in the introduction of new crops, new landscapes, new habitats, new animals, even new humans. In this sense we could say that Goodwin's theory of green value is conditional, the key condition being a profound and enduring sense of unease that technological modernity is contributing towards 'the death of what [people] are part of, a natural rhythm that operates beyond human control' (Milton, 1999: 444). In such conditions the wildness of 'nature', as non-human nature, becomes the needed 'other'. In less pressing times, and in more benign contexts, the 'other' of nature may be less wild and more harmonious, with promises of practices that restore constitutive harmony. We navigate, one might say, between the metaphor of the garden and the wilderness. And when the garden becomes transgenic we flee for the wild woods.

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Culture

John Hutnyk

Abstract Culture is considered as a key term in anthropology, now in critical mode, and to be worked through powerful tropes that lead to issues in politics, interpretation, translation, stereotype and racism. Anthropology is described as a cultural system itself, with a large supporting institutional apparatus, not unlike the culture industry as critiqued by Adorno and the Frankfurt School. The high mass culture/high culture distinction is considered and some distortions explained (away). Street culture and culture as (development) resource are evaluated, leading to an assessment of culture as souvenirs, trinkets and the ephemera of tourism as a modern commodity fetish. How this measures up to political struggles is again considered in the light of work by critics such as Fanon and those engaged with anti-imperialist struggles worldwide.

Keywords Adorno, anti-imperialism, commodity, culture, Malinowski, translation, trinkets

'You are on earth . . . there's no cure for that.' (Beckett, *Endgame*)

Every commentary on culture must begin with a ritual acknowledgement of the local and the global, and of the twinned inextricably bound antithesis of becoming universal and becoming particular, of identity and difference, and contest over these terms. Of course any easy model of culture is delusional in its simplicity, and the local–global nexus obfuscates and enshrines an untenable and thought-congealing homology that is so fragile it should immediately be toppled ('what is falling down should be pushed' – Nietzsche). The task of denoting Culture in encyclopaedic mode is fraught with the impossibility of capturing an always-morphed term – multiple meanings, multiple sites, political struggle. In this sense the categories of Culture are infinitely varied, and so this entry begins with a necessarily incomplete survey, taking account in turn of anthropological notions of culture, mass culture, high culture, cultural translation, culture as a resource, political cultures and cultural movements. Some considerations of the state of culture today are ventured at the end, but with no end in sight, encyclopaedia, for mine would include, or even start with, Bataille's *Encyclopaedia Acephalica* (1995), which self-consciously included the most disparate things: from 'big toe' to 'ritual'. No doubt the parameters must be dialectically open ended, both expansive and collapsing categorization in on itself. Borges/Foucault's list of the Emperor's animals, some of which from a long way off look like flies, might also suggest a model. The open-ended and incomplete encyclopaedia cannot merely mouth the words of openness in its own destabilization, and it should be more than an application of hyperlinking to old hierarchies. All that said, culture was pretty much presented as a kind of complete *compendium* in the good old days. Thus we could begin with anthropology (not just because that is my disciplinary training).

The anthropological notion of culture has a certified and defended heritage in anthropology since Sir Edmund Burnet Tylor – culture as that collection of pots and pans, bit and pieces, that we all have: 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (Tylor,

1871). This notion was not the levelling egalitarianism that some anthropologists perhaps thought it was – despite everyone having ‘a culture’, there were from the beginning tables and grids, and hierarchical schemas aplenty, setting out differences. In the 19th century cultural development ranged from the savage to the civilized in Louis Henry Morgan (1877/1965), or was based on the developmental model of the organism in Herbert Spencer (1901). Culture here was bounded, specific to groups and places, and could be named – though anthropologists like Sir James Frazer were loathe to meet those they wrote about (‘Heaven forbid’ he is supposed to have said when asked if he had ever spoken to any of the heathen). Culture, nonetheless, was global from the start for anthropology, and it was the scholar’s task and duty to set it down and explain it, albeit from afar, with attendant distortions. Later this task and duty enters the Malinowskian project of cultural transcription through ‘fieldwork’ in which the anthropologist spends time (conventionally a year or two) living ‘the life of the natives’ in order to discern, and present, ‘the native’s point of view’ (Malinowski, 1922). With some hesitations along the way, and revisionist anxieties a-plenty, this remains the dominant methodological precept.

Critiques of fieldwork need to be foregrounded, including their historical context. Bronislaw Malinowski arrived in Australia just in time to become an enemy ‘intern’ during the First World War. In a subsequent deal with Governor Hunt, who saw the advantage in having the anthropologist assist with ‘native administration’, Malinowski was permitted to conduct research in Papua New Guinea. He arrived on his first visit to a PNG village accompanied by the local colonial constabulary. It is a matter of record that he established and championed close work with ‘informants’ in order to glean the particulars of a specific cultural group through ‘participant observation’. Though it was many years before he was able to get his Trobriand ethnography into print (after many rejections from publishers he wrote to his wife to say that he would have to enter the margarine industry if Methuen did not take the book), his career was a success. He was responsible for training a generation of scholars (Firth, Evans-Pritchard, Leach – see Stanton, 1997) who in turn carried out various field studies, and, along with Radcliffe-Brown in Sydney and South Africa, and Franz Boas in the USA, he established fieldwork as the *modus operandi* of anthropology departments throughout the world. It was only with the unravelling of colonialism in the face of anti-colonial movements that fieldwork became more difficult in some places. A re-evaluation rocked the discipline throughout the 1970s and 1980s (see Hymes, 1974; Clifford and Marcus, 1986). Yet the sanctity of fieldwork was sustained despite an excoriating critique, and slowly fieldwork was brought ‘home’ and applied to minorities at the margins of the metropole, just as it was to the ‘natives’ of colonial times. A subsequent backlash against critical reflexivity was perhaps encouraged by the institutional need to promote a distinctive methodology (contra sociology, cultural studies or geography) and this idea of a distinctive disciplinary mode of inquiry has buttressed post-graduate training programmes (now fee-paying) and kept a significant number of practitioners in gainful employment ever since.

The Malinowskian transcription of bounded culture was supplemented with systemic and comparative analysis such that increasingly notions of change, network, syncretism and flow became commonplace (see, for example, Ghosh, 1992). Eventually even the venerable institution UNESCO felt obliged to start its ‘World Culture Report’ of 1998, by saying: ‘Cultures can no longer be examined as if they were islands in an archipelago’ (UNESCO, 1998: 16). The often-unacknowledged anti-colonial context of such critiques was one where there was a return of the anthropological gaze by those increasingly wary of being so intently stared at. This imposed a rethinking of ethnocentrism and eurocentrism, so as to establish discomfort and doubt, and even a kind of paranoia, as part of a vocation for anthropology. A celebrated story about the pan-Africanist leader and critic of neo-colonialism, Kwame Nkrumah, perhaps best illustrates this.

On the wall behind the desk in Nkrumah’s presidential office after he took power in Ghana in 1957, there was displayed a picture of an African man breaking the chains that had bound him. The heroic figure in the foreground was surrounded, in the four corners of the picture,

by fleeing Europeans: these were in turn, a colonial administrator, a missionary with a cross, a trader, and an anthropologist carrying the book *African Political Systems*.

This image is powerful, but also a stereotype as anthropologists sometimes sided with anti-colonial struggles and very often gave material and intellectual support to anti-racist, anti-capitalist and popular-democratic nationalist movements. The work of Kathleen Gough would be a case in point, though her career was significantly damaged by rightist criticisms of her partisanship. Eric Wolf was also singled out by Margaret Mead as a ‘communist’ (on the politics of anthropology, see Gledhill, 2000), and even the mildly anti-establishment figures of the ‘writing-culture school’ of the 1980s were subject to denigration by their peers (often fairly so, Nugent, 1991). Today it is a commonplace view that the anthropologist as translator of ‘culture’ is never an uninterested character, and the championing of ‘fieldwork’ now comes with the routine of automatic reflexivity and critical appraisal. Of course it cannot be denied that the work of cultural translation is important, and despite the ‘methodological absolutism’ (Banerjea, 1999: 18) sought in such reflexivity, the argument that translation is necessary seems plausible, if flawed in interesting and interested ways. In a revealing allegory Clifford Geertz tells an Indian story that has the world resting on the back of an elephant, which is itself standing on a turtle, and that the interpretive winks of anthropology are like the turtles that, proverbially, go all the way down (Geertz, 1973). We are told knowledge is perspectival, yet the discipline remains largely based in the enclaves in which it began – in England it is still LSE and Cambridge that receive the larger part of funding for the study of others – the imperial structure of the institutions is not redistributed. And so translation is maimed to the degree to which the distance between the Nkrumah story and the parable of the turtles is calculated ‘reflexively’ and not explicitly in terms of power and privilege.

Thus anthropology might be better described as a cultural system itself. If it claims to be local in focus, its institutional apparatus has a far wider reach. Anthropology (and cultural studies, social theory, geography) might be characterized as a wholly institutionally based global system of knowledge about the peoples of the world. It is organized with researchers and research projects, teaching programmes and degree structures, publishing houses, theoretical schools (more than one, more than a succession of paradigms), methods, debates, tenure, career, course guides, reading lists, footnotes. And this whole agglomeration is more than a project of transcription, translation and comparison for the instruction and edification of those lucky enough to gain places in the teaching factory. As a privileged system then, anthropology reaches well beyond any specifically local instance of the cultural.

Culture of course was never easily presented as a matter of general franchise. The anthropological discussion of culture in ‘all’ its guises should of course be read against an older European notion of culture which was intrinsically hierarchical, if, by the 20th century, somewhat in transition. The critique of privilege took a different form in the context of western industrial societies. Here the mass culture/high culture distinction was central to the cultural dynamic of European thought. Two sides of a broken heritage, the Marxist philosopher Theodor Adorno called it. Often misconstrued as a defender of elite culture, Adorno’s effort was to examine and relate the commodification he saw before him of both Beethoven and mass culture. He did not think that these two ‘torn halves’ could together add up to an authentic whole so long as reification and exchange-value were the driving determinants of cultural experience. At least in his own assessment Adorno did not privilege high culture as many seem to assume – on the leap day of 29 February 1940 he wrote one of his last letters to the critic Walter Benjamin explaining that he was not out to ‘save’ culture (Adorno and Benjamin, 1999: 320). His critique was designed to provoke awareness of the ways industrialization affects both high and mass culture through the routinized processes of the culture industry, and so through the co-option of every last trace of creativity into commerce. In an earlier letter he set this out clearly:

. . . the dialectic of the lowest has the same value as the dialectic of the highest. . . . Both bear the stigmata of capitalism, both contain elements of change. . . . Both are torn halves

of an integral freedom, to which, however, they do not add up. It would be romantic to sacrifice one to the other. (18 March 1936, in Adorno and Benjamin, 1999: 130)

Much of the value of the Frankfurt School, and its legacy for the study of culture, is secured only through a sophisticated reading of their work that does not discredit Adorno's political project. His motivation is materialist and the difference of the materialist model of culture from those 19th-century developmental tables of anthropology (that Marx read in the work of Morgan) are worthy of note. For Marx, the level of civilization is crucial to the mode of production and the needs and wants of, for example, workers. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels identify the bourgeois mode of production as necessarily expanding everywhere, it 'batters down all Chinese walls' and 'compels' all countries to adopt 'the bourgeois mode of production' (Marx and Engels, 1848/1952: 8). This is the source of much misreading however, as Marx was later at pains to point out that his developmental schema of shifts in the modes of production was only a 'sketch' and not to be taken as a blueprint or prediction for all parts of the world. The analysis was one that proceeded at a high level of abstraction for Marx and the detail, for example the details of culture – he refers specifically to books and paintings, and the work of teachers in the teaching factory – were all 'peripheral phenomena'. At the level of abstract analysis, these matters could 'be ignored when considering capitalist production as a whole'. They could be 'left for later' (Marx, 1867/1967: 1049). This does not mean that culture is not significant for Marxism, only that at the level of abstraction that identifies the general mode of production, the specificities of cultural production are not significantly different from production as such. Adorno's effort takes its cue here to show that specific moments of bourgeois culture are industrialized in necessarily similar ways.

This becomes crucial where Adorno identifies how every commodity tries to be unique. While noting, with Horkheimer, that 'culture now impresses the same stamp on everything' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944/1979: 120), Adorno also recognizes that the standardization of mass products had even to 'standardize the claim of each one [product] to be irreplaceably unique' (Adorno, 1991: 68). These were, however, 'fictitiously individual nuances' (Adorno, 1991: 35), examples of the rule of the 'iron grip of rigidity despite the ostentatious appearance of dynamism' (Adorno, 1991: 62). Yet Marx's claim that the bourgeois system batters the Chinese wall until it adopts the bourgeois mode of production does not mean that we all become the same. Here lies the crucial misunderstanding of those who think that the commodity system simply compels uniformity. On the contrary, it is clear that cultural difference is industrialized such that we adopt the mode of 'a smorgasbord of cultures, our society subsists on the mass consumption of variegated and heterogeneous lifestyles' (San Juan, 2002: 6).

Of course 'culture' at this level is also a matter of interpretation. This is the problem with culture as something people have – is it what they do or what they are? As culture morphs from something you have to something you do, it becomes clear that today culture is not equivalent to identity. It is by now established that culture is not something simply to be understood or to be translated in the old anthropological sense without cognizance of the politics of translation and the situatedness of subjectivity. In any case, each translation is a new creativity – and certainly confidence in fixed positions on culture is unstable. No translations are correct; they are creative, more or less with fidelity, never exact, always new. Culture as identity cannot be perfectly translated; cultural artifacts can be remade in other codes. Here the philosopher Jacques Derrida is helpful on idiom – the multiple meanings of a word in one language do not necessarily map the same way in another. Language is a limited model for culture, and text as a metaphor for the social also has limitations that exclude specificities and/or the political context of interpretation (Geertz, 1988).

Here culture as idiom might be supplemented with the idea that it becomes less a bounded entity and more of a resource as increasing 'parts' of culture are drawn into market relations. Instead of a culture you belong to (unambiguous identity, fixed in place), the culture industry replaces identification with cultural activity, and so the exchange value of culture comes into focus. Unfortunately, and increasingly in cultural studies, this happens in a restricted way. Post-modernist theorizing thrives here where the total (and totalitarian) cultural system examined

by Adorno and the Frankfurt School is displaced into a foreshortened commodity analysis focused primarily on trinkets and objects. An analysis that reads only the popular first chapter of *Capital* remains at the level of commodities where Marx emphasized the importance of a cascading sequence of market, production, circulation, credit, the state and so on. This can be seen from examining the presentational organization of the book as a whole. In a way that has similarities with the fieldwork and transcription limits of Malinowskian anthropology, and the symptom not the cure of naïve psychoanalysis, the systemic and abstract aspects of Marx's analysis are missed if it is the tables, coins and metaphors that become the object of primary interest (cf. Derrida, 1993/1994). Commodity analysis stops short if it ignores productive structures, public works, collaborative labour, communications systems, legal forms, governance, financing, etc. For example, to take just the impact of law upon the cultural economy, any adequate analysis must include the influence of legal apparatus such as trade negotiations, GATT and tariff debates, copyright and intellectual property legislation – all of which impinge upon the exchange and movement of objects, trinkets, property.

Similarly, the postmodern cultural studies focus upon street culture fails in its explanatory effort if it does not take into account the ways appropriation and reification operate in the context of the night-time economy of regenerated urban centres, thriving on cheap and often 'illegal' immigrant service sector workers, themselves trapped on below par wages facilitating the gastronomical multicultural façade in the restaurant enclaves and food malls (see Kalra, 2000, for more on this).

Another example with which to illustrate the ways culture needs to be rethought as part of a wider political system is to see how culture has become a resource for tourism, used as an attraction, an attention grabber and as vehicle for development contracting. From the museum or temple to the backpacker cafe or seedy bar, the marker of culture is a rating in the Lonely Planet or Michelin guide, or an Arts Council grant. The systemic here becomes something like a voluntary management of the cultural market, and conflict is neutralized under a model of negotiated exchange and equivalences. At the level of the social or public sphere there is a similar lack of controversy and, as George Yúdice points out: 'civil society increasingly looks like an alibi for neoliberalism' (2003: 158). Under pressure to 'manage' the cultural, all manner of institutional bodies emerge with an investment in culture. Culture today becomes ever more a matter of administration:

The notion of culture as a resource entails its management, a view that was not characteristic of high culture or everyday culture in the anthropological sense. And to further complicate matters, culture as a resource circulates globally, with ever increasing velocity. (Yúdice, 2003: 4)

While I do not think all circulation of culture is merely a further complication, nor am I convinced that circulation velocity is best calculated only as acceleration (multiple speeds of the circuits of capital were already outlined in Marx, 1847), clearly the management of cultural resources is a key problematic. Culture as a resource is the debased mediation of trinkets and structure. Entire departments of the civil service and bureaucracy are engaged with documentation and form-filling to ensure that adequate quality outcomes, audit trails, accountabilities and appraisal criteria are in place. Here culture attains exchange-value and is valorized-recuperated in the most abstract ways. The subsumption of identity (as 'monitored' object) must necessarily close off that which cannot be contained. Abstraction here transmutes an open process into a compendium of product registers, and drags them to market.

In a related reification (of the commodity – its fetish character), the idea that culture is itself emancipatory in its non-hegemonic versions accommodates the subcultural to the ghetto on the one hand and opens it up for (rampant commercial, not revolutionary) celebration on the other. Where cultural studies™ becomes a glorification of resistance without context we can indeed accept San Juan's taunt that culture as a substitute for politics becomes 'an apology for commodity fetishism' (San Juan, 2002: 228). It is not difficult to agree where he follows Francis Mulhern, who warns that:

There is no space, and in fact no need, for struggle if all popular culture, abstracted from 'high' culture and from historical realities of inequality and domination, is already active and critical, if television and shopping are already theaters of subversion. (Mulhern, 1995: 40)

The targets here are writers like John Fiske and Danny Miller, but for me the problem is best encapsulated in the title of Scott's book *Weapons of the Weak* (1985). Where the 'independent' or 'autonomous' recombinative or resistive reception of media product or ideology is achieved by working-class boys (Willis, 1977), or where bourgeois conventions are challenged by Gangsta rappers and subcultural stylists (Hebdige, 1979), does the culture industry tremble at, or celebrate, the diversity of industriousness? Punk, rap, Ché t-shirts and books on 'resistance' have all become items for purchase in high street stores. This is not to say resistance should be dismissed as inconsequential, but the tendency towards uncritical celebration needs to be evaluated. The logic of audience resistance, for example, implies surely that all audience members are creative (consumers). If this is so, a radical democratization of media is on the cards, breaking with the producer-spectator hierarchy and opening production to all. A failure to deliver the requisite redistribution of resources impedes this opening of creativity and allocates 'resistance' to a limited register. The optimism that sees the Internet as a vehicle for mass active participation forgets the massive profits ensured by the commercialization of 'new' media – itself differentially accessible across race, class, gender and geography. Thus, in the commodity embrace, the diminutive celebration of resistance and its egalitarian logic, in writers like Scott, Fiske (1988), Miller (1995) and Clifford (1997), elides the significance of struggle, and those who struggle are reduced to a 'weak' – disorganized, circumstantial and specific – belligerence. Organized anti-colonial movement is again unacknowledged by those who set themselves up as manager-translators. Ironically, the charge that Adorno was elitist is made from a position that ignores the special privilege of the manager who translates (a cultural broker at the very least; a refined aesthete, perhaps; pencil-sharpener more often; certainly web-connected). We do well to remember how the cultural industry is suited to a viewpoint that can pacify political struggles (Malinowski arrives with the police) – the volatility of change and organized resistance is erased when the translated 'culture' must be fixed in snapshot form for sale in the knowledge market.

So it is not without a purposefully ironic echo of Tylor's definition of culture as that 'complex' of 'art, law, morals, custom' that we might turn now to Algiers. In the context of struggle for a popular democratic revolution to liberate Africa from colonialism, Frantz Fanon wrote:

A national culture is the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people keeps itself in existence. (1968: 155)

Surely 'culture' includes those most important, and too often under-reported, too quickly forgotten, or effectively erased, moments – irruptions – of popular democratic mass struggle liberation. The past century is replete with examples to which only the military right (armed with CIA 'contra'-style resourcing) seems carefully to attend. Russia, China, Algeria, Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, Palestine, Nepal . . . the cultures of people's movements are themselves a heritage.

Thus, to schematize: the 'cultural transcription' model of Malinowskian fieldwork required the myth of the omnipotent and all-seeing 'translator'. Later this transmutes into other fields with the area studies specialist (and the new media orientalism of the world cinema specialist, or the sociologist and policy maker on 'ethnicity', where the race relations industry and ethnic arts funding tends to codify both identity and subsequently activities). A critical appraisal would find that the commissars of culture are the ones to be interrogated and the critique of the authority of the translator should suggest a more nuanced line. The authority of style questioned under contextualizing political conditions that include anti-imperial movement and struggle, from the internationals, India, China, Vietnam to Iran/Iraq, would suggest a more problematic context for evaluating those turtles of Geertz. The categories,

events, histories for consideration here, in terms of impact often disavowed, but shaping intellectual movements, are of course open to interpretation. Is it so radical to insist that interpretation of culture include cultural movements, nationalist culturalist uplift, cultural pedagogy and the cultural revolution?

The overall argument might suggest a trajectory that begins by noting that Culture in Europe was first conceived as high culture, and its civilizational categorizations were marshalled across its versioning of world 'history'. This was later complemented by an emergence of the notion that everyone has culture, there is even a working-class culture, mass culture, and here an anthropological notion ascribes culture to all, however unevenly rewarded or valued. After critiques of imperialism and of anthropological 'authority' this notion is further displaced by the global adoption of culture as a resource that transmutes cultural uplift and cultural revolution for the culture industry: tourism, for example, or national and regional film funding councils. The ideology that maintains this co-option of culture as resource includes ethnicity, difference and identity in the global context. These terms may be debated. Difference, for example, seems particularly suitable for a digitized, transglobal cultural marketplace. And isn't the promotion of ethnicity and diaspora not an uncritical celebration of circumstantial privilege and opportunism in exactly that place where a more organized, even nationalist, conceptual apparatus is necessary to build alternatives to imperialism?

In the 21st century, the old debate between those who see the important sites of cultural creativity to be 'interstitial' versus those who cling to a more essentialist notion of culture may now be so old it's obsolete. What might have been characterized – or caricatured – in a series of opposed foci such as syncretism versus coherence; centre versus periphery; diaspora versus nation; third space versus tradition; postcoloniality versus nationalist anti-colonialism – are all now superseded somewhat by the global predicament of war, terror, poverty and death. The categories of culture as resource or as commodity either defend against desperate backs-to-the-wall suicide bombing, or from colossus single superpower overkill; fear at home or homeland security crackdowns. The culture of terror threatens, but we go on.

Culture is both playground and commodity; it is the refined and profound, mundane and extreme. Culture is simultaneously crossed by identity, tradition and change; resource, bulwark, contest. It is the lullaby of a symphony on CD, or the sweet sigh of a junkie's fix hitting the vein. It is that collection of pots and pans . . . and they are for sale. It is what makes us human, in a vast variety of, sometimes still changing, ways. It is not something wholly separate from the politics of commerce, nor religion or hate, and it behooves us to remember this – to seek out its analysis, which is culture too. It is a contested domain, and for good or worse, it is our 'predicament' that we cannot yet do without (Clifford, 1988). We live in it, there is no other choice, even for Robinson alone with Friday on his island. You are soaking in it. Encyclopaedias too.

And so at the end we should return to a dialectical and mediated understanding of the homology between local and global versions of culture. The becoming particular of culture might be traced through various incarnations and avatars in bounded form, identity, commodity and culture as a resource; the becoming universal in developmental schemes, (naïve) modes of production projections, cultural activity and culture industry. The mediation would be to look to the process of local struggles with universalist support. For solidarity across differences, for a liberation of all that relies upon the liberation of each. For the lessons of translation that would learn to learn from below (Spivak, 2000).

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Culture Alive

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Keywords anthropology, colonization, cultural change, cultural studies, difference

Every definition or description of culture comes from the cultural assumptions of the investigator. Euro-US academic culture, shared, with appropriate differences, by elite academic culture everywhere, is so widespread and powerful that it is thought of as transparent and capable of reporting on all cultures. It is, however, also a multiform cultural system, marking the descriptions and definitions it produces. Cultural information should be received proactively, as always open-ended, always susceptible to a changed understanding. The specialist speaks from the ever-moving, ever-shifting ground of her or his cultural base, knowingly pushed back or unacknowledged as transparent.

Culture is a package of largely unacknowledged assumptions, loosely held by a loosely outlined group of people, mapping negotiations between the sacred and the profane, and the relationship between the sexes. On the level of these loosely held assumptions and presuppositions, change is incessant. But, as they change, these unwitting *pre*-suppositions become belief systems, organized suppositions. Rituals coalesce to match, support, and advance beliefs and suppositions. But these presuppositions also give us the wherewithal to change our world, to innovate and create. Most people believe, even (or perhaps particularly) when they are being cultural relativists, that creation and innovation are their own cultural secret, whereas others are only determined by their cultures. This habit is unavoidable. But if we aspire to be citizens of the world, we must fight this habit.

When the tendency to think of our own culture as dynamic and other cultures as static is expressed by a powerful group towards less powerful groups, a political problem arises. This problem surfaced in the 1960s, when the volume of migration from the old colonies increased greatly. A new sub-discipline called 'Cultural Studies' emerged, first in Britain, then in the United States, and now available in universities worldwide. This is happening within academic culture. The Cultural Studies position can roughly be summarized thus: the colonizers founded Anthropology in order to know their subjects; and Cultural Studies was founded

by the colonized in order to question and correct their masters. Both disciplines study culture; the first studies the culture of others as static and determining, the second the culture of one's own group – as dynamic and evolving. As a result of this polarization, Anthropology has launched a comprehensive self-critique.

In spite of its self-critique, Anthropology can only study the self-conscious part of cultural systems, drawing from it more academic conclusions than the practitioners of the culture; even when it slips into Cultural Studies and focuses, in the style of Pierre Bourdieu, upon aspects of the culture of the metropolis. Cultural Studies is concerned with that self-conscious part as if it worked for real cultural change, at least for the investigator within the culture studied. But the part that works for change escapes the study of cultural dynamics. Culture alive is always on the run, itself the irreducible counter-example. For the Cultural Studies investigator, that incommensurable part is lodged either in the academic culture he or she shares with the anthropologist, or the moving wedge of the metropolitan culture into which he or she has entered as a participant.

This is not to say that the people from that culture who have remained in the nation of origin in social strata separated from the general academic culture are more authentic representatives of the culture in question. It is to say that there is an internal line of *cultural* difference within 'the same culture'. This holds not only for the nation of origin but also for the state to which the cultural minority has immigrated. The academy is a place of upward class mobility, and this internal cultural difference is related to the dynamics of class difference. It is related to the formation of the new global culture of management and finance and the families attached to it. It marks access to the Internet. It also marks the new culture of international non-governmental organizations, involved in development and human rights, as they work upon the lowest social strata in the developing world.

Before the advent of modernity, the country to town movement, the field to court movement, the movement along the great trade routes operated to create the kind of internal split of cultural difference within the same culture that may be the real motor of cultural change. Across the spectrum of change, it is the negotiation of sexual difference and the relationship between the sacred and the

profane that spell out the rhythms of culture, always a step ahead of its definitions and descriptions.

The word 'culture' belongs to the histories of Western European languages. If we want to move into the elusive phenomenon in other places, below the shifting internal line of cultural difference, we will not look for translations and approximations of the word. Such synonyms carry on their back the impulse to translate from the European, which is a characteristic of the colonized intelligentsia under imperialism, and thus is the condition as well as the effect of that differentiating internal line. They will not let us go below it. We must rather learn a non-European language well enough to be able to enter it without ready reference to a European one. We may discover Creole versions of the word 'culture' which will complicate our argument. But they are neither the same word nor its translation.

Anthropologists and comparative historians learn field languages but customarily do not enter them so that they become languages of reference. Cultural Studies investigators typically do not relate to their native languages or the languages of their immediate or remote places of origin as languages of reference. The only route to learning languages in this way is through instruction in reading the verbal art in these languages and instruction in philosophizing through ethical systems in them. However, this would require educational reform.

Such efforts might make us realize that every

cultural process, even in the belief system and ritual sector, moves because human beings imagine and create fictions of all kinds, including the rational fictions that extend philosophy; and that it is not possible for one of us to have access to an exhaustive sense of all the cultures of the world. Study of diversity in metropolitan space should make us aware of the limits to the production of cultural information outside the metropolis.

Let me qualify everything I have said by suggesting that in the field of culture alive there are no mistakes. Cultural continuity, made possible by cultural change, is assured by cultural explanations, coming from all sides, insiders and outsiders, rulers and ruled. The study of cultures is part of culture – the anthropologist's picture of elders initiating young men and women, as well as these very words you read. Culture is a place where different explanations always collide, not just by races and classes, but by genders and generations. Culture is its own explanations. It is possible that the assumption of a collectivity sharing a culture is not an essential truth, but a millennial increment of the need to explain.

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Culture and Cultural Analysis

Michael M.J. Fischer

Keywords cultural critique, global restructification, (post)structuralism, reconstruction after trauma, religious returns

Without a differentiated and relational notion of the cultural (the arts, media, styles, religions, value-orientations, ideologies, imaginaries, world-views, soul, and the like), the social sciences would be crippled, reducing social action to notions of pure instrumentality. When singularized, frozen, or nominalized, 'culture' can be a dangerous concept, subject to fallacies of pejorative and discriminatory hypostatizations (we have reason, they have culture) or

immobilized variables (their culture is composed of x features). The modern social science use of the term 'culture' is rooted in the historical milieu that arose with the dismantling of the religious and aristocratic legitimations of feudal and patrimonial regimes, and the agons of Third World particularistic 'cultures' against First World claims of universal 'civilization'. As a counterpoint to definitions of culture as the 'best' productions in aesthetics, knowledge, and morals, the anthropological understanding removes the hegemony of cultural valuation from elites with its erasure of attention to demotic and subaltern forms, and instead asserts the importance of understanding the relations between all cultural forms at play and in contestation within social formations.

The 1970s

Cultural studies, (post)structuralism, and symbolic or interpretive anthropology transformed cultural analysis in the 1970s, along with feminism, media and performance studies, new historicism, and early studies of decolonization and new nations.

Symbolic anthropology drew upon the quasi-cybernetic paradigm of Harvard's Social Relations Department under Talcott Parsons, the semiotics of C.S. Peirce, R. Birdwhistle, and T. Sebeok, structural linguistics (field linguistics classes taught systematic methods of elicitation and analysis of cultural units), Thomas Kuhn's notion of paradigms and Noam Chomsky's generative grammar. The core course in the Anthropology graduate program at the University of Chicago was organized into Cultural Systems, Social Systems, and Psychological Systems. David Schneider (founder of the Society for Cultural Anthropology) argued that the cultural system provided the principles of organization for the social system; Clifford Geertz (1973) argued that the cultural system was logico-meaningfully integrated, the social system functionally integrated, and the psychological system psycho-dynamically integrated. Geertz thus wrote essays on religion, ideology, common sense, art, and moral thinking as 'cultural systems'. Schneider argued that the distinction between etic and emic could not be sustained, thereby making all systems of thought, native and scientific, merely variant modes of cultural accounting. Victor Turner analyzed the Ndembu 'forest of symbols' with a widely imitated combination of structural-functional (Durkheim, van Gennep) analysis of mythic charters and ritual process, Freudian fusions of corporeal-emotive and cognitive-symbolic poles in symbol formation, and Kenneth Burke's performative notions of the rhetorics and grammars of motives.

The turn towards *interpretive anthropology* led by Geertz and Turner followed from the instability of the etic/emic and the cultural/social system distinctions, and drew upon the hermeneutic and phenomenological traditions of Dilthey, Weber, Freud, Schutz, Ricoeur (who also taught at Chicago), and Mircea Eliade (also at Chicago).

Meanwhile in fall 1966, structuralism and poststructuralism arrived simultaneously in the United States via *The Structuralism Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Science of Man* conference at the Johns Hopkins University with Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, Lacan, Barthes, and others, an event that would lead to a dominant strand of cultural work of the next generation [Macksey and Donato, 1972]. In France, structuralism and post-structuralism were modalities of French response to the traumas of World War II, Americanization, and the influx of North Africans after the Algerian

War of Independence. Lévi-Strauss brought together the enthusiasm of post-war thinking about set theory, linguistics, and cybernetics with an elegy and reconstructive method for aboriginal cultures destroyed by colonialism in Australia and in the Americas. He and his fellow structuralists (Georges Dumézil, Jean-Paul Vernant, Michel Détéienne, Pierre Vidal-Naquet) transformed the study of Greek mythology and myth studies in general. No longer could anyone identify deities with single virtues (god of wisdom) without considering that deity's structural position vis-à-vis others; no longer could one version of a myth be privileged without considering the entire set of transformations that a mythic structure makes possible. Lévi-Strauss seemed at the time to vanquish (in favor of deep, pervasive, regenerative mythic and social structures) the attempt by Jean-Paul Sartre to fuse voluntaristic, politically engagé, existentialism with the inertial forces of history understood through Marxist lenses. Lacan, the early Foucault, and Bourdieu were received in the United States as elaborations of this culturalist structuralism.

Foucault's insights into disciplinary power and the birth of the clinic may have had something to do with a kind of Freudian *nachträglich* or post facto recognition of his experiences as an adolescent: the reformatory to instill heterosexual codes, and watching compliance to the Nazis in his native Poitiers ('we all have a fascism in our heads'; Raber, in Herman, 2004). Derrida and Lyotard were more explicit about the legacies of World War II. Lyotard's *Postmodern Condition*, Evan Carton points out:

turns – between chapter 9 'Narratives of the Legitimation of Knowledge', and chapter 10, 'Delegitimation' – on a paragraph devoted to Heidegger's notorious 1933 Rector's Address, . . . and the new chapter begins, 'In contemporary society . . . [where] the grand narrative has lost its credibility'. (Carton, in Herman, 2004: 24)

The essay is about the coming of the computer and information age in which local language games and performativities will have more force than past universalist ideologies for mass mobilization (in the name of History, Reason, or Progress), and where incommensurabilities among language games and value systems will challenge two centuries of standardized linguistic, religious, educational nation-building (as France copes with Muslim North African immigrants). Similarly, Derrida in his first major work (*Of Grammatology*) takes on the 'ethnocentrism which everywhere and always, had controlled the concept of writing . . . from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger'

and introduces the image of ashes that would grow as a motif in his corpus, quoting Edmund Jabes, 'Où est le centre? Sous la cendre' ('Where is the center? Under ashes') (Derrida, 1967: 24).

The stress in interpretive anthropology and poststructuralism on culture as contested meanings created, negotiated, and performed in locally polyvocal contexts dovetailed also with the rise of *Cultural Studies*. In Britain, Cultural Studies arose at Birmingham University from literary studies, branching out under the leadership of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall into youth and popular culture, ethnicity, hybridity, race, and class cultures. In the USA, Cultural Studies grew out of American Studies redirected by anthropologists and folklorists (initially at the University of Pennsylvania), and from labor and social history as in the work of George Lipsitz (1990, 2001). For a time, centers for Cultural Studies sprang up to create interdisciplinary work between the humanities and social sciences, until the field was eventually reimperialized by English and Literature Departments, losing not only its ethnographic and social science edge, but its fledgling efforts to work in languages other than English (ironically the language of most writing about postcolonialism) except in Comparative Literature Departments.

The 1980s

The 1980s produced revised modes of cultural analysis, followed in the 1990s by changing infrastructures (media, environment, biotechnology, and violence) that took on new cultural salience. The 1980s' revisions included new approaches to using ethnography to investigate and map the changing nature of cultural and social forms at the end of the 20th century (Marcus and Fischer, 1986); inquiries into the multiple disciplinary tools that could be employed in making cultural analysis more trenchant and revealing (Clifford and Marcus, 1986); the incorporation of transdisciplinary approaches (feminism, deconstruction, film and media studies, new historicism, science and technology studies, cyborg anthropology); the efforts to revive area and global studies with fresher ideas about how to do multi-sited ethnographies of mutually dependent activities in dispersed parts of larger systems or networks; and inquiries into second-order modernization and the risk society (Beck, 1986; Fortun, 2001; Petryna, 2002). New journals propelled these initiatives, including: *Cultural Anthropology* (vol. 1, no. 1, 1986), *Public Culture* (vol. 1, no. 1, 1988), *Positions* (vol. 1, 1992), *Visual Anthropology* (1987), *Subaltern Studies* (vol. 1, 1982), *Representations* (1983), and the eight-volume annual *Late Editions* (1993–2000).

The 1990s

In the 1990s, a new experimental, recombinant, mode of cultural thought, writing and visualization took material shape, through the combination of commercial biotechnologies (shaped by post-1980 legal, financial, and technological infrastructures) and information technologies (particularly after the World Wide Web in 1994 and linked databases made the Internet an everyday medium). Lyotard's 1979 speculations on the postmodern condition of knowledge and the role of the computer in making information available suddenly seemed both quaint and prescient: quaint in failing to foresee the many-to-many communication uses, the way just-in-time accounting could reorganize the business world, and the way email would speed up the pace of work and introduce new stratifications; yet prescient in the apperception of new local language games and formats, including increased communicative reach through flows, codes, and performativity rather than single propositions or arguments. Compare also: Gregory Ulmer's efforts to think Derrida through electronic media [1985, 1989, 1994], Avital Ronell's re-readings of telephony in Alexander Graham Bell's America versus the place of technology in Heidegger's Germany [1989], Friedrich Kittler's contrast between the cultural formations carried by standardized German in 1800 and the gramophone, film, and typewriter in 1900 [1985, 1986], and the efforts by Mark Poster, Jacques Derrida, and Michael Fischer to rethink the oral versus literate cultures debate (Goody, 1977; Ong, 1982) for new electronic modes of communication [Poster, 1990, 2001; Derrida, 1996, 2001; Fischer, 2001, 2003].

As restratification processes proceeded in the aftermath of the implosion of the Soviet Union and the decline of the bipolar world, violence and religious legitimations repackaged themselves. Derrida suggested that globalatinization through the capital concentration and mergers of transnational media conglomerates would make Islamic and other 'fundamentalist' resistance movements appropriate and be undone by the new media, like a kind of auto-immune disease, intense, virulent and violent, very much like AIDS, the plague of these years whose dynamics also gave rise to new modes of cultural work, with activists pushing for changes in drug approval processes, using the Internet to challenge the hierarchical relations between doctors and patients, insurance companies and beneficiaries, and the entire health-care system. Globalatinization, AIDS (and SARS, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, mad cow disease, and other viruses), 1990s' financial crises moving rapidly across the globe from East Asia to South

America, and worries about climate warming, all made the 1980s cultural notions of alternative modernities seem, if not quaint, more relational than ever, differentially connected to the global patchwork of political and cultural economies. Ethnic and religious warfare intensified and led to renewed analyses of the limits and weaknesses of constitutional forms of governance and the lack of local rootedness of human rights and global humanitarian industries.

Circa 2005

We live today under the sign of the film *Safar-e Qandahar* by the Iranian director Mohsen Makhmalbaf, and its image of prostheses being parachuted from Red Cross helicopters to Afghan men running on crutches to catch them. Under this sign, at least three sites intersect of deep play (overinvestments of money, power, fantasy, hope and fear, putting our existential, ethical, and social stakes at risk): (1) the reconstruction of society in the wake of social trauma and structural violence; (2) immersion in telemedia that affect access to information, formation of public sentiments, and manipulation of the public sphere, governance, and personal subjectivities; and (3) changes in life science institutions involving both profound commercialization of biological research, and efforts of patient groups using the Internet and other new information technology tools to force accountability on the institutions of science and what is made to live and who is let die.

Just as, Lyotard might say, there is no Jew and we are all Jews (female, queer, normalized, neurotic, vulnerable, struggling for recognition, autonomy, rights, community, place, citizenship), so there is no culture, and all we do is cultural. Culture is not a variable; culture is relational, it is elsewhere or in passage, it is where meaning is woven and renewed, often through gaps and silences, and forces beyond the conscious control of individuals, and yet the space where individual and institutional social responsibility and ethical struggle take place. Cultural anthropology operates in a set of third spaces: where new multi-cultural ethics are evolving out of demands that cultures attend to one another, and within techno-scientific networks where the demands of the face of the other, history, and autobiographical figurations counter the reduction of all to the same. The challenge of cultural analysis is to develop translation and mediation tools for helping make visible the differences of interests, access, power, needs, desires, and philosophical perspective. Above all, as we begin to face new kinds of ethical dilemmas stemming from developments in biotechnologies, expansive information and image databases, and

ecological interactions, we are challenged to develop differentiated cultural analyses that can help articulate new social institutions for an evolving public sphere and civil society.

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Bildung

Josef Bleicher

Keywords aesthetics, *Bildung*, education, *Kultur*, morality, self-formation, *Weimar Klassik*

The concept of *Bildung* (educative self-formation) may well be the most grandiose thought to emerge in the 18th century, according to Gadamer (1975), who considers it the guiding concept underlying the rise of the humanities. In tandem with them, it engendered the movement that evolved new aesthetic and moral standards and ideals and also challenged the orientation towards a narrow Enlightenment rationalism in the name of the rounded *Bildung* of the individual. This notion of *Bildung* later informed the education system in Germany with its emphasis on integrating a wide range of subjects and competences within a framework established with reference to the *Vorbild* (model) of the classic languages and authors. Here it followed the precepts of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who succinctly stated that ‘The true purpose of the human being is the Bildung of all his strengths into one integrated whole.’

In the 19th century, while accompanying the transformations related to the industrialization of Germany with critical commentary, the meaning of *Bildung* itself was transformed. At the cultural level, it found itself trying to maintain the inheritance of humanist ideals in face of the dehumanizing effects of rapid industrialization, and the transition of Germany from a *Kulturstaat* (state identity based on culture) to a modern, economically driven nation-state belatedly clamouring for a place on the world stage. *Bildung* thus became streamlined into *Ausbildung* (training, expertise) to answer the need for skilled manpower, and thus increasingly approximated the notion of ‘education’ prevalent in other European countries. Concomitantly, at the socio-political level, sharpening social differentiation accompanying the modernization of Germany saw its remaining humanistic essence become the canonized, elitist preserve of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (that segment of the bourgeoisie defined by the accumulation and use of cultural capital).

The conceptual history of *Bildung* parallels that of *Kultur*, as the micro- and macro-levels of cultural self-formation. Interestingly, both these emblematic concepts arise out of a naturalistic

context. In the case of *Bildung*, it originally denoted a ‘natural formation’, as in well-formed limbs or other successful forms created by nature. Transposed first by Herder into a humanistic ideal, it reached its apex in the *Weimar Klassik* of Goethe and Schiller. The semi-religious undertones of the fulfilment of human potential as the most noble project are themselves remaining traces of the elaborations it experienced within the mystical tradition. It thus maintains its link with the idea of a *Bild* (image) of the Higher Powers contained within us, and serving as a *Vorbild* (model) that entails the exhortation to engage in its *Nachbildung* (modelling upon). Celebrated in Klopstock’s *Messiah*, this notion of *Bildung* had a signal effect on Goethe. The aspect of a spiritually guided formation as ‘modelling upon’, together with the organicist origins of the concept, provided an instance of the union of God and Nature that Goethe considered the sign of deep meaningfulness. It chimed in perfectly with his own work on the metamorphosis of plants, where, as an early theory of evolution, he traced the workings of a *nisus formativus*, translated as *Bildungstrieb*, that is, a formative self-organizing drive. We here approach the ultimate and highest understanding: ‘This immensity personified approaches us as a God, as Creator and maintainer whom we are called upon to worship and revere in all ways possible.’ *Selbstbildung* of the individual accords with the self-organization already apparent in matter, and more so in organic growth, which all provide symbolic references to it. Exemplified in the new genre of the *Bildungsroman* (the novel), tracing the course of an individual’s self-formation, such as *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* [1829] with its maxim: ‘through the useful towards the True and the Beautiful’, it directs our attention to the most noble and pressing task of bringing all the potentials contained within us to full expression.

Gestalt (integrated form) and *Gesetz* (rule), the defining terms of Classicism, are indispensable for *Bildung*. Goethe thus also highlights the further dimension of self and society, individual and world, required for self-development. Only in service to the community, in self-restraint and submission to ethical demands, can *Bildung* shape the individual.

God, Nature, community: these thus are the points of reference for *Bildung*. Transcending mere acquisition of knowledge, *Bildung* points to a way of integrating knowledge and expertise with moral and aesthetic concerns. On the basis of a successful integration of thinking, willing and feeling, it enables sound judgement, indicated by a developed awareness of what is appropriate, and is expressed in tact, good taste, and a sense of community. It entails openness to difference and a willingness to self-correct. *Bildung*, in the classic sense, thus also contains a projective anticipation of the ‘good life’, of human freedom enacted with responsibility for self and others in the open-ended project of self-creation.

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文化 *Bunka*

David Buist

Keywords *bunka*, culture, East Asia, Japan, translation

文化

[Chinese (Putonghua): *wénhuà*; Japanese: *bunka*; Korean: *munhwa*]

The notion of global knowledge necessarily implies an appreciation of regional and local differences. The global diffusion of the social and cultural sciences provides a framework facilitating worldwide communication among intellectuals through a degree of sharing of common concepts. However, the variation in local historical, cultural and social circumstances can produce subtle variations in the context and application of concepts that might otherwise be regarded as ‘universal’. As concepts diffuse outwards from their original context of application, redefinitions inevitably multiply. The linguistic mechanisms of conceptual appropriation are varied, ranging from wholesale verbal transplantation to the coining of new words from existing lexical resources. In neither case is a simple ‘copy’ of the original reproducible. Some process of ‘translation’ or linguistic ‘transformation’ is inevitably involved. ‘Equivalence’ of meaning is a product of translation, not its prerequisite, and what constitutes ‘equivalence’ has to be negotiated in the process. Here, I examine the reappropriation of the word 文化 as a ‘translation’ of the ‘culture’ concept. As the main entry on culture amply demonstrates, this is itself far from being an internally homogeneous concept. This entry seeks to probe the further complexities raised by ‘translation’.

Although most of what I say here refers specifically to Japan, the concept of 文化 can in some sense be regarded as an ‘East Asian’ concept. This is partly why I have chosen to retain the original characters (which are recognized and used in China and Korea as well as Japan) rather than resorting to a Romanized phonetic transcription (which would inevitably reflect the local variations in pronunciation of the characters). As with many of the concepts appropriated from European thought in the latter half of the 19th century, the initial process of translation occurred in Japan, and the resulting terms were subsequently adopted

also in China and Korea. Throughout East Asia, until comparatively recently, the dominant medium of literary and intellectual discourse was Classical Chinese. The characters and compounds derived from this tradition have continued to provide the building blocks for much verbal innovation and translation.

Etymologically, 文化 denotes the process of acquiring (or causing another to acquire) literacy and learning, and by extension, of ‘cultivation’ in the sense of the adoption of manners and dispositions of thought characteristic of the dominant social class. On its own, the character 文 refers primarily to the written language. As well as denoting the medium of characters, sentences and texts, its meaning can also embrace in some contexts the ‘content’ or ‘message’ expressed through that medium (‘knowledge’) and the process of its transmission (‘education’). The character or concept typically opposed to 文 is 武 (usually pronounced ‘*bu*’ in Japanese). 武 refers to military force. Prior to the Meiji Era (1868–1912), especially during the Edo Period (1600–1867), Japanese rulers would sometimes appeal to 文 as an alternative instrument of rule to 武 (*bu*, military force). This involved the promotion of the ‘peaceful’ arts of literacy and learning instead of the honing of military skills. With the end of the violent upheavals of the ‘Warring States’ (Sengoku) Period, and the establishment of a stable regime under the Tokugawa Shoguns, rulers sought to bolster the legitimacy of their rule by supervising the development of what we might now call ‘culture’ (文). To some extent, this also implied the spread of literacy and knowledge among the general populace as a part of what could be called a strategy of ideological control as opposed to simply relying on the threat or use of force. Contrary to later depictions of the Edo Era as a ‘dark age’ prior to the ‘enlightenment’ of the Meiji Era of modernization, Japan had undergone processes of social change that were analogous to certain aspects of ‘modernization’ even before the adoption of European knowledge and social models in the late 19th century. Emiko Ikegami (2005) describes this as ‘proto-modernity’. One aspect of this was the relatively high level of education and literacy among the population, and the existence of a significant publishing industry based on wood block printing. Popular manuals of instruction in etiquette and refined manners,

artistic and literary appreciation, and basic historical and geographical knowledge were widely produced and consumed.

Thus, prior to its use as a ‘translation’ for the newly introduced concept of ‘culture’, 文化 is perhaps best described as having been part of the terminology of governance. Before the 20th century it was not a very widely used term, but it had already acquired certain associations which had consequences for its subsequent usage and meaning. Like ‘culture’, it originally referred to a form of ‘high culture’ – literate, refined, prestigious and close to the sources of political power. However, it also had a processual dimension (denoted by the second character 化, meaning ‘change’ or ‘transformation’) which was generally conceived in transitive terms as the action of an agent (the ruling elite) educating and ideologically incorporating the masses.

During the Meiji Era, greater attention was given to the ‘Western’ concept of ‘civilization’ rather than to ‘culture’. ‘Civilization’ was usually rendered as 文明 (*bunmei*) in Japanese. To the extent it was used at all, 文化 tended to be treated as a synonym of 文明. 文明 meant, above all, ‘Western civilization’ with particular emphasis on the industrial, military and institutional technologies of the dominant European and North American states. By emulating these, the Meiji rulers sought to transform Japan into a modern nation-state on equal terms with the encircling Western powers which were then colonizing much of the rest of Asia.

According to Nishikawa Nagao (1993), the first use of 文化 in a manner close to its dominant contemporary meaning was in a newspaper commentary written in 1889 by Riku Katsunan, who was an advocate of ‘cultural nationalism’ as opposed to the then dominant ‘state nationalism’. The gist of this article was to call for the formation of a unified ‘national culture’ expressing the distinctive character of the Japanese people as a whole. This embraced not only ‘high’ literary culture, but also *everyday* customs (風俗 *fuzoku*). As Nishikawa also points out, the ‘culture’ concept was appropriated at a moment when ‘civilization’ and ‘culture’ were emerging in Europe as opposing elements of a dichotomy. This was especially so in Germany, where *Kultur* came to be valued as the more ‘authentic’ and ‘indigenous’ alternative to the *Zivilisation* associated largely with external, especially French and Napoleonic, models. In many respects, the intellectual and political trajectory in Japan followed that of Germany. German Bismarckian models of modernity were increasingly adopted in preference to the British, French and American models popular in the early Meiji Era. This was accompanied by an increasing

interest in German thought and philosophy, which included absorption of German notions of ‘civilization’ as being ‘external’ and ‘material’, and ‘culture’ as being ‘interior’ and ‘spiritual’. 文明 and 文化 came to represent respectively the two poles of this conceptual dichotomy. 文化 became the ‘object of desire’ in an introverted search for authenticity and cultural cohesion, which was explicitly conceived as a remedy for the social upheavals caused by Meiji ‘civilization’.

During the Taisho Era (1912–1926) use of the word 文化 greatly increased. It ceased to be a peripheral concept and took on crucial significance in intellectual and wider social discourse. The diversity of its meanings and uses likewise multiplied. It became a subject widely discussed by major philosophers of the period (including Nishida Kitaro, Kuki Shuzo and Miki Kiyoshi) and the founders of Japanese folklore studies (notably Yanagida Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu). The notion of ‘popular culture’ (大衆文化 *taishūbunka*) also emerged, along with the development of consumer lifestyles. 文化 became a commercially exploitable concept, as is reflected in such phrases as 文化包丁 (*bunkabōchō* ‘cultural chef’s knife’) and 文化住宅 (*bunkajūtaku* ‘cultural residence’). This attachment of 文化 to the names of artifacts of the new consumer lifestyle was one way of emphasizing the desirable qualities of the products concerned. At the same time, there was also a significant stream of socialist thinking that sought to develop ‘proletarian culture’ as an anti-capitalist alternative.

Despite the ‘democratizing’ tendencies of the Taisho Era, the potential of 文化 as an instrument of governance had not been entirely exhausted. Indeed, as some commentators have pointed out, the development of essentialist notions of the ‘distinctive character’ of Japanese culture during the Taisho Era provided the groundwork for the subsequent development of an imperialistic state ideology in the period immediately before and during the Second World War (Pincus, 1996; Harootunian, 2000). The attempt to construct an all-embracing state-dominated social system for wartime mobilization in the 1930s encouraged the development of the idea of ‘cultural policy’ (文化政策 *bunka seisaku*). The clear definition and demarcation of a specific sphere of life as ‘culture’ facilitated its integration into a unitary and efficient system geared to military success. Such explicit definitions of 文化 tended to be extremely broad, embracing everything from education, the arts, religion, and social welfare, to information and propaganda (Miyahara, 1943). 文化 could thus fulfil the function of a totalizing concept abetting the complete integration of society under government control for a single objective.

The use of the concept of 文化 in Japan since the end of the Second World War can roughly be characterized by three aspects. First, it has continued to be linked to the concept of 'culture' as used in the social and cultural sciences, and its meaning has developed along with the continuous introduction of new theoretical approaches from Europe and North America. In the post-war period, the field of cultural anthropology (文化人類学) was established in Japan, and later in the 1990s, the fields of cultural sociology and cultural studies (文化研究) were introduced.

However, there are other uses of the term 文化 that can only be understood in the context of that word's specific history in Japan. The post-war Japanese state has deliberately used 文化 as a means of bolstering its claim to be a 'peace state' (平和国家) forever renouncing warfare. In contrast to its wartime use, 文化 is now once again employed as a counter to the image of military force, especially in diplomatic relations, where 'cultural exchanges' are a frequent feature of official contacts with other countries. Even in internal affairs, the idea of 'cultural promotion' (文化振興) has sometimes been invoked as a desirable complement to the dominant goal of economic growth. As well as seeking to present Japan as a 'peace state', official policy has promoted the related or synonymous goal of constructing a 'cultural state' (文化国家). At the end of the 1970s, under Prime Minister Ohira, a grand vision proclaiming the 'Age of Culture' (文化の時代) was formulated as a guideline for official policy-making in the aftermath of Japan's extremely successful high growth policy in the 1960s and 1970s.

A third aspect of the use of 文化 in the post-war period is the discourse known as 日本文化論 (*Nihonbunkaron*). This developed into a major genre in the commercial publishing market especially in the 1970s and the 1980s. The central theme of this discourse is the characterization of the supposedly distinctive features of Japanese 文化 as compared to the culture of other (usually American or European) countries. One could argue that this was an appropriation or internalization of the essentialist characterizations of the 'enemy culture' conducted by American anthropologists during the Pacific War. Although the content of the characterizations of Japanese culture varied little, the evaluation of these essen-

tialized characteristics changed from negative to positive as Japan developed into a major economic power (Aoki, 1990). Cultural factors came to be cited as the principal reasons for Japan's high level of economic growth. Indeed, economic success has acted as a general stimulus to cultural confidence and has encouraged government investment in cultural diplomacy (as noted above) and the founding of institutes for research on 'Japanese culture' (such as the 国際日本文化研究所 or International Institute for Japanese Studies based in the city of Kyoto and founded in the mid-1980s under Prime Minister Nakasone).

In conclusion, one can say that 文化 is still very much alive as a central concept in academic, political and popular discourse. Its meanings have ramified, absorbing most of the principal senses of 'culture' in addition to the associations of the term prior to the 20th century. Representations of 'Japanese culture' as a uniquely distinctive totality are no longer as dominant as they were in the 1980s. Discourse on 文化 has since become more diverse and less prone to essentialism. There nevertheless remains a significant latent potential for totalization and government or commercial manipulation of the 'culture' concept, no less so in Japan than elsewhere.

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Postcolonial Cultures

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Keywords contemporary cultures, hybridity, multiculturalism, postcolonialism, post-modernity

Words that bear a 'post-' as prefix defer to, but differ from, the terms they qualify. 'Postcolonial' derives its meaning from a complex relation to 'colonial', which in turn derives its significance from the sense of 'colony' as a territory annexed or controlled for settlement or profit. Motives that mixed curiosity, profit and adventure propelled Europeans after 1492 into a series of interactions with peoples previously unfamiliar to and separated from them by large expanses of ocean and land. European expansion took two forms: settlers looked for land and religious freedom, adventurers and traders looked for commercial gain. In time these interactions shaped and were shaped by differences between the belief-systems, technologies, economics, religions and cultures of Europeans and the peoples they encountered. The quest for land or profit followed a pattern in which Europe exploited relations of difference to its advantage, while the European nations competed with one another in the race for territory and dominance. Settlement and trade grew into empires. Success was the result of various combinations of aggressive enterprise, technological capability and the will to power. Modern imperialism was paralleled by three developments that reinforced the asymmetry between Europe and its colonies: the Industrial Revolution, the rise of modern capitalism, and the rationalization of the instruments of institutional management and governance. An additional factor that entered this equation in stages during the 20th century was the steady rise to power of the USA, especially after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. The conditions of inequality that subsidized empires persisted past the end of imperialism, and were often aggravated – as in the case of many African and some Asian nations – by incompetent or corrupt regimes, and dissension among constituent elements of the new nation. That is where 'post-colonial' comes in. When post-independence leadership reneged on the hopes that had subsidized anti-colonial struggles, 'postcolonial' became the sign of recognition for the inequalities that beset new nationhood after the end of colonialism

in an era of uneven industrialization and globalization. On the other hand, once nationhood had accomplished its often anti-climactic political goals, anti-colonial resistance and nationalist fervour found themselves dissipated in a celebration of diaspora, multiculturalism and hybridity, and 'postcolonial' has had to struggle to keep clear of degenerating into ethnic chic or the blandishments of 'cosmopolitan'.

Many of the preoccupations that characterize the contemporary study of 'postcolonial cultures' were anticipated at about the time that the consequences of European imperialism were diagnosed from the colonies by intellectuals such as Aimé Césaire (*Discourse on Colonialism*, 1950), Frantz Fanon (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 1952), Octave Mannoni (*Prospero and Caliban*, 1956), Albert Memmi (*The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 1957), George Lamming (*The Pleasures of Exile*, 1961), C.L.R. James (*The Black Jacobins*, 1962), Amílcar Cabral (*The Weapon of Theory*, 1966), Roberto Fernández Retamar ('Caliban', 1971), and others, who have since been canonized as formative influences on 'postcolonial studies' (Brydon, 2000). Poets from the colonies had been active on this front even earlier. The Négritude movement made an impact in Africa and the Caribbean, and acquired a wider European resonance when Jean-Paul Sartre, in the 1940s, highlighted formulations on race and writing first articulated by Césaire, Léopold Senghor and Leon Damas in the 1930s. These were meant to redress the ethnic disparagement that accompanied colonialism by reviving racial pride among the colonized. The strategy had precursors in black writing of the Harlem Renaissance, and in W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Later writers from Africa questioned the adequacy of Négritude on the grounds that it invoked an untenable form of ethnic essentialism, fell back on romantic simplifications of pre-colonial cultures, and merely inverted the binaries fostered by colonizers on the colonized. Nevertheless, the movement was the precursor for various forms of cultural nationalism that took part in the political struggle for freedom from colonial rule.

The academic invention of 'postcolonial' took place in the 1980s, as the impact of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) was assimilated by intellectuals. Fanon addressed issues of race, colonial cultures and nationalism well before 'postcolonial' acquired currency. He wrote as an activist formulating strategies from the perspective of the

imperatives of decolonization in Algeria and Africa. In contrast, Said wrote as a committed intellectual using academic scholarship to scrutinize the motives, mechanisms and effects of colonial scholarship in the complicity between knowledge and empire. Said's influence gave 'postcolonial' studies a global orientation and a base in the US academy, which rapidly overtook and assimilated the more modest growth of 'Commonwealth' studies. 'Postcolonial' studies reinforced and was reinforced by new interest in minority discourses (e.g. JanMohamed and Lloyd, 1990), and by the global development of academic curricula devoted to gender, feminism and diaspora. Cinema and music are the latest additions to this franchise, although it is too early to say who stands to profit from such liaisons. After 11 September 2001, and the death of Said, the American Right has shown signs of re-examining its academic investment in 'postcolonial studies'. Meanwhile, writers have consistently resisted the association of their work with 'postcolonial', with the argument that such terms tend to homogenize difference, simplify complexity, misdirect reading and perpetrate a new form of conceptual colonization that pushes writers into a cultural ghetto at the behest of academics struggling to place themselves closer to the centre by promoting the margins of post-imperial cultures.

In a more constructive sense, 'postcoloniality' functions as a period concept which marks the gap separating the formation of nation from the maturation of new social formations relatively free of cultural cringe. As a name for a predicament, it represents the phase of writing in which cultural identity foregrounds itself as a historical problem. 'Postcoloniality' as a state of mind occurs and recurs in individuals and communities whenever the ambivalent energies of their colonial legacy are shaped by, or give shape to, their writing. In a third sense, 'postcoloniality' provides a contingent name for the internalization of asymmetries, an ongoing process in which native inhabitants and non-European migrants struggle to find voice and representation within the cultural dynamics of a settler country. This sense addresses the issue of how cultural productions react to the marginalization imposed by dominant groups on other members or groups within their society on the basis of racial prejudice, as in the case of the Native Americans, Australian aborigines, New Zealand Māori, and Africans under apartheid. The suffixes '-ism' and '-ity' entail different connotations. Graham Huggan distinguishes between 'postcolonialism' as a form of 'anti-colonial intellectualism', and 'postcoloniality' as a mechanism within 'the global late-capitalist system of commodity exchange' (2001: 6). Robert Young

promotes 'postcolonialism' in respect to 'the political ideals of community, equality, self-determination and dignity' (2002: ix). When used in this way, the term links decolonization with bipolar struggles against oppression, injustice, discrimination or prejudice, but it also risks diluting a pathology of the cultural cringe with a secular ethics that is at once both politically correct and aesthetically bland. Aijaz Ahmad (1992), among others, has objected to 'postcolonial' for foregrounding colonial history and neglecting class and the economics of capitalism, observing that a large body of writing and cultural production during colonial and post-independence histories focuses on issues of specific and local concern, with little or no reference to the motifs prioritized by 'postcolonial studies'. But feminism has found its strategic suspicion of dominative modes useful in refining perceptions that gender as a social construct is a varied phenomenon, not to be homogenized under a western rubric (e.g. Mohanty et al., 1991; Trinh, 1989).

The narrow sense of 'postcolonial' confines it to a period concept, which refers to developments that followed European colonialism. This is now a very small part of the story. The dissolution of empire was a gradual process. Dates commemorating political independence only indicate key moments in the more gradual change from dependency to autonomy, or from national hubris to post-imperial detumescence. Moreover, new political realities did not necessarily coincide with changes in culture and society, nor ensure a steady progress towards modernity, peace or prosperity. Therefore 'postcolonial' has acquired a wider connotation. Whether we describe culture as a form of 'having' or a form of 'doing', or some kind of dynamic relation between the two notions, a culture may be described as postcolonial wherever, and for as long as, a nation or a people or a set of individuals suffers its colonial past as a legacy that mixes partial empowerment with partial disablement in respect to the habits of thought and feeling that determine cultural practices and produce cultural artifacts. The broader sense of 'postcolonial' implies awareness of the ways in which modes of thought and belief learned through colonial history continue to affect cultures after the formal collapse of empires. It turns to cultural productions and practices for an imprint of, and a reaction to, the residual force of colonialism on societies whose contemporary history is shaped by asymmetrical patterns of modernization, industrialization and globalization.

The colonizer-colonized polarity implicit in 'postcolonial' is met with a caveat. In 1992, Anne McClintock worried that the term 'reduces the cultures of peoples beyond colonialism to

prepositional time', that it 'signals a reluctance to surrender the privilege of seeing the world in terms of a singular and ahistorical abstraction', and that 'Political differences *between* cultures are thereby subordinated to the temporal distance *from* European colonialism' (1992: 86–7). The degree to which nations are overshadowed by their colonial pasts, their incipient nationhood is indeed prepositional. Her second and third worries reinforce the need for those who use the term to avoid homogenizing diversity and difference along a single axis related to Europe, and the need to recognize the ways in which lateral relations between the various ex-colonies are as important in cultural terms as vertical relations between former colonizers and the ex-colonized. Another worry about the broader connotation of the term is that it can claim to cover a disparate variety of situations: 'Does the post indicate the perspective and location of the ex-colonized (Algerian), the ex-colonizer (French), the ex-colonial settler (Pied Noir), or the displaced hybrid in First World metropolitans (Algerians in France)?', asked Ella Shohat (1992: 104). Her anxiety can be allayed only when those who use the term in its broad sense distinguish carefully between the contingent logic for each specific application.

Despite such misgivings, and in the short period of two decades, the idea of 'postcolonial cultures' has become extended – some say, distended – in scope. It currently includes reference to any ex-colonial society which gives evidence of asymmetry in respect to power (over the canons and organs of knowledge, belief and practice), access (to outlets and audiences for the production of cultural artifacts), or recognition (from peers, consumers and empowering institutions such as the state, media and educational apparatuses). The idea is applied to multicultural as well as monocultural societies, and to the features that complicate such distinctions (e.g. English/French Canadian cultures). It is used to refer to the cultural changes in former colonizers (e.g. sonnets and serials on the British Raj), in the formerly colonized (e.g. cricket in the Caribbean), to the relation between them (e.g. Dub poetry in Black Britain), to the infiltration of one by the other (e.g. Parisian Beur culture, the culture of censorship in relation to the music of Mzwakhe Mbuli), or to internalizations of the colonial relation (e.g. natives in the Americas, aborigines in Australia, Māori in New Zealand, coloured and black people under apartheid). In general, 'post-colonial studies' proposes diagnoses that might redress 'transculturation', the process whereby marginal or subordinate groups can only 'select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture' (Pratt, 1992: 6).

The study of 'postcolonial cultures' gives particular emphasis to the ethico-political dimension that links the ideas of 'postcolonial' and 'post-modern' societies: hybridization. Homi Bhabha expands the connotations:

Hybridization is not some happy, consensual mix of diverse cultures; it is the strategic, translational transfer of tone, value, signification, and position – a transfer of power – from an authoritative system of cultural hegemony to an emergent process of cultural relocation and reiteration that changes the very terms of interpretation and institutionalization, opening up contesting, opposing, innovative, 'other' grounds of subject and object formation. It is this double consciousness that produces what I call the *vernacular cosmopolitanism* of the postcolonial or minoritarian subject. It is a mode of living, and a habit of mind, that seeks cultural translation, not to recover the norms of universality, autonomy, and sovereignty, but to assert that there is a positive, agential value in the whole process of surviving domination that can add an edge, a cutting edge, to the critiques – contra neoliberalism or retro-Marxist – that come from those who have been displaced or marginalized on the grounds of their cultural, civilizational, or, as it is often described, moral and spiritual backwardness. (2000: 370)

In all its forms the idea of 'postcolonial cultures' refracts cultural change through the lens of displacement. Translation between languages becomes a metaphor for the translation of beliefs, values and practices between cultures. Linguistic displacement becomes an allegory for exile and diaspora. At its widest, the oppressive and exploitative dimension of colonialism provides 'postcolonial' with an application that takes in every form of victimization perpetrated by custom, prejudice or ideology on grounds of belief, gender, sexual preference, religious persuasion, or linguistic and ethnic affiliation.

However, there is a sense in which the currency of the term needs to meet with a natural datedness. The first British colony to break free from its colonial status was the USA. The formation of nation managed to avoid or evade the appellation of 'postcolonial' in a manner that has implications for other former colonies. There must come a time when 'postcolonial' ceases to be a term always open-ended about the receding future it recognizes as the plight of those it describes. For that future to stop receding there would have to come a time when a society could look on its colonial and postcolonial pasts as the assumed ground on which to live and continue changing

without being overshadowed or constrained by that history. In the United States, Noah Webster proposed an 'American standard' for language as early as 1789, and the *American Spelling Book* (1783) was selling a million copies a year by the 1850s (in a US population of about 23 million), before Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was published in 1855, 80 years after the American declaration of independence (and in the same year as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's far more traditional *Hiawatha*). The example suggests that the 'postcoloniality' of any culture may be identified as a moment of gradual and complex 'cross over'. However suspended or drawn out this moment may be, it is possible for peoples, nations and cultures to conceive of a time when the crossing is finally over. In that sense, the idea of 'postcolonial' cultures is contingent and provisional, like a ladder that has to be drawn up when the climbing is done, or a name that is meant to become a misnomer.

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Cultural Diversity

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Keywords collective identity, cosmopolitanism, cultural goods and services, cultural policy, international relations, multiculturalism, politics of recognition

The contemporary wave of culturalism has transformed the notion of cultural diversity from a given of the human condition – and the stuff of anthropology – into a normative meta-narrative, whether culture is seen as 'the ground of perpetual, irreducible (and, in most cases, desirable and worth conscious preservation) diversity of human kind' (Bauman, 1992) or in terms of 'the conscious mobilization of cultural differences in

the service of a larger national or transnational politics' (Appadurai, 1996: 15). While the culturalism is patently global, the discourses of cultural diversity as a policy ideal have been generated principally in Europe and North America and appear to have their strongest purchase there.

Everywhere, though, understandings of cultural diversity as a strategic notion tend to favour 'billiard ball' representations of cultures as neatly bounded wholes whose contents are given and static – hence mainly to be 'protected' or 'preserved'. These understandings downplay 'the ways in which the meanings and symbols of culture are produced through complex processes of translation, negotiation and enunciation' (Stevenson, 2003: 62), as well as by contestation and conflict.

The notion has also been rather specifically connoted: in the United States, for example, it was a code word throughout the 1960s and 1970s for the recognition of the civil rights of Afro-Americans; as Appiah (1987) has suggested, the call of collective identities expressed in American 'multiculturalism' is much less a reflection of 'culture' than an expression of the individual's concern for dignity and respect. It is only recently that the term has become the handmaiden of a 'multiculturalism' that seeks to celebrate the full variegation of American society. And the 21st century has introduced yet another special coding: 'cultural diversity' in international cultural politics is the standard-bearer of a campaign to exclude cultural goods and services from global free trade rules.

Once a technical term deployed by the social sciences, the term 'culture' itself has escaped all academic control and has undergone a marked inflation of usages. 'Culture' is now proclaimed as an inalienable 'right', conceived of as a value in itself, and justified as an inherited 'tradition'. It has entered the repertoires of discourses and strategies deployed by 'imagined communities' at different levels – from the activism of minorities, religious sodalities and local groups to the 'cultural policies' of nation-states. Perceived as threatened by a dominant source of 'civilization', the values of different ways of life have risen to consciousness and have become the rallying cry of diverse claims to a space in the planetary culture. 'Before, culture was just lived. Now it has become a self-conscious collective project. Every struggle for life becomes the struggle of a way of life' (Sahlins, 1994: 11).

It was in this spirit that the notion of cultural diversity was given international political legitimacy by the World Commission on Culture and Development, of whose report, entitled *Our Creative Diversity* (UNESCO, 1996), it was the leitmotif. The notion also dominates the cultural policy lexicon in Europe; the Council of Europe has issued a Declaration on it and it is foregrounded in the cultural rhetoric of the European Union. As a counterpart to the idea of a European cultural identity, built on the assumption of a shared history and common 'roots', the diversity of its cultures is proclaimed as one of the defining, if not unique, merits of European civilization (the idea was actually first mooted by the great French historian François Guizot a century and a half ago). The European Union has even adopted 'the unity of diversities' as its slogan. The principle of subsidiarity protecting this diversity gives the Union only complementary or residual competence for cultural policy, leaving the main responsibility at the level of national governments (EFAH, 2004). Yet over five decades ago, 'unity and diversity' was already the motto of

the newly-formed Republic of India. But in this usage, the term merely recognized the empirical plurality of the sub-continental nation's constituent parts rather than being an overt celebration of its cultural variety; this factual usage is replicated frequently elsewhere in the non-Western world.

While the conscious mobilization of collective cultural differences and concomitant claims to the recognition of cultural rights are worldwide phenomena, the elevation of cultural diversity to the status of a value in itself and its use as a 'buzzword' in the popular lexicon have been largely Western. Within nations, the accent has begun to shift from policies with a nationalist and homogenizing cast to the acceptance and even active promotion of cultural differences, as post-colonial developments force societies to address the challenge of articulating and mediating a sense of separate as well as shared space for diverse cultural communities (Bennett, 2001). Thus, the term is now commonly deployed with a view to supporting the 'right to be different' of many different categories of individuals/groups placed in some way outside dominant social and cultural norms, hence including disabled people, gays and lesbians, women, as well as the poor and the elderly. And yet, the predominant emphasis – particularly outside the West – is on ethnic differences and the affirmations of ethnic minorities in the face of dominant majorities and/or the homogenizing tendencies of 'national' cultures. But even these affirmations are diverse, as Bennett has pointed out. They include, first, sub- or multi-national communities (the Basques or the Sri Lanka Tamils, for example) that dispute the homogenizing tendencies of national cultures, but do so on the basis of essentially similar strategies by articulating a set of associations between a territory, its people and their culture which competes with that of the dominant national culture. Second, autochthonous communities, ethnically marked, that are the result of earlier movements of peoples or boundaries. Third, diasporic cultures, produced in association with the histories of displaced peoples, involving mobile international cultural networks operating across, and offering an alternative to, the territorial logic of national cultures. Finally, indigenous cultures developed in the context of resistance to colonial occupation that typically contest national mappings of the relations between people, culture, history and territory by mobilizing deeper and longer histories.

In Europe, the topical challenge is posed by the claims to difference associated with the international movement of – mainly non-European – peoples. This has brought articulations of ethnic difference into the public sphere, rather than relegating them to the private sphere alone, an

issue that has become a key stake in the re-composition of the notion of ‘national’ culture and identity. How is difference heard in the public sphere and what are the strategies, social objectives and recognition goals sought by its actors (Wieviorka and Ohana, 2001)? We are in the midst of a polarized policy debate. On the one hand, the classic liberal position, which posits the primacy of the individual and her/his identity over collective belonging and restricts the affirmation of the latter to the private sphere. On the other, the communitarian approach which sees individual identity as the product of community. As an increasing number of individuals opt for the right to choose the markers and roles they use to construct their identities, how are the claims of equality and citizenship to be reconciled with the claims of difference? The challenge of including diversity within the national public sphere can also help question the ‘national’ culture itself and develop new understandings about its increasingly inter-ethnic and inter-racial composition.

There is an increasingly visible discourse of according respect and value to different cultures that now coexist within national civic communities. Such liberal forms of ‘multiculturalism’, however, may well aestheticize difference through the cosmetic celebration of cultural diversity; they may reify difference at the expense of the new patterns of interaction which might arise from their mixing and intermingling (Bennett, 2004). How to nurture relationships of difference that avoid such pitfalls? What are the forms of intercultural competence – both mutual translation and dialogic interchange – that this would require? Enabling all the groups that henceforth constitute the national community to assume ownership of its composite cultural identity remains a major challenge for policy-makers. This is not simply a matter of combating intolerance and exclusion, but also of giving dignity, voice and recognition in the public sphere to different cultural groups while constructing – negotiating – a sense of national community. How can we forge societies that are truly pluralistic yet possess a shared sense of belonging? What can states do to help different cultural communities live together as one national community? Are current policies and practices effective in promoting attitudes and values that encourage mutual respect? How should policies and institutions evolve so as to better respond to the needs of diverse societies? Can national identity be defined so that all communities may identify with the country and its self-definition?

This entry would be incomplete without a reference to the latest avatar of the notion, its current transubstantive reduction, through a subtle process of semantic sleight of hand, to the

issue of cultural goods and services. In this guise, the term emerged at the turn of the present century, as an alternative to the limited and somewhat negative connotations of the ‘*exception culturelle*’ that France, Canada and other nations had been negotiating since the end of the Uruguay Round discussions in the mid-1990s. When the United States attempted to make free trade principles apply to all ‘cultural goods’, principally their own audiovisual exports, in the context of a debate over the European Union’s broadcasting directive Television Without Frontiers, France countered with the argument that a ‘cultural exception’ was necessary because culture was not just another type of merchandise. The shift from exception to diversity as the master concept allowed French international diplomacy to tap into a much broader range of cultural commitments and anxieties in international relations. Thus, UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted in 2001, was the successful outcome of a vigorous Franco-Canadian strategy. Article 8, which is entitled ‘Cultural goods and services: commodities of a unique kind’, states:

In the face of present-day economic and technological change, opening up vast prospects for creation and innovation, particular attention must be paid to the diversity of the supply of creative work, to due recognition of the rights of authors and artists and to the specificity of cultural goods and services which, as vectors of identity, values and meaning, must not be treated as mere commodities or consumer goods.

Although the Declaration contains 11 other articles that address the policy challenges of cultural diversity in a much more comprehensive way (including many of the issues discussed above), its main strategic purpose, clearly, was to legitimize policy measures taken by national governments to protect nationally produced cultural goods and services. This is also the main purpose of the ‘Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions’ that was adopted in October 2005 by UNESCO; it is the sense in which many individuals, non-governmental organizations, cultural activists and government officials strategically use the term today.

The principle is laudable. The goal is to foster the dynamism of contemporary cultural production rather than play a preservationist role. Yet this new international trope is also built upon unquestioned, undeconstructed discourses of nationhood. Precisely because its object is cultural diversity among nations rather than within them, it brings us little closer to a truly cosmopolitan agenda.

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Violence

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Abstract Violence is spoken of in several senses but its most basic definition, as a force exerted by one thing on another, harbors serious problems, especially when it comes to a consideration of its source or cause. We begin this article by identifying some of the aporias of violence with reference to philosophical and religious discourses and then we go on to analyze how violence problematizes concepts of law and justice in world historical contexts. We examine several traditions including Indo-European mythology, as well as Hindu, Taoist, and ancient Greek philosophy, before addressing the concept of violence in modern thought, as a revision of Christianity. We conclude with some discussion of epistemological violence and its critics.

Keywords epistemological violence, force, human, justice, knowledge, law, religion, sacrifice

Introduction

We speak of violence in several senses: physical, psychological, emotional and conceptual. Most immediately, though (and in that sense most violently), it is said to erupt among people in motivated personal or political struggles, sometimes irrationally, criminally, unexpectedly; in any event, violence leaves its victims in shock or lying wounded or dead. Ubiquitous 24-hour news services report an almost continuous narrative of the multiple events of violence that at any one time are occurring globally. Violence, in this immediate sense, can be the result of natural catastrophes, terrorism, demonstration, rioting or revolt, state policing, military conflict, various kinds of warfare, major offensives, strategic assaults or domestic abuse. This immediate sense of the notion of violence is itself violent. Considered as a category of global knowledge, violence can erupt as the spectacular instance of underlying conditions, complex and often unobserved political negotiations and uncontrolled, incalculable effects. Identifying the causes of violence in certain ways – determining an instance of violence as the consequence of this or that motive or ideology – can itself be regarded as a kind of violence, which would be manifested when a determination is acted upon (e.g. in the form of a retaliation or deterrence), leading to conceptions of justified violence, necessary violence, sufficient force, etc. Violence, in this immediate sense, *escalates*. There is no doubt that the last 150 years *have* seen an escalation of violence in terms at least of the sheer numbers of a global, increasingly urban, population who have been or who are currently (at any time) the victims of the several causes of violence. Simply identifying the empirical escalation of violence does nothing to solve the *problem* of violence, which is as old, it seems, as the race itself.

So violence would seem to be an empirical phenomenon yet questions arise as to its origin, its source. The empirical (materialist or formalist) concepts of violence have proven to be wholly inadequate to any attempt to think through violence as an epistemological category. Traditionally the problem falls into the disjuncture between empirical and transcendental determinations, as if perhaps there was a transcendental (traditionally a divine and thus unconditioned) force before and beyond experience. In his book, *Religion and Violence: Philosophical Perspectives from Kant to Derrida*, Hent de Vries (2002: 1) offers a basic and inclusive

definition of violence as entailing ‘any cause, any justified or illegitimate force, that is exerted – physically or otherwise – by one thing (event or instance, group or person, and, perhaps, word and object) on another’. As inclusive as it is, the definition harbors a serious problem, which becomes one of the main strands of the book. The definition of violence as ‘force’, or at least the concept of force as violence, presupposes a relation between more than one, and thus a potential *play*, or worse, *opposition*, of forces. Violence as a condition of possibility is thus presupposed by any act of force. Any *real* violence (physical, psychological, social, etc.) might seem to presuppose an ideal (a priori or transcendental) violence – or even a radical non-violence. Yet the reverse is true as well: the thought of violence seems necessarily constrained by circumstances, contained by history.

Attempts to engage with the aporias of violence through the (evidently considerable) remaining resources of religion and philosophy address an important aspect of global knowledge. The problem, conceived in this way, is widespread and fundamental. It concerns not only questions of personal and social justice, government, international relations and international law, but also – more fundamentally perhaps – the very constitution of knowledge itself in its concepts and modes of classification. In what follows we make some observations about violence and global knowledge and then go on to analyze how violence problematizes concepts of law and justice in several world historical contexts. We then return to the question of epistemological violence as a contemporary concern of global knowledge.

The problem of knowledge is inextricable from the problem of violence. To speak of epistemological violence in the 21st century might feel almost tautological. When the dominant strands of scientific, but especially technological, knowledge have not only served but also – perhaps more significantly – *driven* the development of military epistemologies and technologies, then one cannot talk of knowledge without evoking violence. Even beyond the evident military sphere, mainstream scientific and technical knowledge can be analyzed as a kind of legitimating force, which not only produces the legitimate bounds of a particular branch of knowledge, but also classifies knowledge generally, relegating, domesticating or even subjugating alternative kinds of knowledge. In this way, for instance, the traditional discourses of Orientalism (in policy, commerce and scholarship) can be said to characterize, through several kinds of representation often in the guise of scientific objectivity, an Orient that replaces – literally stands in stead of – anything that might have been produced as Oriental knowledge as such. These representations are all the more powerful for their combining of scorn and hypostatization, which produces the hallucination of a fully formed *relationship*. *Orientalism*, in this sense (and to the extent that this argument is valid), would only become a *knowledge* in the deepest sense of the term with the *acknowledgement* of the violence of these projections. It seems, then, that knowledge, according to traditional, even ancient, principles, ought to be *opposed to* violence. Nevertheless the problem of violence is considerably more complex than such ideals allow.

Theories of Violence

The word violence is associated with two kinds of terminology; it participates in at least two registers. If it belongs with the lexical series – force, power, *polemos*, *eris*, etc. – then it does so where this register is no longer distinguishable from an ethical or political register: *polites*, *praxis*, law, right, rules, respect, duty and justice. Violence is the term, it seems, that causes the most confusion between these registers. For instance, *Dike*, justice, for the Greeks, whether conceived as right, trial, penalty or vengeance, is identified with a kind of *Eris*, discord or conflict, and thus with *adikia*, injustice. Justice thus presupposes a certain notion of violence, both in the condition that calls for justice and the just response to that call.

A generally applicable pattern can be traced across situations otherwise constrained by their historical conditions. What this pattern manifests each time it emerges is an aporia that resides at the heart of conceptions about violence. Violence is perceived, always, as excessive to some stable principle, condition, or state of affairs (e.g. the Law). But this excess also makes justice possible as a necessary action over and above whatever conditions prevail. Such a situation

then gives rise to a concept of present justice that remains beyond, or exceeds, the Law. All attempts to establish justice, therefore, aim either to revise existing laws or to establish laws not yet in existence. No such attempt would escape violence.

For this reason violence is singled out as a problem or question during times of perceived crisis. For instance, European models of parliamentary democracy, which are regularly confronted by crisis, also regularly fail to overcome the aporia that functions as their ground. Crises and their responses emerge in the forms, variously, of revolutions, world wars, both liberal and fascist discourses, pre- and post-war failures of pacifism, anti-militarism, as well as intellectual or scholarly attempts to form judgments about, critiques of, violence, including state political violence. The problem of non-violence is that its ends are the foundation of new laws or re-interpretation of existing ones on principles that do not yet exist (for it will be the task of the new laws to justify the principles of their founding). Walter Benjamin's (1996) example of the general strike in 'Critique of Violence [*Gewalt* – also legitimate force]' finds a logic there similar to that which grounds the idea of the proletariat revolution. Laws are founded in violence (always and everywhere) just as all attempts to contest, rewrite, re-found – whether in the name of justice in general or on behalf of some identifiable party or parties – are also made in the moment of violence.

Violence also defines the human subject as a possible subject of violence, injustice, or even lack of respect. But this is the result of a peculiar metaphysical and anthropocentric axiomatic that presupposes a hierarchy even within the category *man* – as, for instance, male, European, citizen, capable of sacrifice and omnivorous. Again, this conception is both historically specific and also, in critical terms, a resource for considerations of performative justice in the light of the aporia that it exemplifies.

Attempts to distinguish justice from violence tend to reproduce the distinction between foundation(s) and end(s). The Greek notion of the founding violence of law can be uneasily compared with Jewish notions of divine, destructive, annihilating violence; there are equivalent notions of founding violence in the Indo-European tradition, and in Islam. In each case these notions of founding violence are coupled with catastrophic ends: the last judgment, divine positioning, *telos* and *eschatos* (the end of hope in death and the final destiny of the race). In concrete political terms the metaphysics of origin and end becomes the pragmatic distinction of means and ends, where one can be justified only in reference to the other (the ends justify the means or the means justify the ends). Aristotle's distinction between legitimate force and criminal violence presupposes a law governed constitution (*politeia*) that has been founded. The good of that (arbitrary) foundation must, however, be distinguished from the arbitrary and impetuous acts that characterize crimes. The power of a King must therefore remain outside the Kingdom, so that it is best that the sovereign acts as warrior as opposed to governor, for here the distinction resolves into that between justice and tyranny.

Examples from many times and geographical spaces reveal the emergence of horizons like these and their deconstruction: the enlightenment *idea* (whether in repetition of or distinguished from the Platonic one); various forms of Messianism (Jewish, Christian, Islamic); eschatology and teleology. As Jacques Derrida (2002) suggests in 'The Force of Law: The Mystical Foundations of Authority', the aporia of justice lies in the fact that the requirement to be just falls between a violent founding and the horizon of a present justice, always *to come* (in the French, '*avenir*' – or future). The requirements of both justice and law are excessive but each exceeds itself to the extent that it appeals to the other: law exceeds itself in an appeal to justice; justice exceeds itself in its appeal to law. If the Law is founded in violence, then justice, insofar as it is distinguished from the law, would always be called on to reinterpret or adjust the law as it currently stands, or to found a new one entirely, whose justification is written mysteriously in the future anterior of its moment of violence. So what the law most fears in its other is what resides in itself.

The Traditions

The nexus of might and right (force and law) cannot be easily disentangled. In a famous work on Indo-European mythology, George Dumézil (n.d.) traces the complementary and complicated relationship between violence and law as essential dimensions for the justification of sovereignty. Using a comparative, synchronic, structuralist model of cultural-historical analysis that has come under severe critique, Dumézil nevertheless provides us with examples of a need to reconcile the relationship between force and justice operative in a diverse range of chronological, cultural moments. Taking the Vedic texts as one site of inquiry, Dumézil argues that ancient states did not rely on war to justify and maintain sovereignty per se, that is state sponsored violence against other states to perpetuate internal legitimacy, but rather used internal policing through the law as well as magic for its claims to rule. Violence in state form, according to Dumézil, was almost exclusively an internal matter. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 352) argue, the channeling of the force that is violence through an apparatus such as the military is almost always external to the state and is not reducible to the state. The Vedic texts delineate a complex relationship of gods through which Indra, the warrior god, stands in opposition to both the State-as-Law and State-as-Spirit. He is responsible for keeping the earth and heavens apart. As such, Indra embodies violent forces that are both destructive and beneficent while also demarcating the divide between sacred and secular realms. Similarly, the Dhanur Veda, which provides martial instruction, contains both sacred knowledge and profane knowledge. Violence, in the Vedic texts, is external and internal to the state, harnessed in the form of a military for conflict with other states and in the form of the police (within the *polis*) when exerting internal control. As such, it is both related to justice in metaphysical (religious, sacred) and physical (secular, legalistic) rationales.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* is perhaps most famous as a parable of violence in defense of a philosophy of non-violence. One of the books of the great *Mahabharata* and a corner stone of Hindu philosophy, the *Gītā* begins with a moment just before a scene of battle, where Arjuna, the Kshatria warrior prince, is filled with doubt when he realizes that his enemies on the battlefield are to be family, friends, and beloved teachers. On seeking advice from Lord Krishna, Arjuna learns through dialogue the main tenets of the Yoga School. The *yoga* of knowledge (*jnāna*) and the *yoga* of good works (*karma*) are to be integrated under the *yoga* of devotion (*bhakti*), with the aim of cultivating an ethical state of selfless duty, in which actions have no reference to personal loss or gain. In the *Gītā* Krishna's teaching begins with the analogy (based upon the widespread belief in the transmigration of souls) that, 'just as a man casting off worn-out clothes takes up others that are new, so the embodied self, casting off its worn-out bodies, goes to other, new ones' (*Bhagavad Gītā* 2.22). The notion of the absolute immutability of the *ātman*, the essential self, justifies Arjuna's leadership in a battle that will destroy thousands of his loved ones on the grounds that only the bodies of his enemies will suffer and die. Their essential selves will not be harmed. The body, as the parable suggests, is anyway the site of inevitable suffering, ultimate decay and death. Krishna's teaching defines the eternal state in terms of devotion or duty: Arjuna's involvement in a just war is confirmed as a devotional act, to the extent that his actions will be violently opposed to his inclinations, motivated not by passion but by duty alone. The metaphysical scheme is unmistakable and, as such, reveals the philosophy behind it to be an affirmation of a non-violence in the radical sense as devotion to principles whose source lies beyond the physical world. Mahatma Gandhi's famous reading of the *Gītā* draws on its spiritual implications in order to support his philosophy of struggle through non-violence. Gandhi argued that the war of the *Mahabharata* was allegory for the general experience of conflict and could thus be applied to the specific struggle against British colonial rule. And so by means of non-violent civil disobedience, Gandhi sought to bring about India's independence from British rule, and in doing so, contributed hugely to the British Empire's collapse.

It may be that violence in its logical form serves as a hinge both joining and distinguishing heterogeneous entities, ensembles, registers or concepts. But this *hinge* would always be an eruption. Violence breaks out or erupts, revealing retrospective violence at the heart of the

law while simultaneously establishing a new just law to come for which it lays the violent grounds. Some of the most violent actions – as well as actions that have the most violent effects – are in principle non-violent, but in these cases it is the principle of non-violence that decides against the performative excess of justice in its possibility.

Two extremes emerge, between which all combinations are possible and many common. On one side, violence is never just and the law should never be violent. Violence, at this extreme, always comes into a world that is already governed by laws, for against mythology neither the force that precedes law, nor that which the law must harness for the administration of its justice, would generally have been considered violent. *Violenta* is marked not only by its vehemence and impetuosity, but also by its lawlessness. Physical force would be recognized as violence according to both the rapidity of its eruptions and the damage it inflicts on persons or properties and, in not necessarily physical ways, on other lawfully governed or protected entities (language, grammar, mores, sensibilities, morals, etc.). Justice is always called upon by a world that is already (and thus perhaps imperfectly) governed by laws. Both violence and justice come into the world as if from the outside. In this account there can be no just violence.

Related to this conception would be the Taoist principle according to which human life is a partial and very minor manifestation of the larger process of nature. The only justifiable human actions are those which are in accord with the patterns and flows of Nature – the Tao or the Way. Taoism rejects any principle that would lead to excessively assertive modes of behavior or commitment to the achievement of worldly goals. Assertiveness against nature (or unnatural assertiveness) is the root cause of violence and aggression. If Confucius offered moral reasons to counsel against violence and to urge rulers to govern by virtue rather than by force, then Taoism takes the Confucian principle further and denounces violence as reflecting the ultimate ignorance of the Way of Nature. The distinction between the excesses of human action and the mysterious foundation of natural law is not uncommon. At the other extreme, violence can be justified as natural at the origin. A basic violence outside the world of laws (Mythology, Darwin, Natural Law) precedes the establishment of governed communities. Law is an appropriation of violence and can be opposed by violence. In this case it is argued that there can be just violence.

In the Greek tradition, which is itself formed in complex transactions between Middle Eastern and south Asian traditions, Violence is personified as part of a family group along with several other ethical/political terms. *Nike* (victory) is, according to Hesiod, the sister of three powerful siblings: *Zelos* (Rivalry), *Kratos* (Strength) and *Bia* (Violence and Force). In the Promethean myth it was *Bia* who, together with *Cratos* and *Hephaestus*, chained Prometheus to the rock. *Bia* and *Dike*, in the early archaic periods, are cast as enemies of one another. But as the fragment from Pindar makes clear, later periods found them co-existing under the sovereignty of *nomos* (the rule, law) with each justifying and supporting the other. The same principle is found in Heraclitus (n.d.). Hesiod, however, sought to separate them from one another and, in fact, used this separation as a means for separating humans from animals. Animals could deploy *Bia* because they did not possess *Dike*, but Zeus bestowed *Dike* upon humans so they could forget *Bia*. Thus Agamben observes that, ‘the sovereign *nomos* is the principle that, joining law and violence, threatens them with indistinction’ (Agamben, 1998: 31).

A famous saying of the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus (500 BC) establishes a complex reference for considerations of violence: ‘War is the father of all, king of all: some it shows as gods, some as men; some it makes slaves’. Taking Heraclitus as an early proponent of war, in the face of common-sensical empirical experience of it, Porphyry attributes to him the notion that humans provide the judgment of the enactment of force, which in the eyes of the gods (or God) merely is, neither good nor bad. Violence then is amoral, insofar as it is merely a type of energy, or a force, of the universe that is part of what is necessary for being. But for Heraclitus, this energy, which is best embodied as fire, is ‘intelligent’ and capable of judgment itself. He writes that fire ‘will come and judge and convict all things’ (1987: 104). The universe – itself finite and infinite, divisible and indivisible – is ‘generated from fire and it is consumed

in fire again, alternating in fixed periods throughout the whole of time' (1987: 107). Anticipating in some specific ways the Materialist thought of Hobbes, Heraclitus asserts that 'We must know that war is common to all and strife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife.' The force of the universe, in this early philosophy, is simultaneously creative and destructive. But contra Porphyry's reading of Heraclitus, force embodies and enacts justice. So the force of the universe that manifests itself as violence or fire is part of the infinite in the universe necessary for the existence of all things and beings but which wreaks strife and despair in the finite world of humans, from which and for which we seek explanation and judgment. According to Heraclitus, though, judgment resides in the force that results in and is violence. And in this manner, Heraclitus anticipates Nietzsche's discussion of the force of being as 'the will to power', which is also a will to interpretation and evaluation (or judgment). Violence has long held the aura and enigmatic power of both divine and secular law.

After Plato, philosophical treatises on justice and violence eschew the suggestive force (and potential violence) of myth. In Book V of *The Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle addresses much of what is at stake in considerations of violence and justice, by claiming the right to use force as a legislative principle of constitutional government (*politeia*). Following and developing motifs of the *Ethics*, a key text in discussions of political justice, *The Politics* distinguishes from an at once ideal and historical necessity in sovereignty, a progressive and developmental necessity for replacing sovereignty with constitutional (and contingent) politics. It is here where Aristotle definitively rejects democracy as a tyrannous form of constitutional government, which allows the violent principle of sovereignty back into the civilized state. The concept of violence once again distinguishes the citizens of a constitution, who are never women, children, slaves, animals or plants.

Immanuel Kant (1991, 1996), in the name of Enlightenment, outlines the passage from the state of nature to constitutional government as both the distinction between, and the continuity of, founding force against the state of nature and rational law against criminal violence. States in an international arena thus repeat the natural situation of individual men in a natural arena. Just community is always to come – it is one of reason's ideas. Kant's idea for a universal history has its ethical correlative in the categorical imperative, according to which I must act as if the maxim for my action could, by my will alone, become a universal law in analogy with natural laws. Several scholars have identified points of comparison between Kant's metaphysics of morals and the *Bhagavad Gītā*, which is suggestive, so long as we acknowledge that for Kant the analogy is a *regulative* ideal, and thus a hypothetical horizon of present justice to come.

Violence and Sacrifice

The texts of widely varying traditions reveal a strong link between violence and the sacred (and, by extension, secular law and metaphysical justice). The most apparent form of this link, perhaps, can be found in the sacrifice. René Girard (1979: 14–19) argues that sacrifice serves as a means of staving off violence by redirecting it toward a victim incapable of seeking vengeance, an initial act of violence that seeks to prevent an escalation of it. Religious sacrifice as a means for containing human violence yielded to the secular Law in later societies, and the judicial system (always somewhat derivative for its authority on Divine Law) takes over the mantle of ritualized violence within the State apparatus. Girard argues further an exteriority of violence in relation to humans, much as Heraclitus asserted it as a force operative in the universe. Because violence is exterior to humans, Girard (1979: 31) writes, it is a 'part of all the other outside forces that threaten mankind. Violence is the heart and the secret soul of the sacred. We have yet to learn how man succeeds in positing his own violence as an independent being'. Violence's exteriority, then, connects it to the sacred and through the containment of it in the form of sacrifice, humans perform a sacred ritual.

The three great monotheistic religions each include the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son, only to have God intervene and stay his hand. The early tribes of Israel would seem to have positioned their belief in relation to sacrifice, much as each of the monotheistic

traditions has had to address the relationship between sacrifice and murder. The crucifixion of Jesus has been read by many as a sacrifice to end all sacrifices; the son of God is also the Lamb of God, or the sacrificial lamb. Nevertheless, the question of sacrifice is amongst the deepest questions of ontology.

The problem, in the peculiar (and fecund) form it takes in the western critical tradition, culminates in Hegel's philosophy (1948, 1977). Hegel's early theological works (written between 1795 and 1800) manifest the mature systematic philosophy in rudimentary form. There, the concept of sacrifice plays the role of removing a prior violence: the violence of irreconcilable division. In Hegel's account, Abraham founds the history of the Jewish people and thus inaugurates a dialectical process. In emancipating his people from slavery Abraham institutes a singular relation to his (the Hebrew) God and at the same time establishes a fundamental and hostile division between the Jewish nation and the rest of the world. Abraham encounters foreign people as he encounters nature: as a wandering stranger, destined to remain in absolute opposition: 'he was a stranger on earth, a stranger to the soil and to men alike' (Hegel, 1948: 186). This foreignness particularly characterizes his God, who remains absolutely alien to the world. For readers of the *Phenomenology* Abraham's *foreignness* with regard to the world anticipates how consciousness in its early manifestation seizes on *mastery* as the only possible relationship to a world infinitely opposed to it (the canonical form, for us, of the subject-object relationship). Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son can thus be grasped as the mythical version of a necessary phase in the process by which consciousness becomes aware of itself beyond its naïve opposition to its others – essentially yet only ultimately, of course, between selfish interests and the ethical interests of the total community.

The point is that a remainder – construed as absolute division or absolute difference – will throughout history have determined particular kinds of response. Regarded as violence, this division, this utter difference, will provoke counter measures of all kinds. Sacrifice is often presented as the lesser violence. For Hegel, Christianity marks a further step forward. The sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, functions as a kind of refined repetition of the previous situation (perhaps, in Samuel Beckett's sense, a better failure): Jesus supposedly dies for *everybody's* sins, thus revealing the Christian God as somewhat less exclusive than its Hebrew predecessor. Moreover, Jesus is supposed to, though he does not quite, resolve the absolute division between the mundane and the divine. Jesus' ascension, which attempts to resolve the division between the Jews and the rest of the world, leaves, if anything, a greater calamity in the wake of his absolute disappearance into the divine. And, Hegel argues, as long as Christianity remains a 'positive' religion (excluding heathens), the unity of life is divided by the principle of bondage to the Christian lord. Thus Hegel begins his philosophy (properly speaking) with (what remains as) a short fragment on 'Love', which he saw (still as early as 1798) as the only possible solution to the several kinds of violence produced by discord: not the restricted love that binds all Christians but what he thought of as a 'living' bond capable of uniting radical opposites. The ways in which Hegel's dialectic both fails (catastrophically) and succeeds (beyond expectation) in establishing the bond of love as the basis for ethical life remains one of the key problems of modern critical thought in the European tradition.

Epistemological Violence

Many critical approaches to global epistemological violence generally identify a reductionist model of knowledge based on modern science and determined by the capitalist hold over organizations of government. Vandana Shiva (1990), for instance, argues as follows:

The linkage between modern science and a profit-based economic system can be discerned in major and varied scourges such as desertification, diarrhoea, and deforestation. Since the alternative modes of knowledge which can provide solutions to these problems are oriented to social benefit rather than to personal or corporate profits, reductionist science scoffs at them as hocus-pocus. The fact, however, is that reductionist science itself often resorts to misinformation and falsehood in order to establish its monopoly on knowledge.

While Shiva's account of epistemological violence is grounded in the idea of a suppressed socialist alternative to capitalism, it remains credulous of the basic rationality of capitalism. In this conception capitalism (as the economic base of western modernity) and socialism (in terms of its stifled postcolonial potential) are rationalities in opposition (the rationality of 'social benefit' opposed to that of 'personal or corporate profits'). It is just this kind of 'mode of production' argument that is challenged by the idea of the *postmodern condition*, which, it is argued, cannot be related back to any kind of rationality, as the cause for violence under the rubric either of modernization or of military objectives.

The profit driven notion of capitalism as a cause of international military aggression is widespread, as the popular media representation of both the Gulf War and the war in Iraq (as economically driven offensives) shows. Against this Jean Baudrillard (1994) notoriously insists on the *irrationality* of capitalism. His 1981 book, *Simulacra and Simulation* (translated into English in 1994), takes as its main device (mapped out in a multitude of both military and non-military scenarios) the idea of the simulated war. He argues that Vietnam was the site of an experimental war, which must be distinguished from any previous meaning of war (and the motivated political struggles manifested by it). There is only one aim of the simulated wars of the last 50 years or so: total liquidation of any form of rational social relation. The war is simulated to the extent that no *actual* principles of antagonism are involved, which does not, of course, lessen – in fact it increases – the actual violence and atrocity that civilians and military personnel face in the field (and behind the scenes). Just as military scenarios are created for purpose-built simulation (several in Southeast Asia, Australia and across the USA), which produce with minute accuracy hypothetical battlefields of the future (jungles, cities, deserts), so the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq must be accompanied by their simulated scenarios and objectives. This was the lesson, Baudrillard (1994) argues, of Vietnam. Use of the media to create the hypothetical scenarios of war is vital. So with the war in Iraq a test hypothesis is produced comprised of an enemy of elite troops in command of a huge arsenal of the most powerful long range weaponry. The war is *fought* on the basis of this hypothesis, *as if it was true*, and the objective (the capture of Baghdad) one that could be met, as if in training for some future antagonism. Then the long range weapons and elite force melt back into the hypothetical world from which they first emerged. The phenomenon of terrorism that accompanies today's armed conflicts is perhaps, as Baudrillard suggested in 1981, the appropriate complement to simulation, the purpose of which, he argued, is 'the terrorist rationalization of the social' (1994: 37). Baudrillard's vision of a violence without reason is bleak – and his evident outrage at the situation he exhaustively describes is unmistakable. There remains a biblical element, a return of the eschatological tradition, to Baudrillard's theoretical grounds, which evoke (albeit without nostalgia) categories of the real that would justify violence in a world where justification has simply been replaced by its endless simulation in objective operationality.

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Genealogies of the Global

Mike Featherstone

Abstract The term global suggests all-inclusiveness and brings to mind connectivity, a notion that gained a boost from Marshall McLuhan's reference to the mass-mediated 'global village'. In the past decade it has rapidly become part of the everyday vocabulary not only of academics and business people, but also has circulated widely in the media in various parts of the world. There have also been the beginnings of political movements against globalization and proposals for 'de-globalization' and 'alternative globalizations', projects to re-define the global. In effect, the terminology has globalized and globalization is varyingly lauded, reviled and debated around the world. The rationale of much previous thinking on humanity in the social sciences has been to assume a linear process of social integration, as more and more people are drawn into a widening circle of interdependencies in the movement to larger units, but the new forms of binding together of social life necessitate the development of new forms of global knowledge which go beyond the old classifications. It is also in this sense that the tightening of the interdependency chains between human beings, and also between human beings and other life forms, suggests we need to think about the relevance of academic knowledge to the emergent global public sphere.

Keywords classification, culture, economics, global, globalization, integration, social life, social sciences, technology

The term 'global' suggests all-inclusiveness, along with a certain finitude and limit. It brings to mind connectivity, that space has somehow been shrunk, as we find in the popular phrase 'we are all in each other's back yard'. This is something which was represented for the first time in the photographs of the Earth from space in the 1960s. Planet Earth, the small blue and green globe set amidst the vastness of space, captured a certain sense of vulnerability – a reversal of thinking about the scale of our world. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the current meaning of the term global emerged in references to global trade in the 1920s and global war in the 1940s and 1950s (long-range American B-36s carrying the atom bomb were described as 'global bombers'). The term gained a boost from Marshall McLuhan's (1962) graphic reference to the mass-mediated 'global village'. In the 1960s, we also have the first use of the term globalization in the context of the economy and business. The earliest sustained academic discussion of the globalization of markets seems to have been a paper by Theodore Levitt published in the *Harvard Business Review* in 1983 (Dicken, 1998). In sociology, Roland Robertson (1992) was one of the first to use the term in articles published in 1985. By the early 1990s the term globalization was very much on the increase, and it had migrated into mainstream academic usage. In the past decade it has rapidly become part of the everyday vocabulary not only of academics and business people, but has circulated widely in the media in various parts of the world. It is in this decade that we find assertions that we now live in 'globality', a new 'global age'. There have also been the beginnings of political movements against globalization and proposals for 'de-globalization' and 'alternative globalizations', projects to redefine the global. In effect, the terminology has globalized and globalization is varyingly lauded, reviled and debated around the world.

The global is often counter-posed to the local, to suggest that the potential to influence and communicate with people in other localities has increased exponentially. People become bound together in longer chains of interdependencies and have great potential to communicate with and influence each other, depending upon their resources and capital. In effect, people's frame of reference becomes larger, as their reference group of regular contacts becomes more extensive. Ultimately there is the technical potential to communicate with every member of humanity and survey life in every corner of the planet. The potential scope of action becomes global. Whether or not this leads to global integration – to a new level of social life in which more and more people interact with others around the world through new communications systems – is a different question. This is dependent upon the power resources and projects of different groups of people. Not least on the shifting power balance between those groups who have the resources to communicate and those who do not, and those who can engage in extensive surveillance, information gathering and storage and those who cannot. If we pose the question in this way, we can see that globalization processes can lead to various types of global integration and de-globalizing reactions, to the extent that we cannot presume a single outcome.

Yet the rationale of much previous thinking about humanity in the social sciences has been to assume a linear process of social integration, as more and more people are drawn into a widening circle of interdependencies in the movement to larger units: from families to bands, to tribes to regions, to nations, to states, to blocs of states and eventually to the world-state or global level of social organization. In this sense the global is conceived as a limit, a final stage in the integration of humanity. Yet it is easy here to fall into a teleological narrative with human social life conceived as moving from tradition to modernity, to globalized modernity or globality. This approach misses the non-linearity of the process of global integration and the potential for it to have unfolded in different ways. It over-emphasizes the uniqueness of the current phase of globalization and misses earlier phases such as the one which occurred in the late 19th century and ended with the First World War in 1914, in which foreign direct investment was high, along with world trade, leading to the movement of a vast array of products around the world (Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Briggs and Snowman, 1996; cf. the popularity of World Fairs at this time, Simmel, 1997). Information also moved rapidly via a telegraph and cable network. In addition, the percentage of the world population migrating was larger than in the current phase of globalization (Friedman, 2004).

A shift in the global balance of power away from the West to Asia would potentially involve different accounts of global integration which could challenge Western narratives and provide the economic and symbolic capital to stimulate systematic research to develop alternative versions. We are already seeing the beginnings of this process with critiques of Eurocentric accounts of the emergence of the modern world system such as Wallerstein's. André Gunder Frank, for example, asks us to think back much further and consider that the system of world trade goes back not just 500 years but 5000 years, and to acknowledge the centrality of China in this process prior to what he startlingly refers to as the 'Western interlude' (Frank, 1998; see also Pomeranz, 2000). The challenge is for us to think through what has been termed 'oriental globalization' (Nederveen Pieterse, Hobson, this issue). This is a view of global history in which Asia and the Middle East are seen as central to the development of a global economy, standing in sharp contrast to Weberian and Marxist accounts of the Western origins of a dynamic capitalism and modernity with their depiction of an ossified static Asia. Global history takes its impetus from this challenge to contest a diffusionist model in which the significant changes were seen as produced in one place (Western Europe), and seeks to think historical processes in a relational spatial dynamic. This goes beyond the idea of the history of societies or states, or their inter-societal or international relations; or the idea of history driven by a master process such as capitalism or modernization which spreads out from a (Western) centre, in favour of the focus on a complex assemblage which operates on a number of levels.

If the shifting balance of global power can give rise to an oriental globalization literature which disputes Western-centric theories and asks for a rewriting of history in a more relational and less linear way, then there are clear implications for knowledge, not just of the past, but

also of the present phase of globalization. If globalization points to the process of the integration of the world (often characterized in terms of space–time compression) and the increased consciousness of this process, then it should also give rise to emergent dimensions of social life, new social phenomena, which can challenge existing modes of conceptualization in the social sciences and humanities. It is this aspect which has captured the attention of Ulrich Beck (2002), who argues that we need a massive shift in our frame of reference to accompany globalization: if our object is no longer the nation-state society but the global, then we need a new epistemology to accompany this ontological shift.

Some academics are demanding that we globalize our courses, yet if we want to move beyond a ragbag global studies, the problems of selectivity of content (what do we put in?, what dare we leave out?) and the generation of new concepts have to be addressed. To consider globalization in terms of intensified flows of people, goods, money, information, images and technology (Appadurai, 1990) is a start, but we need to build on this inchoate image of flows to conceptualize the structures, barriers, and regulatory mechanisms within which things move, as well. Hence there is currently a good deal of interest in mapping the global economic, social, cultural, political and military emergent ‘dimensions’. In practice, it is of course difficult to separate these aspects of social life when we focus on lived practices and the generation of culture – we also need to be aware of the history of the formation of these allegedly differentiated ‘spheres’ of social life and the practices and disciplines that administer them (Featherstone, 1995). Clearly, in the current phase of globalization, the economy has been the dominant integrative force, but this is not to say that social, cultural and political ‘factors’ follow on meekly, or that culture and politics are merely defensive de-globalizing reactions. Indeed, it may well be the case that an active sphere of global public life is in the process of forming, a space in which many conflictual images of the globe battle with each other over the emergent consciousness of a new global ontology based around the vulnerable planet Earth, the binding together of not just humanity, but life in general in a common fate and the possibility/impossibility of human intervention.

Globalization as a set of economic processes gathered pace with the neo-liberal deregulation of markets in the late 1980s. Indeed, marketization is often seen in the popular imagination as the defining characteristic of globalization: the ease with which capital investment can flow around the world to the most profitable (i.e. cheapest) labour markets – what Bauman (2000) refers to as ‘liquid modernity’. But we should not see this process as signalling the eclipse of nation-state power, the replacement of the modern nation-state system which has been dominant since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, by a totally ‘borderless economy’ (Ohmae, 1987). Rather, economic deregulation is also accompanied by re-regulation, by a raft of institution-building and legislation designed to give greater ‘sovereignty to the markets’ (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Ong, 2000; Sassen, 2000). It also depends on new infrastructures to sustain the flows of money and goods. Here we think of not just the new information technologies, the electronic networks such as the Internet and intranets, telephone systems and video-conference links, which increase the scope and speed of activities to permit 24-hour trading and the coordination of transnational corporations. Equally crucial are the new social infrastructures in the network of global cities: not just stock exchanges, corporate headquarters and INGO (international non-governmental organization) offices, but the work and leisure spaces for face-to-face encounters involving people who work in these places along with specialist business and management service professionals, the experts and intermediaries working in communications and culture industries. If there is globalization of the economy, we need to ask where are its effects most clearly manifest in terms of creating new forms of social relationships and practices. The various tiers of global cities linked together in a vast reference group provide not only command and coordination centres (the network nodes), but also the spaces for business and corporation people and specialists in the new middle class to jet in for face-to-face meetings. These cities, as Sassen (2000) and others emphasize, also attract another set of migrants, the mobile lower-class service workers and cleaners (largely women) who develop their own vernacular cosmopolitan networks (Werbner, 2006).

Economic globalization, then, gives rise to new economic and social forms and modes of connectivity which, in the current neo-liberal phase, is transforming social structures and generating new inequalities; the new mobile global elites (or 'transnational class' who enjoy 'Davos culture') along with their business, professional, knowledge specialist and culture industry new middle-class counterparts, are effective global winners. A sharp contrast to the many workers in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors who remain rooted in place, who have seen their incomes and life chances eroded. Yet the plight of such groups of 'global losers' is beginning to throw up and net together (often using new information technologies) activists and sympathizers to develop counter-globalization movements. In effect, a complex global dynamic is emerging which produces a new unstable field, which we are struggling to map. This process is generating a new patchwork of inequalities, pushing us beyond the existing terminology, such as 'the West and the rest' and 'the North and the South'.

In the West, the images of mobility in the media (global music, sport and news from around the world), the accessibility of the Internet and the increasing availability of food and consumer goods from all around the world in the supermarkets and shopping centres, create a sense that there is an emerging global culture. Yet this is often the banal cosmopolitanism of consumer culture, as opposed to a distinctive set of worked through value commitments. Indeed, the latter sense of culture, that a global culture should be somehow equivalent to the culture of the nation-state writ large, is a limited figure on a number of counts. It misses the ways in which national cultures were actively formed in the dynamics of the competing nation-state system. This is something which has little prospect of being paralleled on a global level. Indeed, it is difficult to envisage a global cultural integration process without something 'outside' which acts as the focus to bind humanity together (e.g. extraterrestrial threat or impending planetary ecological disaster).

There is the same problem for those who seek to equate the globalization of culture with Americanization. There is of course a good deal of evidence cited for Coca-Cola-ization, Disneyfication and McDonaldization, given that these and other consumer culture brands and icons are visible in the consumer mediascapes around the world. We could also cite the increasing use of (American) English and forms of organization in business law and business practices, education, the Internet, etc. Yet, there are many counter-tendencies, such as the emergence of China, with its own diasporic and global communications circuits, such as finance, media and the Internet. Also noticeable is the development of new regional circuits, as we find with the success of Japanese media and culture in East and South-east Asia (pop music, television dramas, *anime*, Pokémon, etc.). Many of these cultural forms have reworked American popular cultural themes, but within modern Asian contexts (Iwabuchi, 2002). In addition to the enlarged transnational regional audiences, there are also a range of religious and other cultural movements which originated or have been sustained outside the West (Sai Baba, Hare Krishna, Tzu-Chi, Soka Gakkai, Opus Dei et al.) (Berger, 2002).

An emergent global culture, then, can be seen as far from being the culture of the nation-state writ large, despite various globalization projects arising from nation-states, or cultural and religious movements, to provide an all-embracing integrative culture. Rather, it is better to conceive global culture as a field in which many cultural forms are announced, accumulate, and collide. There is more cultural work going on today, which seeks to expand the circle of addressees and rethink the communal, audience or market relevance of cultural goods and media information. If globalization can be seen as a series of interlinked processes which are generating new forms of social life, then the impetus initially came from economic processes. But it has spread into the social and cultural arenas, not least in providing us all with more cultural work in understanding the others with whom we come into contact, along with the varying levels of construction and sedimentation of new conventions and habitual modes of interaction and communication.

There is also a fourth major social process, politics, to be considered. Here we need to think beyond existing international politics and the constraints on many international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), including the United Nations, to structure global

dialogues via people who are exclusively stamped as representatives of nation-states. There is an intensification of global politics from below, in part building upon the work of international peace movements and other INGOs which seek to construct new forms of global peace, inter-faith religious ecumenism or human, ecological and planetary solidarity. In addition to the current wave of 'third culture' institution building, it should be remembered that there was also a significant increase in this type of activity in the years leading up to the First World War (see Boli and Thomas, 1999).

Yet the current phase differs to the extent that an important dimension of global politics is the development of a global civil society. The anti-globalization protests in Seattle in 1999, and Cancún in 2003, suggest not only a defensive protest against economic globalization with its WTO-inspired punitive regimes of destruction of livelihood through the opening up of agriculture outside the West to the global market, but also a process of formation. The World Social Forum (initially conceived as a reaction to the neo-liberal global elite club, the World Economic Forum) has held various meetings in Porto Alegre from 2001 onwards, and a major congress in Mumbai in 2004, along with various regional assemblies. It is an emergent hybrid form, engaged in discussions and network-building to work out the agenda for an alternative globalization, under the ambitious promise that 'another world is possible'. This intervention in the formation of a global civil society aims to rethink global democracy and citizenship – a process which could well involve syncretisms from different globalizing traditions (the *ummah* and *ahimsa* and not just European human rights). The aim is to establish a new form of sovereignty which counters the sovereignty of the global markets and military force.

Military globalization is rarely talked about in the same context as economic, social, cultural and political globalization processes. Yet there is clearly a binding together and potential governmental disciplining of the people of the world through military force and technologies with their capacity for comprehensive global satellite surveillance and missile and weapon system targeting. This process of military globalization gave rise to the Internet and a host of other technologies which incorporate speed of delivery, scope of action and flexibility of response. As the power potential of economic and military globalization increases, there are those who see this as facilitating the global Empire, a new supranational form of sovereignty from above, which redefines the scope of action of nation-states. In effect, for Hardt and Negri (2000, 2005), we are moving into a new global era in which the US-defined state of emergency has the potential to undermine international law and define all wars as civil wars, or policing operations, under the new supranational umbrella, as war becomes a permanent part of biopower, or social reproduction.

Yet before we concede to the globalitarian bad dream of total surveillance and control, we should refer to Karin Knorr Cetina's (2005) recent discussion of global terrorism which suggests that the formation of world society may turn out not to be at all as people have envisaged and also casts doubt on the efficacy of social intervention, either for good or ill. Knorr Cetina points to the ways in which the new global terrorism can exemplify complexity by highlighting the major imbalances between cause and effect, unpredictable outcomes, and self-organizing, emergent structures. This contrasts with the earlier dreams of social science producing general explanations and the achievement of expert control. The management of uncertainty, task predictability and orderly performances were much easier to facilitate in the 'relatively complex' organizations of modern industrial societies. A global society, on the other hand, entails a different form of complexity: one emanating more from micro-structural arrangements that institute self-organizing principles and patterns. One of her most telling observations is that this new pattern of complexity is found both in the global markets and global terrorism, and in either case is exceedingly difficult to predict and control.

This point has important implications for global knowledge and the development of a global public sphere. As we seek to grapple with a new level of social life and the emergent global economic, social, cultural, political and military 'objects' and process, it is clear that our existing modes of analyses, often formulated with bounded-state societies, or working off simple games models involving one or two parties, are no longer adequate. Barbara Adam (1999) in her

discussion of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear explosion argues that it challenges our classical theoretical framework. She argues it could only be understood via a new approach which went beyond the traditional separation of disciplines to take into account the intermeshing of natural and social processes. There is also the need to go beyond the traditional focus upon intra-societal processes, with the need to make sense of a complex network which linked together a nuclear explosion, weather patterns, milk production, radiated babies and the overseas aid 'gifts' of the British government. It is in this sense that the new forms of binding together of social life necessitate the development of new forms of global knowledge which go beyond the old classifications. It is also in this sense that the tightening of the interdependency chains between human beings, and also between human beings and other life forms on planet Earth, suggests we need to start to think about the relevance of academic knowledge to the emergent global public sphere.

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Globalizations

Boaventura de Sousa Santos

Abstract What is generally called globalization is a vast social field in which hegemonic or dominant social groups, states, interests and ideologies collide with counter-hegemonic or subordinate social groups, states, interests and ideologies on a world scale. Even the hegemonic camp is fraught with conflicts, but over and above them, there is a basic consensus among its most influential members (in political terms, the G-7). It is this consensus that confers on globalization its dominant characteristics. The counter-hegemonic or subordinate production of globalization is what is called insurgent cosmopolitanism. It consists of the transnationally organized resistance against the unequal exchanges produced or intensified by globalized localisms and localized globalisms.

Keywords counter-hegemony, emancipation, globalization, social movements, utopia, World Social Forum

Introduction

In the past three decades transnational interactions have intensified dramatically, from the production systems and financial transfers to the worldwide dissemination of information and images through the media, or the mass movements of people, whether as tourists or migrant workers or refugees. The extraordinary range and depth of these transnational interactions have led social scientists and politicians to view them as a rupture with previous forms of cross-border interactions, a new phenomena termed 'globalization'. The term 'global' today is used to refer both to the processes and to the results of globalization.

Whether new or old, the processes of globalization are a multifaceted phenomenon with economic, social, political, cultural, religious and legal dimensions, all interlinked in a complex fashion. Strangely enough, globalization seems to combine universality and the elimination of national borders, on the one hand, with rising particularity, local diversity, ethnic identity and a return to communitarian values, on the other. In other words, globalization appears to be the other side of localization, and vice versa. Moreover, it seems to be related to a vast array of transformations across the globe, such as the dramatic rise in inequality between rich and poor countries and between the rich and the poor in each country, environmental disasters, ethnic conflicts, international mass migration, the emergence of new states and the collapse or decline of others, the proliferation of civil wars, ethnic cleansing, globally organized crime, formal democracy as a political condition for international aid, terrorism, and militarism, etc.

The debates on globalization have centered around the following questions: (1) is globalization a new or an old phenomenon?; (2) is globalization monolithic or does it have different political meanings and both positive and negative aspects?; (3) is it as important in the social, political and cultural domains as it is in the economic domain?; and (4) assuming that globalization is intensifying, where is it leading, what is the future of national societies, economies, politics and cultures? These debates have been showing that what is generally called globalization is a vast social field in which hegemonic or dominant social groups, states, interests and ideologies collide with counter-hegemonic or subordinate social groups, states, interests and ideologies on a world scale (Fisher and Ponniah, 2003; Sen et al., 2004). Even the hegemonic camp is fraught with conflicts, but over and above them there is a basic consensus among its most influential members (in political terms, the G-7). It is this consensus that confers on globalization its dominant characteristics. Just as with the concepts that preceded it, such as

modernization and development, the concept of globalization contains both a descriptive and a prescriptive component. The prescription is, in fact, a vast set of prescriptions, all anchored in the hegemonic consensus. This consensus is known as the 'neoliberal consensus' or the 'Washington consensus', since it was in Washington in the mid-1980s that the core capitalist states in the world system subscribed to it, and it covers a vast set of domains (world economy, social policies, state–civil society relations, international relations). This consensus has weakened in recent years by virtue of both the rising conflicts within the hegemonic camp and resistance from social movements and progressive NGOs around the world (Fisher and Ponniah, 2003). However, it is this agreement that has brought us to where we are today and for that reason deserves to be analysed. The Washington consensus encompasses four major issues: (1) the consensus of the liberal (or rather, neoliberal) economy; (2) the consensus of the weak state; (3) the consensus of liberal democracy; and (4) the consensus of the primacy of the rule of law and the judicial system.

The consensus of the neoliberal economy states that national economies must open themselves up to the world market, and domestic prices must be accommodated to international prices; priority must be given to the export sector; monetary and fiscal policies must be guided towards a reduction in inflation; the rights of private property must be effectively and internationally protected; the entrepreneurial sector of the state must be privatized; there must be free mobility of resources (except labor), investments and profits; state regulation of the economy must be minimal; social policies must be a low priority in the state budget, no longer universally applied but rather implemented as compensatory measures for means-tested, vulnerable social strata.

The consensus of the weak state is based on the idea that the state, rather than being the mirror of civil society, is its opposite and potentially its enemy. The state inherently oppresses and limits civil society, and only by reducing its size is it possible to reduce its harmful effects and thus strengthen civil society. Hence, the weak state tends also to be a minimal state.

According to the consensus of liberal democracy, civic and political rights have an absolute priority over social and economic rights. Free elections and free markets are two sides of the same coin: the common good achieved through the actions of utilitarian individuals involved in competitive exchanges with the minimum of state interference.

Finally, the consensus of the primacy of the rule of law and the judicial system establishes the need for a new legal framework suited to the regulatory needs of the new economic and social model based on privatization, liberalization, and market relations. Property rights and contractual obligations must be guaranteed by the law and the judicial system, conceived of as independent and universal mechanisms that create standard expectations for businesses and consumers and resolve litigation through legal frameworks which are presumed to be accepted by everyone.

The different consensus share a core idea that constitutes a kind of meta-consensus. This central idea is that we are entering a period in which deep political rifts are disappearing. The imperialist rivalries between the hegemonic countries, which in the 20th century had provoked two world wars, have disappeared, giving rise to interdependence between the great powers, cooperation and regional integration. Nowadays only small wars exist, many of which are of low intensity and almost always on the periphery of the world system. In any case, the core countries, through various mechanisms (selective military intervention, manipulation of international aid, control of multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund), have the means to keep these focuses for instability under control (Patomäki and Teivainen, 2005). Moreover, conflicts between capital and labor are being relatively de-institutionalized without causing any instability, since labor has, in the meantime, become a global resource and no institutionalized global labor market still exists or ever will exist. The idea that rifts between the different models of social transformation are disappearing also forms part of this meta-consensus. The first three-quarters of the 20th century were dominated by rivalries between two antagonistic models: revolution and reformism. If, on the one hand, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall meant the end of the

revolutionary paradigm, the crisis of the welfare state in the developed countries and of the developmentalist state in the developing countries means that the reformist paradigm is equally condemned. In the face of this, social transformation is, from now on, no longer a political question but a technical question. The idea of the end of history is the extreme manifestation of this meta-consensus.

Moving from the descriptive/prescriptive level to the analytical level, it becomes evident that the dominant characteristics of globalization are the characteristics of the dominant or hegemonic globalization. Therefore, a crucial distinction must be made between hegemonic globalization and counter-hegemonic globalization.

The Nature of Globalizations

The idea of globalization, as a linear, homogenizing and irreversible phenomenon, although false, is prevalent nowadays, and tends to be all the more so as we move from scientific discourse into political discourse and everyday talk. Apparently transparent and without complexity, the idea of globalization masks more than it reveals of what is happening in the world. And what it masks or hides is, when viewed from a different perspective, so important that the transparency and simplicity of the idea of globalization, far from being innocent, must be considered an ideological and political move. Two motives for such a move should be stressed. The first is what we could call the determinist fallacy. It consists of inculcating the idea that globalization is a spontaneous, automatic, unavoidable and irreversible process which intensifies and advances according to an inner logic and dynamism strong enough to impose themselves on any external interferences. The fallacy consists in transforming the causes of globalization into its effects, obscuring the fact that globalization results from a set of political decisions which are identifiable in time and space, as mentioned above. The second political motive is the fallacy of the disappearance of the South. Whether at a financial level, or at the level of production or even of consumption, the world has become integrated into a global economy in which, faced with multiple interdependencies, it no longer makes sense to distinguish between North and South or between the core, periphery and semi-periphery of the world system. In the terms of this fallacy, even the idea of the 'Third World' is becoming obsolete. Since, contrary to this discourse, the inequalities between the North and the South have dramatically increased in the past three decades, this fallacy seems to have no other objective than to trivialize the negative, exclusionary consequences of neoliberal globalization by denying them analytical centrality. Thus, the 'end of the South', and the 'disappearance of the Third World' are, above all, a product of ideological changes which must, themselves, become an object of scrutiny (Santos, 2005; Sen et al., 2004).

Both the determinist fallacy and the fallacy of the disappearance of the South have lost credibility in recent years. On the one hand, if, for some, globalization is still considered a great triumph of rationality, innovation and liberty, capable of producing infinite progress and unlimited abundance, for others, it is increasingly an anathema, as it brings misery, loss of food sovereignty, social exclusion for ever vaster populations of the world, and ecological destruction, etc. On the other, a contradiction has been growing between those who see in globalization the finally indisputable and unconquerable energy of capitalism and those who discover in some of its features, such as the revolution in information and communication technologies, new opportunities to broaden the scale and the nature of transnational solidarity and anti-capitalist struggle (Buey, 2005).

In the light of these disjunctions and confrontations, it becomes clear that what we term globalization is, in fact, a set of different processes of globalization and, in the last instance, of different and sometimes contradictory globalizations. What we generally call globalization is, in fact, different sets of social relationships which give rise to different phenomena of globalization. In these terms there is not, strictly speaking, one sole entity called globalization, instead there are globalizations; to be precise, this term should only be used in the plural. As they are sets of social relationships, globalizations involve conflicts and, therefore, winners and losers. The dominant discourse on globalization is the history of the winners, told by the winners.

At an abstract level, only a process-based definition of globalization is possible. Here is my definition: it is a set of unequal exchanges in which a certain artefact, condition, entity or local identity extends its influence beyond its local or national borders and, in so doing, develops an ability to designate as local another rival artefact, condition, entity or identity.

The most important implications of this concept are as follows. First, there is no originally global condition; what we call globalization is always the successful globalization of a particular localism. In other words, there are no global conditions for which we cannot find local roots. The second implication is that globalization presupposes localization. The process that creates the global as the dominant position in unequal exchanges is the same one that produces the local as the dominated, and therefore hierarchically inferior, position. In fact, we live as much in a world of globalizations as we live in a world of localizations. Therefore, in analytical terms, it would be equally correct if our current situation and our research topics were defined in terms of localization instead of globalization. The reason why the latter term is preferred is basically because hegemonic scientific discourse tends to favor the history of the world as told by the winners.

There are many examples of how globalization produces localization. The English language as a lingua franca is one. Its propagation as a global language implies the localization of other languages, even of languages which not long ago saw themselves as potentially global languages, as is the case of the French language. Analogously, the French or Italian actors of the 1960s – from Brigitte Bardot to Alain Delon, or from Marcello Mastroianni to Sophia Loren – who at the time symbolized the universal style of acting, seem, when we watch their films again nowadays, provincially European, if not curiously ethnic. The difference in view lies in the way in which, since then, the Hollywood style of acting has managed to globalize itself. That is to say, once a certain process of globalization has been identified, its integral meaning and explanation cannot be obtained without taking into account the adjacent processes of relocalization occurring simultaneously or in sequence to it.

One of the transformations most frequently associated with the processes of globalization is the compression of time and space, or, rather, the social process by which phenomena accelerate and are spread throughout the world. Although apparently monolithic, this process combines highly differentiated situations and conditions and, because of this, cannot be analysed independently of the power relations that respond to the different forms of temporal and spatial mobility. On the one hand, there is the global capitalist class, which in reality controls the space–time compression and is capable of transforming it in its favor. On the other, there are the classes and subordinate groups, such as migrant workers and refugees, who in recent decades have represented much cross-border traffic, but who do not, in any way, control the space–time compression. Between the executives of the multinational companies and the emigrants and refugees, tourists represent a third mode of production of the compression of space and time.

There are also those who contribute greatly to globalization but remain, nevertheless, prisoners in their own local time–space. By cultivating the coca, the peasants of Bolivia, Peru and Colombia, contribute decisively to the world drug culture, but remain ‘localized’ in their villages and mountains, as they always have been. So do the Rio slum-dwellers, who are prisoners of their marginal urban lifestyle, while their songs and dances, particularly the samba, are nowadays part of a globalized music culture. The production of globalization therefore entails the production of localization.

I distinguish two main modes of production of globalization. The first one consists of a twin process of globalized localisms/localized globalisms. Globalized localism is the process by which a particular phenomenon is successfully globalized, whether it is the worldwide activities of the multinational, the transformation of the English language into a lingua franca, the globalization of American fast food or popular music or the worldwide adoption of the same laws of intellectual ownership, patents or telecommunications aggressively promoted by the USA. In this mode of production of globalization, what is globalized is the winner of a struggle for the appropriation or valorization of resources or for the hegemonic recognition of a given

cultural, racial, sexual, ethnic, religious, or regional difference. This victory translates into the capacity to dictate the terms of integration, competition and inclusion.

The second process of globalization is the localized globalism. It consists of the specific impact on local conditions produced by transnational practices and imperatives that arise from globalized localisms. To respond to these transnational imperatives, local conditions are disintegrated, oppressed, excluded, destructured, and, eventually, restructured as subordinate inclusion. Such localized globalisms include: the elimination of traditional commerce and subsistence agriculture; the creation of free trade enclaves or zones; the deforestation and massive destruction of natural resources in order to pay off external debt; the use of historic treasures, religious ceremonies or places, craftsmanship and wildlife for the benefit of the global tourism industry; ecological dumping (the 'purchase' by Third World countries of toxic waste produced in the core capitalist countries in order to pay for foreign debt); the conversion of subsistence agriculture into agriculture for export as part of 'structural adjustment'; and the ethnicization of the workplace (devaluing of salaries because the workers belong to an ethnic group considered 'inferior').

These two processes operate in conjunction and constitute the hegemonic type of globalization, also called neoliberal, top-down globalization or globalization from above. The processes should be dealt with separately, since the factors, agents and conflicts which intervene in one or the other are partially distinct. The sustained production of globalized localisms and localized globalisms is increasingly determining or conditioning the different hierarchies that constitute the global capitalist world. The international division of the production of globalization tends to assume the following pattern: core countries specialize in globalized localisms, while peripheral countries only have the choice of localized globalisms.

Insurgent Cosmopolitanism

There is, however, a second mode of production of globalization. I call it insurgent cosmopolitanism. It consists of the transnationally organized resistance against the unequal exchanges produced or intensified by globalized localisms and localized globalisms. This resistance is organized through local/global linkages between social organizations and movements representing those classes and social groups victimized by hegemonic globalization and united in concrete struggles against exclusion, subordinate inclusion, destruction of livelihoods and ecological destruction, political oppression, or cultural suppression, etc. They take advantage of the possibilities of transnational interaction created by the world system in transition, including those resulting from the revolution in information technology and communications and from the reduction of travel costs. Insurgent cosmopolitan activities include, among many others: egalitarian transnational North–South and South–South networks of solidarity among social movements and progressive NGOs; the new working-class internationalism (dialogues between workers' organizations in different regional blocs); transnational coalitions among workers of the same multinational corporation operating in different countries; coalitions of workers and citizenship groups in the struggle against sweatshops, discriminatory labor practices and slave labor; international networks of alternative legal aid; transnational human rights organizations; worldwide networks of feminist, indigenous, ecological or alternative development movements and associations; and literary, artistic and scientific movements on the periphery of the world system in search of alternative non-imperialist, counter-hegemonic cultural values, involved in studies using post-colonial or minority perspectives. The confrontations surrounding the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle on 30 November 1999 were the first eloquent demonstration of insurgent cosmopolitanism (Fisher and Ponniah, 2003; Sen et al., 2004). The World Social Forum is today its most accomplished manifestation. The use of the term 'cosmopolitanism' to describe the global resistance against the unequal exchanges produced by hegemonic globalization may seem inadequate in the face of its modernist or Western ascendancy. The idea of cosmopolitanism, like universalism, world citizenship and the rejection of political and territorial borders, has indeed a long tradition in Western culture, from the cosmic law of Pythagoras and the *philallelia* of Democritus to the '*Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum*

puto of Terence, from the medieval *res publica christiana* to the Renaissance humanists, and from Voltaire, for whom ‘to be a good patriot, it is necessary to become an enemy of the rest of the world’, to working-class internationalism. This ideological tradition has often been put to the service of European expansionism, colonialism and imperialism, the same historical processes that today generate globalized localisms and localized globalisms. Insurgent cosmopolitanism, on the contrary, refers to the aspiration by oppressed groups to organize their resistance on the same scale and through the same type of coalitions used by the oppressors to victimize them, that is, the global scale and local/global coalitions. Insurgent cosmopolitanism is also different from that invoked by Marx as meaning the universality of those who, under capitalism, have nothing to lose but their chains – the working class. In addition to the working class described by Marx, the oppressed classes in the world today cannot be encompassed by the class-which-has-only-its-chains-to-lose category. Insurgent cosmopolitanism includes vast populations in the world that are not sufficiently useful or skilled enough to ‘have chains’, that is, to be directly exploited by capital. It aims at uniting social groups on a non-class basis, the victims of exploitation as well as the victims of social exclusion, of sexual, ethnic, racist and religious discrimination. For this reason, contrary to the Marxist concept, insurgent cosmopolitanism does not imply uniformity, a general theory of social emancipation and the collapse of differences, autonomies and local identities. Giving equal weight to the principle of equality and to the principle of recognition of difference, insurgent cosmopolitanism is no more than a global emergence resulting from the fusion of local, progressive struggles with the aim of maximizing their emancipatory potential *in loco* (however defined) through translocal/local linkages.

This character is both the strength and the weakness of insurgent cosmopolitanism. The progressive or counter-hegemonic character of the cosmopolitan coalitions cannot be taken for granted. On the contrary, it is intrinsically unstable and problematic. It demands constant self-reflection by those who share its objectives. Cosmopolitan initiatives conceived of and created by a counter-hegemonic character can later come to assume hegemonic characteristics, even running the risk of becoming converted into globalized localisms. It is enough to think of the local initiatives in participatory democracy, which had to fight for years against authoritarian populism, the ‘absolutism’ of representative democracy and the mistrust of the conservative political elites, and which nowadays are beginning to be recognized and even adopted by the World Bank, seduced by the efficiency and lack of corruption they have applied to managing funds and development loans. Self-reflexive vigilance is essential in order to distinguish between the technocratic concept of participatory democracy sanctioned by the World Bank and the democratic and progressive concept of participatory democracy, as an embryo of counter-hegemonic globalization (Bello, 2002).

The instability of the progressive or counter-hegemonic character is also derived from another factor: the different concepts of emancipatory resistance held by cosmopolitan initiatives in different regions of the world system. For example, the struggle for minimum standards in working conditions (the so-called labor standards) – a struggle led by trade unions and human rights organizations in the more developed countries, to prevent from circulating freely in the world market products produced by labor that does not reach these required minimum standards – is certainly seen by the organizations that promote it as counter-hegemonic and emancipatory, since it aims to improve the conditions of the workers’ lives. However, it can be seen by similar organizations in peripheral countries as one more hegemonic strategy of the North, to create one more form of protectionism which favors the rich countries and harms the poor ones. In spite of all these difficulties, insurgent cosmopolitanism has succeeded in credibly demonstrating that there is an alternative to hegemonic, neoliberal, top-down globalization, and that is counter-hegemonic solidarity, bottom-up globalization. From now on, what we call global and globalization cannot but be conceived of as the provisory, partial and reversible result of a permanent struggle between two modes of production of globalization, indeed, between two globalizations.

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Global Assemblages

Stephen J. Collier

Keywords anthropology, global assemblages, rationalization, techno-science

Max Weber began his 1920 'Prefatory Remarks' to the *Collected Essays in the Sociology of Religion* with a famous and provocative claim:

The child of modern European civilization will inevitably and justifiably approach problems of universal history from the following standpoint: What chain of circumstances led to the appearance in the West, and only in the West, of cultural phenomena which – or so at least we like to think – came to have *universal* significance and validity. (2002: xxviii)

A series of illustrations follows: developments in history, music, science, architecture, bureaucracy, and, finally, 'the most fateful force in our modern life', capitalism.

Contemporary sensibilities balk. Few today would agree that the development in the West of an orchestra with a string quartet as its nucleus, or

the East's lack of a solution to the problem of the dome, give either civilization a claim to phenomena with universal validity, even if one could find a serious scholar still willing to talk about 'the West' and 'the East' (or, for that matter, about 'civilization'). But the most crucial items on Weber's list – science, bureaucracy, and economic rationalism, to which Weber's work returned again and again – are harder to dismiss. Whatever misdirections resulted from discussions around globalization in recent decades, it is certain that at the beginning of the 21st century the ever-more pervasive spread of capitalism and the rationalization of what Weber called the 'life worlds' are central topics for a global knowledge. Indeed, the most relevant question today is not whether the significance of such forms is universal but whether they can be meaningfully associated with 'the West'. Twentieth-century developments in Japanese and Chinese capitalism, or in Russian, Indian, and Pakistani techno-science – to take a few among innumerable examples – should convince us that, whatever claims one might make about their patrimony, these forms no longer require the support of their conditions of origin.

What remains, then, is to ask how we might move beyond platitudinous proclamations to assess their significance for contemporary life.

An emerging body of scholarship has grappled with this question by examining what might be called *global assemblages* (Collier and Ong, 2005). Global assemblages are the actual configurations through which global forms of techno-science, economic rationalism, and other expert systems gain significance. The global assemblage is also a tool for the production of global knowledge, taken in the double sense of knowledge about global forms and knowledge that strives to replace space, culture, and society-bound categories that have dominated the social sciences throughout their history.

The term global refers to forms such as science, expert systems, or techniques of rational calculation whose validity, as Anthony Giddens has argued, rests on 'impersonal principles, which can be set out and developed without regard to context' (1994: 85). The implication is not that global forms are everywhere but that they have a distinctive capacity for decontextualization and recontextualization, abstractability and movement, across diverse social and cultural situations. It may be helpful to take a few contemporary examples. Developments in extraction, donor matching, and immunosuppressant drugs have made human organs an increasingly global form (Cohen, 2005). Certain organs can be abstracted from one context, a human body, and functionally embedded in virtually any other. A similar point could be made about the objects of standards regimes, from illness identified through diagnostic standards in psychiatry to agricultural products produced according to the strictures of production and quality standards (Dunn, 2005; Lakoff, 2005). Through standards, such objects gain a legibility and functionality in heterogeneous domains. Global forms do not, of course, hold a monopoly on mobility. Consider McDonald's or Coke. But the validity of the latter depends on meaning, belief, or desire, specific functions of subjectivity. Global forms, by contrast, are 'valid' in relation to the impersonal and self-referential terms of technical systems.

In many respects, global forms are akin to the 'boundary objects' and 'immutable mobiles' examined by scholars of science and technology (Latour, 1987; Bowker and Star, 2000). But if one's concern is not with the workings of global forms themselves but, rather, with their anthropological significance, a further conceptual turn is required, to the space of *assemblage*. A global assemblage is the actual and specific articulation of a global form. Thus, for example, the anthropolo-

gists Lawrence Cohen and Nancy Scheper-Hughes have analyzed assemblages comprising 'global' organs, networks of brokers and dealers, donors and recipients, sellers and buyers, who interact in various moral and money economies, and through various forms of technical and political regulation (Cohen, 2005; Scheper-Hughes, 2005). From this example it should be clear that the global assemblage is an alternative to the categories of local and global, which serve to cast the global as abstraction, and the local in terms of specificity. In the space of assemblage, a global form is simply one among a range of concrete elements.

The relationship among the elements in an assemblage is not stable; nor is their configuration reducible to a single logic. Rather, an assemblage is structured through critical reflection, debate, and contest. Thus, as Scheper-Hughes and Cohen have argued, communities, families, government officials, non-state organizations, and scholars debate organ transplants, proclaim their immorality in the name of the sanctity of the body, or promote their legalization in the name of better regulation, health, and allocative efficiency. As Andrew Lakoff (2005) has shown, psychiatrists with different areas of expertise dispute the ability of standards to yield adequate diagnoses, or, for that matter, the very possibility of establishing generalizable diagnostic standards for mental illness. And as Elizabeth Dunn (2005) has argued, agricultural standards may simultaneously unify some markets but also provoke small farmers to resist standards regimes by turning to informal markets, thereby perversely parcellizing economic exchange.

In pointing to instabilities and conflicts, the global assemblage serves as a tool for a critical global knowledge, though one that diverges from the standard fare of relativizing cultural analyses, sociological reductions to structures of power, or political economic analyses of hegemony that have dominated discussions of globalization. Investigations into global assemblages assume that Weber's provocative claim is still with us: the abstractability, mobility, and power of global forms make them 'fateful' for human life. And the secular trend of their expansion is a central problem with which critical purveyors of global knowledge must grapple. But such investigation cannot tell us whether the 'rationalization of the life-worlds' – biological life, the life of labor, or the life of the psyche – is, in general, a good or bad thing. Rather, it seeks to clarify moral or ethical positions, resistances, and possibilities that emerge around such processes, without knowing 'what lies at the end of this tremendous development' (Weber, 2002: 124).

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Mundialization/Globalization

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Keywords culture, globalization, mundialization, pattern, world modernity

How can one understand the specifics of globalization from a cultural perspective? One possible answer would be to go back to the *world system* paradigm, for its critique of the nation-state as a unit of analysis opens a way to envision the world dynamics in other bases. This perspective, however, opens up other problems that, if ignored, will lead us into a dead end. There is, first, a strong economic inclination of the analyses, for the world system's history is conceived as the evolution of capitalism (Wallerstein, 1991). As the economic basis is the privileged unit of analysis, political and cultural manifestations appear as its immediate reflections. In fact, this way of understanding social phenomena transposes to a wider territoriality a well-known reasoning: society is formed by an economic infrastructure and an ideological superstructure. The material 'floor' would comprehend and determine the upper part of such architecture.

Another dimension posited by the analysis is its systemic character. A world system is an articulated set within which all elements are functionally integrated into the whole. An example is to be found in Luhmann's work, that, conceiving society as a system, can extend the concept to reach a planetary scope; in this sense, the world would be a sole communicative system, where the parts, in their differences, would be linked to the same set. There would even be a hierarchy among social systems, from simple to complex, i.e., from less to more differentiated. The difference, however, has a simply functional role, the part functions for the integrity and coherence of the whole.

This theoretical conception allows us to answer an array of questions related to the role of economic and political forces in the 'world system'. It includes, however, a series of contradictions that unveil its weaknesses. There is, first, a lack of social actors; a system-society does not need individuals and political actors: it consummates itself independently of their existence. The systemic approach encompasses the limitations of the sociological objectivism characteristic of Durkheimian or structuralist theories. By

understanding society as a ‘thing’ or ‘structure’, one transcends the existence of ‘the men who make history’, i.e. the individuals and institutions that act and interact with each other. It would be difficult to conceive of social action within this theoretical framework, for the social actor would have a passive role in the social interaction process (at best, he or she would perform a function). In a word, the fate of all would be determined (not only comprehended) in the planetary structure that encompasses us. Another aspect has to do with the degree of interaction required by analytical thinking. In order to function, a system requires an articulation such that the movement of each one of its parts would be solely coordinated by the whole. Internal cohesion has to be high, and without this systemic unity would be compromised. Within this perspective, as Wallerstein (1991) emphasizes, culture is ‘a structure through which the world system operates’. In fact, it would simply have the function of a ‘geo-culture’, guaranteeing the maintenance of an order imposed by itself, independent of the culture.

The above criticisms allow us to take up the cultural question at another level. There is, in the idea of globalization, the suggestion of a certain unity. When we speak about a global economy, we have in mind one single structure, underlying economic exchange in any place on the planet. Economists can even measure the dynamics of this globalized order through various indicators: exchanges and international investments. The same can be said of the technological sphere: it is marked by the unity of techniques – computer, satellites, electric or nuclear energy. But, would it make sense understanding the cultural theme in the same way? Could we speak of ‘one’ global culture or ‘one’ global identity in the same manner we consider the economic and technological levels? Surely not, and language offers a good example. For historical reasons – British colonialism, North American imperialism, capitalist economic expansion, the development of science in the USA after the Second World War, and the like – English became the language of world modernity; it would not make sense, however, to imagine the disappearance of other languages in the face of its dominance. The existence of a hypothetical ‘universal’ language, shared by all the planet’s individuals, would require that all human experiences converged towards one and the same source of meaning. But such a linguistic speculation is not reasonable. The emergence of English as a world language gives a new definition to the world market of linguistic goods at a planetary scale, shows an unmistakable power situation but does not imply a single way of speaking. And that is the reason why it is useful to establish a differ-

ence between the terms *globalization* and *mundialization*. The first may well be applied to the economic and technological spheres; the second adapts itself better to the cultural universe. The ‘mundi’ (world) category is then articulated to both dimensions. It is bound first to the movement of globalization of societies, to the economic and technological transformations that involve them. Without this material dimension we could hardly discuss the existence of a process of mundialization of the cultural sphere. But it also corresponds to a ‘world (mundi) vision’, a specific symbolic universe of today’s civilization, that coexists with other world visions, establishing hierarchies, conflicts and accommodations with them. Its transversality reveals modern life’s globalization, its mundiality expresses the cultural diversity that is inherent to the process.

Using an idea by Marcel Mauss (Mauss, 1974), I would say, mundialization is a total social phenomenon, which pervades all cultural manifestations. The whole goes to the core of its parts, redefining them in their specificities. In this sense it would not be proper to speak of a world-culture whose hierarchical level would be situated outside and above local, regional or national cultural practices. Thinking in this manner would amount to establishing dichotomous relations between various platforms (local vs. national; national vs. global; local vs. global), promoting the dualist reason in a planetary scale. In order to exist, a culture has to have roots, to be situated in men’s everyday practices, without which it would be an abstract expression of social relations. With the emergence of globalization/mundialization, the cultural whole recasts the ‘situation’ where multiple particularities are located, without the need to think in systemic terms. Thinking mundialization as a totality allows us to approximate it to the notion of civilization, an extra-national set of specific social phenomena, common to many societies. But it is necessary to emphasize a particularity of our times. Historically, a civilization extended beyond a people’s frontiers, but limited itself to a determined geographical area. A mundialized culture corresponds to a civilization whose territoriality is globalized. This is not, however, synonymous with uniformity. I emphasize this aspect for the cultural debate sometimes identifies both dimensions, and this is inadequate. For a long time, the discussion of culture, especially when it refers to the so-called mass culture, has debated the dilemma of consciousness homogeneity. In fact, the conception of mass itself is associated with the idea of crowd (a popular notion in the 19th century), where the individuals tended to dissolve into the whole. The theme is posed anew in the context of the planetary diffusion of technologies. For a good many authors, the global village

would consecrate the homogeneity of habits and thinking. Communication technologies, getting people closer to each other, would make the world smaller and identical. An example: Theodore Levitt's (1983) diagnosis of markets' globalization. We would be living a reality that had suffered a standardization of products consumed at a global scale, leveling cultural practices to a sole common denominator. It would be naïve to non-critically oppose this globalizing perspective. Science, technology, consumption, all are important vectors of the globalization process. There is in fact a patterning of modern life's different domains. This is due to some extent to industrialism that invades the cultural sphere itself. The industrial making of movies, television series, books, video games, clothes, is doubtless bound to product patterning.

It is, however, important to distinguish pattern and standards. Anthropologists teach us that there is no society without a determined cultural pattern. And for this they understand the models, the norms that structure social relations. Individual behavior is bound to this 'ground' shared by all. A society is a set of subgroups whose particular ways are distinguished within a common framework. But no one ever refers to culture 'standardization' when dealing with indigenous societies (as it would make no sense to describe Trobriand aborigines' life in terms of 'patterning'). It is only in the discussion of industrial societies that *pattern* and *standard* are identified to the idea of homogeneity. Such an association became 'natural' due to the high degree of rationalization of modern life and to the extension of industrial procedures to the cultural domain. The modern world's rationality distinguishes different areas of society, in one of which, consumption, the patterning process is deeply established. The serial production of cultural artifacts even allows for an analogy with industrial rationality. This fundamental trait of contemporaneous societies, however, should not lead us to be confused. When Weber writes on the rationalization about Western music, he has in mind the casting of a cultural pattern in the sense anthropologists give to the notion. We could hardly assimilate such a pattern to the idea of standardization. In other words, the *pattern* is not to be confused with the *standard*. The point is to understand how the patterning process takes on hegemonic character, although not univocal, in the globalized context. Taking on

again the concept of civilization restores the discussion to another level. There is no conceptual opposition between the common and the diverse; a mundialized culture promotes a cultural pattern without imposing the uniformity of all; it disseminates a *pattern* bound to the development of world modernity itself. Its width certainly involves other cultural manifestations, but it is important to emphasize that it is specific, founding a new way of 'being-in-the-world' and establishing new values and legitimizations. And that is the reason why there is not and there will be not a single global culture, identical in all places. A globalized world implies a plurality of world-views. What we do have is the consolidation of a civilization matrix, world modernity, that is actualized and diversified in every country, region, place, as a function of its particular history. And this means that globalization/mundialization is one and diverse at the same time. We should not conceive of such a diversity as equivalent to the idea of pluralism. In the global situation, parts are different and unequal, fill hierarchically diverse positions, and are permeated by the power relations and force lines that constitute the reality of the game of the world's interests.

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Culture and Global Systems

Jonathan Friedman

Keywords cosmopolitan, culture, global systems, hybridity, intentionality

Culture is often treated as a code, a paradigm and more recently as a substance that can spread throughout the world. The position I suggest here is much simpler. Culture in the most general sense, as generic culture, is simply that which is specific to human societies based on the notion of alternative ways of doing similar things. The capacity for culture is the capacity within the same species to constitute different ways of getting organized. It has usually been contrasted with the rest of the biological world, of which we are, of course, a part, by the fact that other species have far less leeway in the organization of their lives, their production of ways of going about the world. This relative fixity has been called instinct in the past, although the behavior of non-humans is today understood as more complex, even displaying cultural learning. This notion of culture as that which makes us human is not the usual usage of the term of course, except for those who deal with the relations between species. Rather, human culture is a differential concept, based on the notion of difference itself, different ways to skin a cat, different ways to relate to the world, different ways of organizing social reproduction, etc.

That culture can be understood in terms of specific structures, even codes, is based on a false dichotomy between culture as specific social practice and culture as the organizing principle of such practice. Culture is difference, of course, but the difference does not precede the practice. Culture is a set of properties of practice, that which is the specificity of the latter. It is not a scheme for the organization of social life that has a prior existence to that life. Nor does the fact of cultural difference convey anything concerning the origins of such difference. The embeddedness of culture within the social is the starting point for examining the way it is constituted as a social-historical phenomenon. In sum, to say that social life is culturally constituted is to say that social life is constituted *of culture* but not *by culture*. It is of course true that there are aspects of culture that are not embedded in actual social relations but exist as relatively autonomous symbolic schemes to be used to socialize members of a particular social world and/or to interpret the

nature of social existence (as in myth). The internal order of the cultural is related to the construction of worlds of intentionality that constitute the immediate, i.e., non-reflexive meaning of action. Understanding such worlds should not be conflated with the external observation of meaning as a set of texts, objects or substance, as is the case in most globalization approaches to culture. The attempt to understand what people are doing in their lives can never be replaced by an external interpretation of the products of their activities. The examples of this confusion are often quite shocking, as when it is assumed that culture A is a melange of cultures B and C, without any analysis of the way the so-called possessors of such culture create their worlds. Thus, spaghetti becomes part-Chinese, and New Guinea masks depicting advertising for South Pacific Beer are assumed to be hybrid works. Hybrid-for-us perhaps, and it is often stated that such hybridity is an objective phenomenon even if local subjects are unaware of it. But hybridity-for-us is not objective since it is only 'for us', in fact, our own subjective interpretation of our objectification of other people's lives. I have suggested that discourses of hybridity are identity discourses rather than attempts to understand what the people we are supposed to be studying are up to. This perspective is symptomatic of global elites, of transnationally identified artists, intellectuals, media people, and global politicians. In cultural terms, it is generated by a gathering of cosmopolitans in the West. This elite congregation is the source of much of the discourse of globalization as well.

The issue of globalization as related to culture is a product of the kind of conflation referred to above. The objectification of culture is one of its instrumental aspects, the reduction of the practice of difference, of meaning, to a product, a text, a substance which liquified can thence flow across all conceivable borders. This process is associated with visions of a new world that we are entering, a millennium of globalization that for some is the announcement of a world of diasporic hybridity, and for others, a world of increasing disorder and inequality.

Global Process and Culture

The global field is one within which globalization, in the sense of movement, can either occur or not occur. Globalization itself does not define the global. The *Fordist* period of nation-states was just

as global as the contemporary world of supposedly disintegrating national sovereignty, even if states are as strong as ever. A systemic approach allows us to ask the very question: why suddenly did culture become a central figure of discourse and why has 'cultural globalization' followed suit (Friedman, 2004b)?

The emergence of culturalist discourse occurred in tandem with the rise of cultural politics, with the decline of modernist structures of identity and the fragmentation of the modernist world into cultural specificities, the search for roots, the demands for culturally based rights as opposed to class rights. This was a major historical transformation in the West and its dependencies, stimulating a series of cultural re-identifications: indigenous, regional ethnicity, immigrant ethnicity and the transformation of national identity from the issue of citizenship to one of cultural belonging. This is what I have referred to as horizontal fragmentation of the national order.

At the same time there has been a rapid vertical polarization separating upwardly mobile sectors of national populations and downwardly mobile sectors, the increase in the rate of stratification in which the lower half indigenizes while the upper sector cosmopolitanizes. While the bottom becomes increasingly xenophobic and indigenizing in its search for a secure identity, the top identifies as the wards of the multicultural world that has been produced by globalization. Here we find the tendency to self-identification as hybrids, as in 'my life space is an assemblage of objects from world cultures', or 'I am a citizen of the world'. At the bottom, those identified and sometimes self-identified as the global rednecks become increasingly angry opponents of what they identify as global elites: Washington, Rome, the Jews and all other representatives of the cosmopolitan agenda. It is interesting that here as well there are alliances across ethnic lines, the 'black' Washitaw Indians who are allied with the Republic of Texas, the KKK in St Petersburg that trains with local black power groups. Sometimes this is made explicit, as when it is stated that all the *trash*, white, black, red and brown, should have it out and then get the real culprits – the gold card-carrying academics (Goad, 1997) who have always succeeded in separating themselves from the multicultural bottom that they so celebrate.

The above polarities are not alone, of course. There is an interesting tendency for the emergence of geo-political polarizations that have been suggested by authors such as Huntington (1996). Others (Buruma and Margalit, 2004) have suggested that a more general hatred of Western modernity is a deeper structure of Western civilization, from the Romantics to more recent cultur-

ally left anti-Westerners. This discourse has been exported, they claim, to Japan in World War II, to Russia beginning in the 19th century, as well as to contemporary Muslim 'fundamentalism'. While it is true that such discourses have been used by anti-Western and anti-modernist movements in order to purify their geographical regions from the disease of modernity, there is plenty of local discourse that can be summoned for the same geopolitical goals. Fractures at lower geographical levels in the global arena are thus supplemented by these larger world regional configurations (Friedman, 2004c).

While fragmentation is occurring in the Western-dominated sector of the world, in East Asia, primarily China, but also in parts of Southeast Asia, the cosmopolitan is in a weak position with respect to nationalist and regionalist discourses, the establishment of larger geographical units, an intensive focus on development and a new Asian modernism, the extinction or integration, by assimilation, segmentation, rather than autonomization of indigenous minorities.

The combination of horizontal and vertical polarization establishes the field of forces that in their specificity are, by definition, cultural (Friedman, 2004a). If particular signifying constructions are produced in such processes – discourses of hybridity and multiculturalism, discourses of indigenization, nationalism, traditionalism and *Kastom* – these are the cultural content or properties of the changing configuration of the global arena itself. Is there global diffusion in all of this? Of course, commodities, brands, technologies, the media, etc. have established themselves across much of the globe and there has even been a certain superficial identification with these sets of objects among rising elites and, to some extent, middle classes. One might wish to call this homogenization, although it is countered by the fragmented production of new identities and cultural forms. From the outside there might indeed be examples of what one could call hybridity, but these are usually *observer-dependent phenomena*. Hybridity only exists, and it does, of course, where those who are so defined identify as such.

All of this of course has occurred in the past, not least in the form of religious expansion related most often to economic and political colonization: the Hinduization and then Islamization of Southeast Asia (and East Africa), the spread of technologies, products, texts, all common phenomena in world history. We note, however, that diffusion is not a process in itself but a result. How things move and the way they are integrated into people's lives must be approached in great detail and with emphasis on the actors involved. For the spread of religion, at least, the conflicts between local elites

in vying for control over trade and other forms of external wealth have been a crucial aspect of such 'diffusion' in Asia, Africa, the Pacific and even in the early history of Europe. The articulation between different logics and strategies originating in different parts of the world forms the site of a true understanding of such phenomena.

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Global History

Bruce Mazlish

Keywords Eurocentrism, global history, globalization, knowledge, new global history, world history

Global history compels us to ask what it is we know about our world, and how we know it. In its simplest terms, globalization, the subject of study in global history, takes us beyond Eurocentrism, nationalism, and their parochial ways of thinking, into a world of both difference and differences being transcended in the name of a common humanity. In doing so, however, it raises many questions about the disciplines by which we try to discern the shape of what it is we are seeking to understand.

These are lofty-sounding statements. We need to come down to earth as well. Global history is, to begin with, a sub-field of history (Mazlish, 1993; Hughes-Warrington, 2005). It is often used as a synonym for world history. This obfuscates our knowledge in an important way. While world history is also an effort to go beyond Eurocentrism, it does not focus on globalization. The latter is a theme, contained within world history, that can be traced from earliest times – hunter-gatherers spreading across the globe – up to the present. It encompasses interconnection and interdepen-

dence of people, trends that appear to be increasing over time. Yet, teleology and determinism must be rejected as we seek to understand globalization's development. The story of the latter is made up of unintended consequences and human agency, with the result being powerful currents that move in a global direction.

We 'know' this since some time after the end of the Second World War, when the factors making globalization achieved a level of expansion and synchronicity and synergy that, like water boiling, has brought us to a new state. The very term 'globalization' only appeared around the 1960s. To reflect our new awareness we would do well to adopt a new periodization: the global epoch. Previously, we spoke of ancient, medieval and modern periods or epochs. Now we must transcend the latter term in this sequence, modern (and its offspring postmodern), for it has lost its potency in orienting us in a 'world' (a word derived from Middle English meaning 'earth') that has become a globe (a word derived from Latin for spheroid, and pointing us outward) (Mazlish, 1998). Our consciousness of space and time has changed to match our changed life experiences. This is knowledge, a knowledge that requires us to re-examine all our social sciences disciplines, which were derived from an earlier transformation, that of the Industrial and French Revolutions.

Many, if not most, scholars will refuse to take this jump. Their disciplinary traditions, their fights over turf, do not allow them to embrace the interdisciplinary approach and the global history perspective that is required. This is even more true in regard to what is emerging as New Global History, an initiative that focuses on present-day globalization, seen as coming into being after 1945 (for further details, see the website, www.new-globalhistory.org). Knowledge moves by fits and starts – one thinks of Galileo's opponents who refused to look through his telescope or, if they did, declared the stars seen through it to be mere dust on the glass. Such an intelligent man, but stuck in his own limited perspective, as Immanuel Wallerstein declares 'so-called "globalization"' to be a fad (Wallerstein, 2000, xviii–xix). Many follow him in this view.

Often they are blinded by their political desires. Particular ethnic, religious, and national groupings prize particularism rather than universalism, which they link to globalization and see as threatening their ways and local power. Thus, universalizing sciences, such as mathematics and physics, are viewed as mere social constructs, with no need to accept them as true knowledge. This in spite of the fact that they are the same for Asians and Americans and produce similar results everywhere. The same can be said for parts of technology: computers work the same everywhere. How they are used, of course, is a different matter.

Needless to say, outside the natural sciences, the situation is more complicated. Do we know about human rights in the same way we know about gravity? The answer is obviously no. Yet, emerging out of human historical experience as a moral imperative with universalistic claims, human rights, or so its proponents claim, override local, particularistic behaviors in the name of the greater community of humanity. Foreshadowed in the idea of cosmopolitanism (see the entry in this encyclopedia by Pheng Cheah), which is being rethought in the light of globalizing experiences, human rights are based on the reality of developments in the information revolution and the interconnections made possible by that revolution. In the shape of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), operating in connection with the UN and nation-states, the rights of each individual and of oppressed minorities are vindicated.

The perspective of (new) global history requires us to *see* the world anew in these terms. NGOs and multinational corporations (MNCs) are the new actors, alongside the state, in our emerging global society. Our growing knowledge of this fact – for example, of the 100 largest economies, 29 of these are MNCs; as a result, the value added by, say, Exxon Mobil, is larger than the GDP of countries such as Pakistan, New Zealand,

Hungary, and Vietnam – needs to be matched by our visualization of this world (Chandler and Mazlish, 2005). If we open an atlas, we do not *see* this fact. To remedy this distortion, an historical atlas of the MNCs, *Global Inc.*, has been published (New Press, 2003). A project is now under way to match it with a similar atlas depicting the extent and power of the NGOs.

This is knowledge for the eye as well as in the mind. Global history requires us to rethink and review all our other pieces of knowledge. Thus, the notions of sovereignty, internationalism, migrations, and so forth call out for re-conceptualization in the context of globalization, viewed from an historical perspective (in which history, of course, is interdisciplinary). In spite of certain fantasists of globalization, nation-states will not disappear in the world shaping itself around us. Yet national histories will certainly have to be written anew from the global history perspective. One can see this beginning to happen even in such extremely nationalistic and parochial settings as the teaching of American history.

In short, global history puts all our preconceptions and presumed knowledge at risk. As we have been told since antiquity, with this truism recently emphasized by many postmodernists, knowledge is power. It can be power over nature, or power over humans. And power produces knowledge, whether aiding in domination or undermining existing dominations. The question at issue is whether knowledge is merely local power or can transcend its origin and become part of the heritage of humanity. The answer is, of course, contested, but now must be contested in the terms presented to us by globalization.

At a minimum, global history requires us to take up the epistemological and dialectical dimensions of old questions about knowledge in a new light. Without doubt, it forces us to transcend the received Eurocentric perspective and to engage in the preliminary step of going beyond Orientalism to a close examination of Occidentalism (Coronil, 1996). The next step is to explore the geography of globalism per se, an adventure on which we are only now beginning to embark in a serious way. This is a piece of knowledge that is no longer refutable.

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East and West in Global History

John Hobson

Keywords capitalism, civilizations, East/West, Eastern agency, Eurocentrism/Orientalism, imperialism, Oriental globalization

If the title of this entry appears to be unproblematic, if not anodyne, it turns out to be contradictory and loaded with Eurocentric bias. It is contradictory because within conventional historiography there is no East *and* West in 'global history'. 'Global history' is neither global, because it is a provincial story of Western universalism, nor historical, because it is 'ahistorical-Eurocentrism' written backwards. For in conventional historiography, the East is prejudicially relegated to a residual category that has no autonomous place in global history – it is merely a stagnant backwater in the mainstream Western story. In short, conventional global history turns out to be an ahistorical-Eurocentric 'Western provincialism writ large'.

David Landes dismisses this view as but politically correct 'good think' which avoids the 'twin facts' that the West has consistently led the East and pioneered modern global capitalism (Landes, 1998). Similarly, John Roberts argues for the veracity of Eurocentrism on the grounds that:

[it] means 'putting Europe at the centre of things', and its usual implication is that to do so is wrong. But, of course, if we are merely talking about facts, about what happened, and not about the value that we place on them, then it is quite correct to put Europe at the centre of the story in modern times. (1985: 201)

But it is precisely the naïvety or impossibility of the fact-value distinction wherein the source of

the problem lies. For what eludes Roberts and Landes is that Europe only appears to occupy centre-stage of progressive global history because Eurocentric values have led them to select Europe as, or place it at, the centre of the story in the first place. And the East only appears to be absent because it has been selected out, having being consigned to the dark ghetto of the marginalized periphery.

The idea of Western history as universal (global) history emerged in the 19th century when racist-Eurocentrism or Orientalism had been constructed by the Europeans (Said, 1978). This discourse suddenly pronounced the superiority of Europe over the 'inferior Eastern other'. It entailed two critical assumptions: first, that what had previously been thought of as interlinked, if not symbiotic, regions were suddenly relocated along either side of a constructed 'civilizational line of apartheid'. And, second, Europe was constructed as qualitatively superior to the East because it supposedly had exceptional, progressive characteristics or virtues. By contrast, the East was inscribed with only regressive properties. Having constructed Europe as superior and exceptional, Eurocentric thinkers then extrapolated this conception back in time to Ancient Greece, thereby painting an ahistorical picture of Europe as permanently superior (Amin, 1989; Bernal, 1991). Simultaneously Europe was inscribed with a unique 'logic of immanence' wherein the seeds of progress were contained within its socio-political structure. Accordingly, from Ancient Greece on, European development and global history are (re)presented as a purely endogenous Western story that unfolds in a linear sequence. In the process, the Western people were elevated to the permanent 'subject' of global history standing at

the centre of all things progressive. Conversely, the Eastern peoples were relegated to the peripheral status of global history's passive 'object', languishing on the Other side of an imaginary civilizational frontier, stripped of history and dignity.

Crucially this Orientalist discourse was endogenized within the major theories of the rise of capitalist global modernity – especially liberalism, Marxism and Weberianism (Blaut, 1993; Turner, 1993; Frank, 1998: Chapter 1; Hobson, 2004: Chapter 1). Accordingly they explain Europe's rise by excavating causal variables that allegedly exist only within Europe. Moreover, fabricating the story of the rise of the West entailed retrospectively tracing Europe's superiority back to Ancient Greece and then forwards through an immanent journey of the Western (Oriental) Express. On the way the Western train passes through an imaginary linear series of purely European way-stations. These comprise feudalism, the Italian commercial-financial revolution and the Renaissance, commercial capitalism and the Iberian Voyages of Discovery, and then on through British industrialization before arriving (for liberalism) at the terminus of history – the Pax Americana. Marx, of course, shared in this view though he saw capitalism as the penultimate way-station before socialism, which stood at the gateway of the communist terminus of history. Conversely, such a progressive linearity was absent on the Other side of the 'civilizational frontier', where Oriental despotic/patrimonial states and collectivist mentalities and production systems choked civil society, thereby resulting in permanent stagnation. Accordingly, the Easterners could only passively await the arrival of the Oriental (imperial) Express which, fuelled by *Occidental Messianism*, steamed across to pick them up in order to graciously deliver them to the emancipatory terminus of history.

But the problem with this Eurocentric story is that it obscures the considerable role that Eastern agents have played both in progressive global history and in the rise of Europe, which in turn implies a promiscuous and globally interdependent relationship between East and West. Recently, a number of scholars have undertaken their own 'voyages of rediscovery' resulting in various non-Eurocentric explorations of the global-historical rise of the West (Abu-Lughod, 1989; Blaut, 1993; Frank, 1998; Goldstone, 2000; Pomeranz, 2000; Hobson, 2004). Despite all manner of differences, one of the common themes of the alternative post-1997 departure is the inversion of the standard Eurocentric temporal-narrative. Now the mainstream of global history *up to the 19th century* appears as Eastern – especially East Asian – and, after a short Western interlude, seems to be

returning back to China. Moreover, without the considerable help provided by the East, there might never have been a Western interlude (Hobson, 2004). The assumption that global history began with the Europeans after 1492 obscures the point that the West emerged within a pre-existing Eastern-led global economy that was forged in the post-500 era. And between then and about 1800 Europe resided on the backward periphery of the global economy, constituting a promontory of Afro-Asia or the 'Cape of Asia' (Valéry, cited in Nederveen Pieterse, 1990: 105).

Important to the emergence of the global economy after 500 was the rise of various inter-linked regions. These extended across from T'ang China to the Islamic Ummayyad/Abbasid empire in West Asia and the Fatimids in North Africa via the kingdom of Śrīvijaya in Sumatra, ultimately linking to Europe via Ummayyad Spain and Italy. They promoted an extensively pacified space that enabled both considerable trade and the transmission of advanced Eastern 'resource portfolios' (ideas, institutions and technologies) to Europe. In turn, the Afro-Eurasian economy was woven together by three major trade routes (Abu-Lughod, 1989), which were initially promoted by Islamic capitalists after about 650, though Jews, Africans, Javanese, Indians and Chinese were also important.

Islam led the way in terms of two major indicators – extensive and intensive global power. Extensive power refers to the ability of a state or region to spread its economic tentacles outwards, whereas intensive power refers to a leading economy that provides high supply and demand for global trade. Islamic West Asia led the way in both after about 650. Around 1100 the baton of global intensive power was passed not to Italy but to China (during the Sung industrial miracle), where it remained down to the early 19th century. And around 1450 the leading edge of global extensive power passed not to the Iberians but to the Chinese. Nevertheless the distribution of global economic power was polycentric for Islamic West Asia and North Africa as well as India and later Japan maintained high levels of intensive and extensive global power.

Paradoxically, the official 1434 Chinese ban on foreign trade came just before Chinese external trade escalated (Hobson, 2004: Chapter 3). China's voracious demand for silver, owing to her hugely productive economy and large trade surplus with the rest of the world, ultimately sucked Europe *directly* into the Afro-Asian-led global economy. China's demand for silver provided the main outlet for the plundered Spanish-American bullion, thereby enabling the Europeans to finance both their trade deficit with China (and other Asian

countries) as well as their, albeit modest, presence within the Indian Ocean trading system (Hobson, 2004: Chapter 7). And it enabled the Europeans to directly insert themselves into the global gold–silver arbitrage system that was centred upon China (Flynn and Giraldez, 1994; Frank, 1998).

Eurocentrism assumes that the Europeans single-handedly made their own developmental history (and subsequently that of the world's). But this obscures what I call *Oriental globalization* wherein advanced Eastern 'resource portfolios' diffused along the sinews of the global economy to be eventually assimilated by the Europeans, thereby fuelling the rise of the West throughout the 500–1800 period. So while the Italians led the way in Europe after about 1000, the financial institutions upon which they relied were borrowed from West Asia. Moreover, without the many Islamic ideas that diffused across there might never have been a 'European' Renaissance (Goody, 2004; Hobson, 2004: Chapters 6 and 8). In Eurocentrism the Voyages of Discovery signify the emergence of proto-globalization at the hands of the Europeans. But they might better be labelled the Voyages of Rediscovery, given that the regions the Portuguese 'discovered' had long been in contact with each other and indirectly with Europe through Oriental globalization. Moreover, without the diffusion of Eastern resource portfolios, there might never have been any Voyages of Rediscovery. The critical features of the European ships that enabled oceanic sailing – the square hull and stern-post rudder, lateen sail and triple-mast system – were derived from Islamic and Chinese shipping. The critical navigational techniques and technologies – the astrolabe, solar and lunar calendars, astronomy, trigonometry and geometry – were derived mainly from Islamic West Asia. And when we note that the weapons deployed by the Iberians – gunpowder, gun and cannon – had been invented in China in 850, 1275 and 1288 respectively, then there is very little left for the Portuguese or Spanish to have sincerely claimed for their own. Last, but not least, British industrialization was significantly fuelled by the imperial *appropriation* of Eastern resources – land, labour, bullion, raw materials and markets – and the *assimilation* of Chinese ideas and technologies (Hobson, 2004: Chapters 9–11).

So what does this tell us about 'East and West in global history'? It should be clear by now why 'bringing the East back in' creates a genuinely *global* history. But this begs the question: does the deconstruction of the white Eurocentric myth of the West-as-pioneering-subject of global history merely lead to an inverted-Orientalist, or Occidental, metanarrative? This retort misses the central point. For deconstructing the civilizational-apartheid perspective of Eurocentrism

necessarily reveals the peoples of the world as symbiotic, hybrid partners rather than opposing and separate entities. It points up the modalities of inter-human commonality, communication and connection rather than difference, deafness and disassociation. And in so doing it reveals the affiliations and immanent solidarity of civilizations and of the world's peoples. Ultimately, in recognizing this we take an initial step, if not one giant leap, towards a global dream that exorcises the global nightmare of cycles of war and civilizing missions imposed upon a manufactured Eastern Other. A dream wherein the peoples of the Earth can finally sit down at the table of global humanity and communicate as equal partners after the dark interlude of Western colonialism and neocolonialism.

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Oriental Globalization

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Keywords Asian hegemony, East–West binaries, Eurocentrism, global history, Oriental despotism, world economy

The critique of Eurocentrism has gone through several rounds. The first round was primarily a critique of Orientalism. Edward Said and Martin Bernal, among others, focused on cultural bias and racism in Eurocentric history. Others addressed Eurocentric biases in development thinking (Samir Amin, Paul Bairoch, Stavrianos) and historiography (Eric Wolf, James Blaut, Jack Goody).

Subaltern Studies made further contributions revising history from the point of view of the global South. A further strand, global history, generated critical historical studies that document the significance of, in particular, Asia and the Middle East in the making of the global economy. Janet Abu-Lughod focused on the Middle East, Marshall Hodgson on the world of Islam, K. N. Chauduri on South Asia, André Gunder Frank on East and South Asia, Kenneth Pomeranz, Robert Temple and Bin Wong on China, Eric Jones on Japan, and Anthony Reid on South-east Asia, along with many other studies. This body of work not merely critiques but overturns the conventional perspectives and implies a profound rethinking of world history that holds major implications for social science and development studies.

Arguably this body of literature converges on a major thesis: the Orient came first and the Occident was a latecomer. Frank's *ReOrient* settles on 1400–1800 as the time of 'Asian hegemony' (1998: 166). 'The two major regions that were most "central" to the world economy were India and China.' This centrality was based on 'greater absolute and relative productivity in industry, agriculture, (water) transport, and trade' and was reflected in their favorable balance of trade, particularly of China (1998: 127). Pomeranz's *The Great Divergence* offers meticulous comparisons of developments in China and Britain and Geoffrey Gunn (2003) draws attention to South-east Asia as a 'first globalizer'.

In general outline, the Orient-first thesis runs as follows. Global connections may go back to 3500 BCE or earlier still, but 500 CE may rank as the start of oriental globalization and 600 as the beginning of the big expansion of global trade.

This timing is based on the revival of camel transport between 300 and 500. At the time the global economy was centred on the Middle East with Mecca as a global trade hub. In 875 Baghdad ranked as a 'water-front to the world' linked to China (Hobson, 2004: 40). The Middle East remained the 'Bridge of the World' through the second millennium, but by 1100 (or later by some accounts) the leading edge shifted to China where it remained until the 19th century. In China's 'first industrial miracle' 'many of the characteristics that we associate with the eighteenth-century British industrial revolution had emerged by 1100' (Hobson, 2004: 50) with major advances in iron and steel production, agriculture, shipping and military capabilities. From Japan to the Middle East, the East was the early developer – far ahead of Europe in agriculture, industry, urbanization, trade networks, credit institutions and state institutions. Several historians note that 'none of the major players in the world economy at any point before 1800 was European' (Hobson, 2004: 74). The East was also expansive: the Afro-Asian age of discovery preceded Columbus and Vasco da Gama by about a millennium (Hobson, 2004: 139).

Europe was a late developer. Eastern ideas and technologies enabled European feudalism, the financial revolution in medieval Italy and the Renaissance: 'oriental globalisation was the midwife, if not the mother, of the medieval and modern West' (Hobson, 2004: 36). In Hodgson's words, the Occident was 'the unconscious heir of the industrial revolution of Sung China' (in Hobson, 2004: 192). Hobson dates China's central role earlier and extends it later than Frank does. According to Hobson, in shares of world manufacturing output, China outstripped Britain until 1860 and 'the Indian share was higher than the whole of Europe's in 1750 and was 85 percent higher than Britain's as late as 1830' (2004: 77, 76). In terms of GNP, the West only caught up with the East by 1870; in terms of per capita income, a less representative measure, the West caught up by 1800.

I will discuss three specific critiques of Eurocentrism that this literature contributes and then give an assessment of this literature. One of the cornerstones of Eurocentrism is the idea that China turned away from maritime trade and that this caused its gradual decline and opened the way for the expansion of European trade in Asia. The

revisionist literature argues that the closure of China (and Japan) is a myth and the diagnosis of decline is likewise mistaken. It is true that China did not choose the path of maritime empire, but Western historians have mistaken the official Chinese imperial legitimation policy of upholding the Confucian ideal and condemning foreign trade with the actual trade relations which continued and flourished. That China remained the world's leading trading power shows in the 'global silver recycling process' in which 'most of the world's silver was sucked into China' (Hobson, 2004: 66; Frank, 1998: 117).

Another cornerstone of Eurocentrism is Oriental despotism (and variations such as Weber's patrimonialism). In contrast, the revisionist literature argues that states such as China and Japan had at an early stage achieved 'rational' institutions including a 'rational-legal' centralized bureaucracy, minimalist or *laissez-faire* policies in relation to the economy and democratic propensities, while the European states during the 1500–1900 'breakthrough period' were far less rational, more interventionist and protectionist, and less democratic: 'eighteenth century China (and perhaps Japan as well) actually came closer to resembling the neoclassical ideal of a market economy than did Europe' (Pomeranz, 2000: 70). Light taxation and *laissez-faire* attitudes to enterprise were common in the East long before the West and trade tariffs were consistently far higher in the West than in the East throughout the period of comparison, which shows that the Oriental despotism thesis is faulty.

The centrepiece of Eurocentrism is the judgement that other cultures lacked the European commitment to enterprise and accumulation. Weber highlighted the Protestant ethic and described Islam and Confucianism as obstacles to modern development. But many observers have noted the penchant for commerce in the Islamic world. Viewing Confucianism as an obstacle to development involves historical ironies too: what ranked as an obstacle in the early 20th century was recast as the Confucian ethic hypothesis to account for the rise of the Asian Tigers in the late 20th century. An additional irony is the influence of Confucianism on European thinking. That behind Adam Smith stood François Quesnay and the Physiocrats is a familiar point, but the Physiocrats' critique of mercantilism was inspired by Chinese policies and the philosophy of *wu-wei* or non-intervention, which goes back to well before the Common Era (Hobson, 2004: 196). Thus, Confucius emerges as a patron saint of the European Enlightenment.

What is the significance and status of oriental globalization literature at this stage? There are

echoes of dependency theory in this body of work for if it wasn't European genius or other endogenous factors that turned the tide, the role played by colonialism and imperialism in changing the global equation must be greater than is acknowledged in Eurocentric perspectives. One thinks of Eric Williams's work on slavery, Walter Rodney on Africa and other studies. But dependency theory was structuralist while the recent revisionist history rejects a global structural approach (such as world-system theory) and reckons with contingency and devotes attention to agency and identity formation: 'material power in general and great power in particular, are channeled in different directions depending on the specific identity of the agent' (Hobson, 2004: 309). Dependency thinking came out of the era of decolonization while the allegiance of revisionist history is to global history rather than to history viewed through the lens of a particular region and time period. It looks past Fernand Braudel and his 'Mediterranean world' and past world-system theory and its preoccupation with the Low Countries and the Baltic, to wider horizons in the tradition of William McNeill's global history.

At times there is a rhetorical surcharge to this literature which reflects its character as a polemical position. This comes across in a recurrent problem: though the *portée* of its findings is that the East–West divergence is a fiction and is really a continuum, the oriental globalization literature reverses the current of Eurocentrism by marginalizing the West and centring the East; thus it replays East–West binaries. Taking global history beyond East–West binaries is the thrust of another body of studies (Lieberman, 1999, 2003; Whitfield, 2003).

The oriental globalization literature is uneven in that it represents a kind of retroactive Sinocentrism and Indocentrism; for various reasons China, India and the Middle East have been more extensively studied and are more salient than other areas. There is frequent mention of the 'Afro-Asian global economy' but the African part remains sketchier than the Asian side. Also South-east Asia, Central Asia and the Mongol Empire often fall between the cracks of the world's major zones. The oriental globalization thesis needs to integrate finer-grained regional histories and studies such as Hoerder's (2002) work on world migrations during the second millennium. Janet Abu-Lughod also suggests triangulation with local histories but notes, 'We can never stand at some Archimedean point *outside* our cultures and outside our locations in space and time. No matter how *outré* we attempt to be, our vision is also distorted' (2000: 113).

While the oriental globalization literature has grown rapidly and is increasingly substantial, it is by no means dominant. Mainstream thinking continues to view the West as the early developer and the East and the global South as laggards or upstarts. At the turn of the millennium – following the Soviet demise and the Asian crisis and neoconservative belligerence in Washington – Western triumphalism, though increasingly hollow, sets the tone as part of an entrenched ‘intellectual apartheid regime’. The Washington consensus is as steeped in Orientalist stereotypes and historical myopia as the neoconservative mission to bring freedom and democracy to the world. Eurocentric economic history à la David Landes (*The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*) and Roberts (*Triumph of the West*) rhymes with Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilizations, Bernard Lewis’s account of Islam (*What Went Wrong?*), Fukuyama’s ideological history (*The End of History*) and Mandelbaum (*The Ideas that Conquered the World*). This general mindset informs IMF and World Bank policies (economics without history or anthropology) as well as American aspirations in the Middle East (politics without memory), as if development and democracy are virtues that the West chanced upon first and only.

Besides plain ignorance and arrogance, there is something deceptive about Eurocentrism-as-policy, a trait that Ha-Joon Chang summed up as *Kicking Away the Ladder* (2002). In the 19th century free trade was used as a means to deindustrialize colonial economies and now WTO statutes and free trade agreements that uphold the intellectual property rights of multinational corporations short-circuit industrialization in the global South. Institutionalized amnesia and intellectual apartheid are instruments of power.

As the oriental globalization literature overtakes the self-indulgent west-centric view of globalization, perhaps the global realignments that are now gradually taking shape will catch up with the material side of American supremacism. This diagnosis of the ‘global confluence’ arrives on the scene at the time that China, India and East Asia are re-emerging as major forces in the global economy; historiography catches up with the present just when the present is coming full circle with past trends in the world economy. A synthesis that is yet to take shape is that of the historical oriental globalization thesis with the

cutting edge of contemporary globalization in the making.

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Globalization with a European Face

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Keywords emerging powers, Europe, European globalization, Westphalian order of societies, world systems

Mediating Emerging Powers

Should globalization have a face as civilizations and cultures, states and societies, economic and social orders historically had or have? We may think of friendly or ugly faces of power – our cultural memory includes colonial and racist faces of power. One generation in 1968 had the dream of socialism with a human face, and another of capitalism with a human face in the good times of the *new economy* at the end of the last century. The cultural memory of historical representations of power matters when new emerging powers are beginning to shape the global order. The European cultural memory may enable Europeans to mediate emerging powers beyond the world of traditional empires and their global economies, beyond the worlds of nation-states and their international economies, and beyond the world of liberal empires and their global economy, since they know something about the reflexivity of power. The double character of power, being at once asymmetrical, as Max Weber characterized it, as well as creative, i.e. the ability to do something with somebody else, as Hannah Arendt stressed, has to be turned into a tool for mediation. The emerging powers are structurally diverse: there are nation-states and societies as extended as continents and civilizations like India and China, associations of regional states as in Europe, South-east Asia, and South America, and all the varieties of reflexive territorialism between them. There are networks of global firms and technology hubs, the nodes of capital markets and knowledge systems, and the new economic archaeology of power. There are these widespread media-, techno-, ideological, religious, and cultural scapes that Arjun Appadurai talks about, and the old and new ecumenical spheres, diasporic locations and islands of meaning with their flows of images, text, sound, and artefact. Last but not least, there are *global cities* no longer defined only by financial headquarters, historical functions and home for the creative classes, but by their position in the permanent struggle for centrality in the global urban landscape of power, as Saskia Sassen (1995) has taught us.

Their emerging powers work from above and from below, within global societies and within their interdependency: people see, hear, taste, feel, and smell this emergence. Discourses on globalization are an essential part of globalization everywhere and are mirrored and reflected by multiple audiences. One may argue that these emerging powers do not allow, do not need or should not ask for mediation, because the flows and stocks of the global complexities, as John Urry (2003) has characterized them, will find their own way. But the realities of globalization demand a rethink of the old European ideas of mediation and *Aufhebung*. At the same time it is true that European thought is not just the naturally born candidate for the position of mediating emerging powers. European reflexive modernity is less universal and more particular than Europeans often like to believe. It is true that it would be better to speak of 5000 years of globalization rather than of 500 years, as André Gunder Frank (1998) has suggested; that the project of globality is different from the project of modernity, and the global universe after modernism will not be defined by the postmodernism we know. Modern individualism and individual choice in all spheres of life, the interaction of markets as a social research process and the driving force for mobilization and differentiation, popular democracy and individual conflict management, the dominance of rational cultures forcing secularists as well as believers to come up with their reasons and intensities, all these modern achievements are confronted with emerging powers and the empty place of globality. Before suggesting a European reflexive empire, as Ulrich Beck does (Beck and Grande, 2004), Europeans have to break with their idiosyncratic identification of globalization and modernization, reflect on their position in the rise of the modern world system and reshape their illusions after recovering from their own two world wars.

World Systems

The real challenge of Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory is to speak of a singular world system. Archaeologists as well as historians would prefer to speak about world systems. They suggest, as Gil Stein (1999) does, alternative frameworks such as trade-diaspora and distance-parity models of interaction, they have empires and their world economies, as Fernand Braudel has documented,

and last but not least the world of nation-states and their global economy. The singular modern world system marks the special place in-between historical-archaeological empires and exchange systems, on the one hand, and modern capitalism, democratic republic and open culture, on the other. In this modern world system, however, some basic questions remain: whether the dynamic towards universal nations or the balance of strategically acting powers, and the commercial and credit institutions of economic power or the professional and industrial commodification of labour are shaping economic life, and whether the institutionalized coexistence of beliefs, traditions, and cultures, or the mediation of different human experiences in a single universe of science, ethics, and aesthetics makes the world go round. It is that singularity that now is reappearing on the global political, cultural, and economic stage, but this time in terms of a true global world system. Europeans do not own the reflection on the singular world system at all; they have to accept their histories of rising, rivalling and declining power in a collective psychoanalysis in order to contribute to and mediate the antagonisms of a true global world system. After their centuries of religious civil war and reason, revolution and development, life and difference – Helmuth Plessner has suggested the sequence of reason, development and life for the European centuries – American modernization emerged in the first half of the 20th century as the only mediator between universalism and the balance of powers, industry and commerce, pluralism and belief. As the challenge of socialism disappeared in the second half of that century, and the aspirations of the Third World remained limited because the constitution of many independent states was not embedded in an institutionalized global economic order, for a moment it seemed that the American unification of modernity and globality would be the end of history and that globalization would get an American face. But after only a few years the basic questions of the one-world system are back and more open than ever before. If Europeans are entering the contemporary struggle and competition for the mediation of the emerging powers of globalization, they not only have to understand the shift of economic, political, and cultural power to the American project of global modernization during the last century, but maybe even more the global limits of their own post-war European project which proves to be much more inward-looking, historicist and passive than most of them believe.

European Illusions

After the post-war-recovery, with the crisis of the 1970s, Europeans became conscious of their reflexive capacities and developed sublime feelings of superiority regarding the liberal project of modernization. At the end of the century most of these feelings proved to be illusions, software without hardware. Nevertheless, this amalgam of reflexive social capacities and sublime illusions is an obstacle to any global mediating role giving globalization a European face. Europe seemed to have some civilizational advantages resulting from a longer and more intensive period of industrialization creating the appropriate institutions and the appropriate behaviour of mass society, sophisticated organization and democracy. More than this, European urban experience seemed to preserve an idea of public life, depth of collective experience and vital senses for the division of meaning between urban and rural landscapes. Some people even thought that the European experience of family, marriage and intensive bonds between individuals had the better historical chances to be cultivated and extended. When, three decades ago, the first waves of our contemporary globalization arrived, many Europeans, due to their mature historical institutions, the complexities of their urban life and their differentiated family life believed themselves to be better adjusted to the uncertainties of modernity. Indeed, the American way of life having been Europeanized by war, welfare-statism and communication had moved into the global crisis of the 1970s, seemingly unable to work with this decline. By turning this decline upside down hegemonic American liberals – and their British followers – first of all learned from their Japanese and German competitors and then used the new opportunities of globalization, information industry and global mediascapes to make their project of modernization reflexive, raising productivity, including vital parts of European and Asian societies. The seemingly civilizing European advantages were doubted. The long and extensive experience of industrialization could also be a disadvantage in flexible high-tech production or high quality service structured by global expansion of the tertiary sector. The European urban experience with its historical-cultural core might not be open enough for the productive effects of migration, transnational media experience and anthropological reflexivity. Even the often quoted stability of personal bonds, reciprocity and public life expressed in public places, theatres and museums could be doubted as too slow, too homogeneous and too inflexible for a vital post-colonial world of intensive differences. The European face seemed to be looking old, not only against the new

America but against the new Second World of emerging powers from India and China to South African and South American states and societies. But neither the old nor the new Europe, neither the old nor the new America, neither the old Third World nor the new Second World, match the questions of our time. In 1973 economic globalization began to recover from the de-globalization of the world wars; in 1989, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the question of political globalization returned, and after 2005, with the end of the post-war constitution for Europe, the German question is over, but the European question of that time is now embedded in the real interaction of global emerging powers.

Global Expectations

At the beginning of the 21st century expectations for Europe come more from the periphery than from the centre. The East and South European societies of the EU are re-inventing themselves to get into the markets, networks, and institutions, although these efforts are embedded in the nervous intertwining of local and global desire. Emerging powers like China and India as well as associations of growing economies are interested in a better balance of power and are looking for attractive, cooperation cultures in a competitive world. Beyond nation-building, beyond the historical interaction of civilizations and beyond the Westphalian Order of states, global complexities are framed in a different manner. But instead of developing global governance software without the hardware of global government, a new Westphalian order of societies may be the future. The treaty for this contract is not yet signed, but overlapping societies, migration from above and from below, permanent comparison and exchange of ideas and values are demanding new arenas for conflict and consensus in and between societies linking the power structure of one society much closer to the power structure of the others. As high-technology enterprises, media and cultural industries are providing the interaction of markets, opportunities, desires, and life chances, Europeans could offer a model for an order of open societies attractive for a globalized world. However, the European economic unity in diversity is not established, the difference between a Scandinavian and British welfare regime is unbalanced, and the creative cores of development are partly chic nodes in the global enterprise network. From the glorious times of European modernity there might remain a distinguished sense of global complexities, the

fluidity of objects and subjects between words, histories, and experiences, as well as some sense of the dignity of places, persons, and artefacts, but as in history Europeans have to re-invent themselves to mediate the emerging powers. The long shadows of the European 19th century, nation and class, have to be reflected when Europeans are mediating work and service within and between societies, and have to mediate taxation and representation within and between societies while leaving the shadows behind in contributing to a truly globalized world. European intellectual traditions are characterized by the same ambivalence. The intellectual history of critical social theory, structuralism and cultural theory, modernization and systems theory is somehow exhausted from the great post-war recovery, the post-colonial fragmentation and the post-totalitarian difference, but at the same time offering tools of reflexivity for the management of emerging powers. As often in history Europeans prove to be the most universal and the most particular human beings at the same time. They are born to invent the idea of *Weltpragmatismus*, but could get lost between their history and the compression of time and space.

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America

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Keywords exceptionalism, godliness, hegemony, hypertrophy, immunity, impunity, providentialism, supplement, terrorism

To take America as an encyclopedic object, and as a 'supplement', at that, is to court damnable incoherence, if not outright actionable impertinence where America's global order of the day at the beginning of the 21st century is concerned. Hegemonic world order is prone to guard its privileged epistemic and onto-theological status with fanatical zeal. America as self-reifying centrality has militated for its indisputable ontological status since its inception as Puritan theocracy. Harold Bloom, not without typical American self-conviction, has diagnosed America as endemically self-sanctifying and providentially elect, closer to God than any other chosen people has dared deem itself so chosen. Bloom's *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation*, published in the not insignificant year of 1992, is as acute as Bloom could ever be. It is also symptomatic of America's perennial self-perception as history's exception. A 'Post-Christian Nation', as Bloom's subtitle avers, is a post-historical nation, inasmuch as history where America is concerned has always been teleological and messianic, which is to say apocalyptic. Its 'post-Christianness' would clearly make it as post-apocalyptic and extra-historical. Symptomatically, Bloom's diagnosis coincides with Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1993), yet another instance of American triumphalist exceptionalism that deems itself beyond human history. And while Bloom saw America as 'post-Christian' in 1992, by the beginning of the 21st century the 'postness' he and Fukuyama diagnosed would prove encyclically circular.

In a vehement return of the repressed, in Freud's terms, that would betray a pre-Christian zeal verging on self-idolatry and divinely conferred self-justification, by 2005 commentators such as Canada's (formerly of the USA) Henry A. Giroux refer to the reigning paradigm of America's public sphere as 'Rapture Politics', and to the pithy characterization of America by its former Attorney General John Ashcroft as

Unique among nations, America recognized the source of our character as being godly and

eternal, not being civic and temporal. And because we have understood that our source is eternal, America has been different. We have no king but Jesus. (Giroux, 2005)

At the beginning of the 21st century, then, as we cycle back into encyclopedic knowledge management, America stands apart as uncontested and incontestable hegemon in a cyclical return to a 'heroic' age, where 'heroic' can only be understood in Hobbsian and apocalyptic terms, rather than in terms of the recursive spirals of Giambattista Vico. Such recursivity is not only a reaction formation responding to the baleful contingencies of realpolitik and its terrors, itself a complex set of reactions, in turn. Rather, America's self-perceived godliness and infallibility are yet another occasion of a compensatory gesture seen as perennially indispensable because, in good measure, of America's genesis as nominal and philological gambit on the part of pundits such as Thomas More, himself no less theologically convinced, a strength of conviction that would end with his decapitation in the court of his sovereign, and on the part of ironic wits such as Martin Waldseemüller. In his *Cosmographia Introductio* (Introduction to Cosmography) (1507), Waldseemüller would forge the baptismal nomination of 'America' as lexical play on the name of Amerigo Vespucci. By taking the Greek stem *meros* ('place') and prefixing the privative 'a' to it, and by locating this 'no-place' on earth (*ge*), with *Amerige* Waldseemüller left the trope of 'utopia' as legacy for the ill-starred Thomas More (Kadir, 1992). This is the nominal ontology for which America has been compensating ever since with desperate and sanctimonious righteousness. It has not sufficed to displace nominalism as foundation by substituting realism's or religion's bedrock ontology. America has perennially labored to convert that compensatory realism into an onto-teleology, an overcompensation that would have America be 'real' not only of/in this world, but also of/in the next. Thus, the providentialist exceptionalism has echoed unremittingly since Columbus equated the newly encountered oceanic land mass with the eschatological New World, since the Puritans founded their theocracy in New England as New Canaan, since continental conquest and colonization found its divine sanction in Manifest Destiny, and since God himself certified the enterprise of global hegemony through His latest providential agent,

the current president of the USA, George W. Bush, who is convinced of his divine appointment and godly agency. (Mr Bush would confess on a 16 July 2004 visit to an Amish community in Smoketown, PA, 'God speaks through me.' See <http://www.irregulartimes.com/godspeaksthroughme.html>.) How, then, to consign such providentially sanctioned centrality to epistemic supplement in an encyclopedic archive, when the destiny of America is already writ large in God's own book for the ages? Perennial attempts to reframe America as hemispheric synecdoche, as 'the other America', or as 'our America', have proved no more than disingenuous reaffirmations of America as Whitmanesque grandeur and bipolar multiplicity, or as involuntary and inexorable self-subalternizations on the part of Latinate voices in the rest of the American Hemisphere. Symptomatic, in this regard, is Boaventura de Sousa Santos's 'Nuestra America: Reinventing a Subaltern Paradigm of Recognition and Redistribution' (2001), where a 'reinvention' ends by being a re-inscription and replication of what it would interrogate.

If, then, as the subtitle of this encyclopedic project avers, the global goal is to render 'global knowledge' problematic, we are faced with no larger problem than the supplementarity this project would impute to the status of what deems itself not only global in this planet Earth, but central in the cosmic order of extra-planetary space (now duly militarized) and transcendental metaphysics (now evangelized with the zeal of born-again self-conviction). This, of course, is not only a transcendence into metatheoretical space and post-apocalyptic time, it is a bulking metastasis, a hypertrophy that distends the global and overflows any site of knowledge production – no matter whether encyclopedic, archival, digitalized, or hypertexted. No cognitive mapping can contain America, as supplement or as metanarrative, and no network – the World Wide Web or any other cosmic formation of knowledge management – proves equal to the task of epistemic or discursive containment. America has proved from its inception what this author has termed elsewhere 'an incontinent continent' (Kadir, 1986). At the beginning of this new millennium, America labors to sustain this indomitable impetus with greater vigor than ever. This is no mere deluge or fluidity that overflows the sites and epistemic rules of knowledge production. America has always viewed itself as post-diluvian and post-apocalyptic, where, as the already cited Bloom demonstrates, by example as much as by assertion, 'post-' and 'pre-' converge in a cycle of 'preposterous' self-conviction. As such, if indeed it is to be consigned taxonomically to the status of supplement,

America's supplementarity must be cosmic and extend well beyond the circumscriptions of the circular *paideia* we commonly call an 'encyclo-pedia'. As global hegemon, America situates itself beyond any globalizing process. No archive, squared or in the round, can subsume, much less subject to its disciplinarity the America that militantly deems itself exempt from and exceptional to any consignments of knowledge or constellations of realpolitik. An orthogenesis of its own exertions, America does not brook definition as instance of any discursive formation or as epistemic object of any dialogical assemblage. In its self-perceived and oft-declared exceptionalism, it would persist as incomparable monad that does not allow for diagnostic scrutiny or prognostic speculation outside its own self-engendered criteria. It aggressively projects its own unilateral and monologic soliloquy in which it deems itself incomprehensible by/in any logic or epistemic archive. Any definition imputed to this phenomenon, as supplement or otherwise, will be deemed a less than adequate projection of the archivist, or considered a wishful transference of the encyclopedist. To venture any diagnosis or characterization of America other than the self-sanctioned at this historical juncture runs the risk of being indicted for terroristic intentions and condemned for seditious heterodoxy. By questioning what now reigns with bellicose immunity, then, one risks the consequences of its absolute impunity. This risk itself and the all too evident global repercussions of its belligerence may be America's self-defining and most compelling descriptor. No encyclopedic endeavor can feel immune from the prospect of its own encirclement – epistemic, ideological, carcenary – within the hegemonizing circumscriptions of its object of knowledge, if that object should be America at the beginning of this new millennium.

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Civilization

Roland Robertson

Abstract It is necessary to distinguish between civilization as a sociocultural complex on the one hand, and civilization as a process, on the other. This is illustrated by invoking the work of Norbert Elias. For Elias, the civilizing process consisted in the way in which what were, historically, constraints on human behaviour became internalized, and is a process that takes different forms in different cultures. On the other hand, at the centre of civilization as sociocultural complex was the question concerning the attributes of a human being, crystallizing as clear-cut criteria for adjudging the degree to which the people occupying a particular territory were or were not civilized. The conception of civilization as a complex has become contemporary via Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' thesis, and is indicative of the way in which the very word 'civilization' now carries with it a considerable ideological baggage. This article argues that the ideological use of civilization and the wider discourse of the war against terror involves the fusion, or conflation, of civilization as process and civilization as complex.

Keywords complex, culture, Elias, Huntington, Islam, modernity, process

Process vs Complex

The concept and idea of civilization is replete with problems of meaning and interpretation. In the first place, it is necessary to distinguish between civilization as a sociocultural complex – more loosely, a bounded way of life – on the one hand, and civilization as a process, on the other. As will be seen, this distinction is, in itself, by no means clearcut. This can be immediately illustrated by invoking the work of Norbert Elias (1978, 1982). While Elias concentrated very explicitly on the processual meaning of the term, his work has some overlap with the notion of civilization as a complex. As will be seen in due course, the overriding difficulty with Elias's work inheres in his apparent failure to recognize that what came by the end of the 19th century to be called *the standard* of civilization was a relatively autonomous, transnational norm (Gong, 1984; Robertson, 1992: 114–28). In other words, over and beyond Elias's *analytic* conception of the civilizing process there had developed a consciously known and recognized, prescriptive denotation of civilization.

For Elias, the civilizing process consisted in the way in which what had been, historically, constraints on human behaviour became internalized. This process makes the conduct of social affairs less a matter of external control and more a matter of individual conduct. Essentially this means that over the long haul there is, in Elias's perspective, a trend toward what we would in everyday terms call civilized behaviour, notwithstanding periodic deviations from this trend. There has been considerable debate as to the degree to which this process has taken different forms in different sociocultural contexts (Mennell, 1992: 227–50). Of particular relevance here is the principle of civility (Cuddihy, 1987; Robertson, 1992: 115–28).

Elias's work was undoubtedly influenced by Sigmund Freud, who had talked in roughly the same terms, but much less elaborately. Freud's ideas in this regard were expressed succinctly in his lateish book, *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930).

In contrast to the processual conception of civilization, the focus upon civilization as a

sociocultural complex, one which has tended to be territorially bounded, is – at least, in an explicit sense – much older and probably much more familiar, in spite of the great prominence of Elias over the past 50 years or so in some Western academic circles. Having said this, a strong caveat must be stated, in that general ideas about barbarians, savages and so on had permeated much of Western history writing for a number of centuries. At the centre of much of this was the question concerning the attributes of a human being. Different societies have imagined different solutions to this, though the conceptualization of the other, the stranger, has varied from culture to culture, ranging from complete non-recognition to the recognition of a common belonging. Much of Elias's writing on the civilizing process had been published in German at the beginning of the most severe Nazi domination of Germany, which people have sometimes found to be rather ironic, but nonetheless courageous. Clearly, the Nazi conception of the superiority of the Aryan 'race' demonstrates the obvious link between Elias's work and much older and diffuse talk of racial superiority and inferiority.

Civilization as a Complex

It is necessary to explore the idea of civilization as a complex, as an 'entity' (Kavolis, 1986, 1987; Nelson, 1981) before coming more directly to its processual connotations, repeating that, in announcing this procedure, it will be essential later to bring the problems of the relationship between the two semantic tendencies into sharper focus. The conception of civilization as a complex with particular attention to its cultural content and associated practices has been brought into very sharp, and politicized, contemporary terms by the publication of Samuel Huntington's polemical book, *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996). This book was a much extended version of an article previously published in the American journal, *Foreign Affairs* (Huntington, 1993). The fact that it was published in such a context, devoted to world politics and foreign policy, notably US American foreign policy, is indicative of the way in which the very word 'civilization' now carries with it a considerable ideological and perspectival baggage (Crockatt, 2006; Harris, 2004; Toynbee, 1948). Moreover, it is more than worth saying at this point that for many living in the oft-called Third World, 'civilization' has for quite some time been considered as an aspect of the Western imperial gaze (Mignollo, 1998), related to the subjectivizing project of the 'mission civilisatrice'. The word civilization has been so inflated in political terms that much of its analytic purchase has been lost. However, this should by no means be taken as a rejection of the term, particularly since the more analytical use of this concept has never completely succumbed to ideological pressure and has in recent years been the subject of growing analytic concern, Huntington notwithstanding. It is worth noting that for quite some time there has been an American conception that the USA represents a particularly advanced form of civilization. This idea has been especially prominent during the last 15 years or so among American Republicans (cf. Beard and Beard, 1930).

At this point, it may be helpful to turn to the contested meaning of the term civilization in a more historical perspective, thereby assisting us in understanding – at least, skeletally – its spatiotemporal location in the late 20th century and the early 21st century. With the proclaimed end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Huntington, among many others, considered that the Western world, and the USA in particular, would think it necessary to 'find' another Other (cf. Fukuyama, 1992). In other words, opposition and resistance to the seeming threat of the old Soviet Union – more accurately, the Russian empire and, indeed, civilization – had become the basis of quite a large degree of the solidarity that existed within and among Western nations. In addition, Huntington proclaimed that Islam, in particular, could and probably would come to be a threat to the Western world (at least in the Northern hemisphere), regardless of its Otherness. Particularly since the early 1970s, the oil boom in the Middle East, coupled with the resurgence of the more 'radical' types of Islam, had already emerged in opposition to both Soviet communism and the 'democratic capitalism' of the West. So, even without the collapse of Soviet communism, Islam would almost certainly have become a formidable factor in the world. Indeed, in its extreme caliphate form, some Muslims have envisaged that Islam could and should become the apex of a globewide

Islamic civilization. In this regard it should be said that one of the contributing factors to the demise of the Soviet Union was, in fact, its unsuccessful venture into (Islamic) Afghanistan in the late 1970s and the 1980s, as well as the increasing signs of resistance to Soviet domination in the southern Islamic republics of the USSR. Here it should be kept carefully in mind that over the long historical haul, Islam had represented much more of a challenge to the Western 'way of life' than had the relatively brief period of Russian, Marxist-Leninist expansionism from the time of the Russian revolutions of 1917 until the declining years of the 20th century.

While the notion of civilization, both as a verb and as a noun, had been around for many centuries, notably in what we now call the West, extensive use of the term did not really begin until the later part of the 19th century. This occurred in close connection with the beginnings of academic anthropology in two overlapping branches: the comparative and the evolutionary. It should be quickly added, however, that it had significant, but highly complex, continuities with ideas propagated during the European Enlightenment of the second half of the 18th century, in spite of presentations of the negative side of the Enlightenment in Western and Central Europe.

As the imperial ventures of the most powerful Western countries gained momentum and reached their peak with the so-called scramble for Africa and the crowning of Queen Victoria as the empress of India at the end of the century, so the view in political circles grew that areas of imperial expansion were uncivilized in terms of the ways of life of the 'natives'. This process resulted in the crystallization of rather clear-cut ideas as to the criteria for adjudging the degree to which the people occupying a particular territory were or were not civilized. Quite frequently the term 'barbarian' was used as a synonym for the latter. This development impinged a great deal on the work of religious missionaries, many of whom saw their task as being the civilization (note the calculative processual use of the term here) of the indigenous, 'primitive' inhabitants of colonized or to-be-colonized areas.

It should also be said that a rough distinction has to be made between colonial expansion in the Northern hemisphere and areas south of the equator. The notion of civilization was bound up in certain parts of the world – notably East Asia – with the principle of extraterritoriality. This refers to the ways in which imperial nations attempted to enforce the laws of the intrusive nation within certain regions of the threatened territories. Such was the case particularly on the eastern seaboard of China and in the central parts of Japan towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries.

Stated all too briefly, it can be said that in the areas of colonial expansion, or at least intrusion, there was much more a perceived promise of becoming civilized than in other areas. In this regard we should mention such regions as India, China and other parts of the East and, to some degree, South East Asia. But, it should be said that much of what we now call Latin America was an exception to this rule, in that by the end of the 19th century a considerable number of countries in South and Central America (including Mexico) had by virtue of a long-standing and dominating Spanish or Portuguese presence been largely 'civilized'. Nevertheless, the Spanish or Portuguese prevailed over the indigenous peoples, notwithstanding varying degrees of inter-marriage between conquerors and 'natives', this being particularly true of Portuguese Brazil. Overall, this can be characterized as a period during which the Western imperial powers – including to some extent the USA – attempted not so much to conquer new territory, but to open up new markets for their products and gain access to valuable and 'exotic' raw materials, such as silk and other fabrics as well as spices, tea and coffee.

The challenge posed to these areas was resisted with various degrees of success during the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Indeed, the idea grew in some of these countries that if they could become 'civilized' they would not be so much at the mercy of such nation-states as Britain, France, Germany, the USA and others. This meant that among political and intellectual elites in the threatened areas it was not at all uncommon for them to declare that they should calculatedly engage in projects of civilization. Notwithstanding a superficial similarity with Elias's conception of civilization as a process, it is not fully consonant with his

perspective, for Elias tended to neglect the reflexive and purposeful, not to say strategic, significance of what should be called *projects* of civilization. This latter phenomenon is to be seen vividly in the case of Japan, where the aspiration to become a civilized nation-state grew rapidly in the Meiji period (1868–1912). Indeed the very notion of a bounded territory becoming a nation-state was in itself taken to be a hallmark of civilization. Moreover, the Japanese conception of civilization included such ideas as that a truly civilized and modern nation should have its own empire, in imitation of the most advanced European powers. This aspiration grew steadily in the first half of the 20th century and, in the case of Japan, its leaders saw it as their mission to protect the entirety of Asian civilization from Western intrusion by creating its own racially conceived empire. Even in the case of a relatively ‘advanced’ and rapidly expanding nation/empire such as Russia, the concern to be recognized as civilized was closely associated with the ambition to become politically, economically and militarily powerful. Indeed, Lenin proclaimed, soon after the successful Russian revolution of 1917, that in order to be accepted as a major power Russia/the Soviet Union had to be recognized as being civilized, notwithstanding the fact that, in the entitive sense of the word, Russia had been for many centuries at the very centre of a distinctive civilization!

This enables us to see with particular clarity why it was that the Standard of Civilization (Gong, 1984) came to be a feature of international law during the period in question. The fact of the matter is that whereas there has been a lot of resistance to the ideological term civilization in recent decades among the peoples of less developed societies, the aspiration to become civilized was conspicuous in those same regions at the beginning of the 20th century. This is why, in spite of many attempts to do otherwise, the concept of civilization cannot, when all is said and done, be entirely divorced from the theme of imperialism. Nor can it be divorced from the themes of race and racism. This partly explains why it was that the explicit, if a little reluctant, strategy to become civilized was to be found much more in the Northern hemisphere than in the South.

For it was in the latter part of the world that ‘true natives’ or ‘savages’ were to be found. Indeed, there was considerable debate among Western intellectuals as to whether the black or red peoples of Africa and the Americas should be regarded as human at all. In fact, the debate about the distinction between human and non-human is at the heart of more normative traditional discussions of civilization. In any case, the French novelist-philosopher Arthur de Gobineau argued in his ‘An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races’ (1853–55[1970]) that civilization in the normative sense basically revolved around the question of racial superiority and inferiority, claiming that this was the only way in which we could explain why European societies had constituted the site of the production of a superior way of life. At the heart of Gobineau’s ideas on race was the belief that some races were destined to remain incapable of mixing sociably with others, while superior races had a proclivity to produce such peoples (Harris, 2004: 76–77). It is noteworthy that Gobineau considered that this theorem could explain the rise and fall of civilizations.

One much-overlooked aspect of the notion that the world could be divided essentialistically into superiors and inferiors is that this was a rather strong feature of Enlightenment thought, most strikingly in the work of none other than Immanuel Kant. In fact there was a considerable amount of what we would now call, very pejoratively, racism among Enlightenment thinkers, including such late-Enlightenment figures as Hegel. This was not simply implicit, it was quite open and unembarrassed, this being well exemplified by Kant’s statement that ‘This fellow was quite black . . . a clear proof that what he said was stupid’ (Eze, 1997: 38–64). Kant’s pupil, Johann Herder, was one of the few exceptions among Enlightenment thinkers to resist the general consensus that the world could and should be divided in terms of different racial characteristics (Eze, 1997: 65–78), although Herder was seemingly guilty of what some would nowadays call Orientalism. Gobineau’s claim that the incapacity for some races to mix sociably with others was a sign of their racial inferiority facilitates our returning directly to the theme of the rise and fall of civilizations, thus implying that there was a racial foundation of cosmopolitanism.

Another Enlightenment thinker, Edward Gibbon, must also be mentioned here. Gibbon authored the highly influential book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He attributed the formal introduction of Christianity into the empire as having been the primary cause of its downfall. This theme of the negative effects of religion was a rather common feature of Enlightenment thinking, although this tendency has been greatly exaggerated, as Cassirer (1944) cogently argued. Moreover, it should be said, Cassirer contributed considerably to the study of world history, with considerable attention to the concept of civilizations.

Perhaps the most well-known example of the revival of interest in the rise and fall of civilizations was Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (1965[1996]). This book was partly based upon a very pessimistic and what we would now call a highly negative view of the rise of European modernity, particularly with regard to changes wrought in the ways of life to be seen in such cities as London, Paris, Vienna and Berlin. In this respect Spengler's pessimism and negativism rested a lot on the new forms of life detected in a 'tragic' way by such sociologists as Georg Simmel, who had a direct, if unintended, influence on Spengler (Hughes, 1952). Spengler was also much affected by what he perceived to be the increasing power and global impact of such 'inferior' areas of the world as East Asia, most notably to be seen in the meteoric rise of Japan from an isolated, more or less feudal, society in the mid-19th century to a rapidly changing, 'modernizing' one by the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century. One should say here that the problem of the rise and fall of civilizations came into even sharper focus when the relationship between Spengler's work and that of the English historian Arnold Toynbee is explored. The crucial difference between the two writers was that whereas the German, Spengler, paid little or no attention to the relationships between different civilizations – indeed, he considered this as a sign of civilizational degeneration – Toynbee, in direct criticism of Spengler, insisted on regarding world history in terms of the *mixing* of different ideas and different peoples. Indeed it is worth emphasizing that it has been rather common for German historians and social theorists to neglect mixing – specifically the issue of inter-civilizational relationships and encounters – in comparison with their British and American counterparts. This is to be evidenced in the recent past in the rather neglected work of Benjamin Nelson (e.g. Nelson, 1981), with respect to what he called the new civilizational analysis. Nelson was central to the reinvigoration of the Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations, along with Vytautas Kavolis (some of whose work is discussed in Robertson, 1992: 129–45). Whereas Nelson was particularly concerned to produce an enriched version of Max Weber's brilliant and highly influential work on the differences between Western and Eastern civilizations, Kavolis was more interested in mapping the uniqueness and singularity of extant civilizational complexes. In fact he identified the continuing vitality of what he called the five living civilizations: the East Asian, the South East Asian Buddhist, the Indian, the Islamic and the Western (Huntington, 1996).

In fact the inattention to civilizational encounters and cross-fertilization among civilizational complexes is something of a hallmark of the German approach to the study of civilization and civilizations. This may well be why German historiography and social and cultural theory have, for the most part, been resistant to the thematization of the idea of globalization. There is, in any case, something of a tension between the civilizational perspective and the globalization standpoint – although this is certainly not necessary (Robertson, 1992: 129–37; Barkawi, 2006). Indeed, increasingly the study of processes of globalization in long-historical perspective involves emphasis upon the centrality of civilization analysis (Sanderson, 1995; cf. Brotton, 2002; Goody, 1996; Gunn, 2003; Hobson, 2004; Jardine and Brotton, 2000; Mozaffari, 2002).

The Future of the Concept of Civilization

Clearly, the so-called war against terror has brought the notion of civilization in the sense of a *condition* into ever-sharper focus. This development has in fact involved the fusion, or conflation, of civilization as process and civilization as complex. Now we are witnesses to a fateful, apocalyptic explosion of ideas concerning the future of humankind (Jurgensmeyer, 2003). This development is not at all incompatible with the globalization perspective (Robertson, 1992;

Osterhammel and Petersson, 2003). Indeed, the present phase in the overall globalization process may well be described as the human-conditional one. This certainly does not, by any stretch of the imagination, involve any kind of utopianism. Quite the contrary. For the so-called war against terror turns primarily on the axis of what has been described as the West-against-the-rest (Scruton, 2002; cf. Ferguson, 2005); more specifically and controversially the war is centred upon the clash between 'global America' and caliphate Islam. This clash involves nothing less than wars for the right to 'define' the human condition (Arendt, 1959) and its *raison d'être*.

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Civilizationalism

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Keywords civilizationalism, colonial identification, little subjectivity, nationalism

Civilizationalism is the ultimate level of expression of ethnic nationalism. One of the most powerfully dangerous articulations emerging in the historical scene is civilizationalism. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that, in the 1990s, the most influential academic essay on earth was Samuel Huntington's (1993) 'The Clash of Civilizations?'. For better or worse, the US right wing imperialist stand taken by Huntington has drawn responses from all over the place; essays, conferences, books, policy consultations, etc. have been generated within (rather than outside) the Huntington problematic. His simple and easy cutting up of the globe into seven or eight spaces has in effect constructed a new civilizational identification forcing everyone on earth to take one on. The Huntington proposal to the US state power, at the end of the essay, seeks to exploit conflicts so as to maintain world hegemony, which will no doubt, if state machines are bought into the Huntington problematic (which seems to be the case in practice), generate global racism, nationalism and regionalism, not to mention a reactionary form of civilizationalism. Unfortunately, the US foreign policy after the September 11th incident has indeed echoed Huntington's proposal, treating the Islamic civilization as the target enemy.

In sharp contrast to the colonizer's strategic mapping, the most articulate form of civilizationalism formulated by intellectuals in the (ex)colonized societies comes from the Delhi-based,

prominent social psychologist Ashis Nandy. In *The Illegitimacy of Nationalism: Rabindranath Tagore and the Politics of Self* (1994), Nandy argues that nationalism is a by-product of western colonialism, and hence illegitimate. According to his reading of Tagore and Gandhi, if Indian nationalism works on the level of the nation-state, civilizationalism operates in the larger historical space of Hindu civilization, which functions to resist being trapped into the colonial system of the nation-state. One has to be reminded that Nandy's formulation was grounded in his earlier seminal work, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (1983), which was a self-conscious theoretical undertaking in the tradition of Fanon and Memmi. For him, unlike the Huntington aggression, the importance of Indian civilization is for the colonized subject to hold onto their own traditions in order to create new traditions. Tradition, and its reinterpretation, then becomes the empowering ground on which the long lasting cultural impacts of western colonialism can be combated, because the West has deeply penetrated not just our social structure but also our culture and mind.

Although the differences between the offensive colonialist Huntington and the postcolonial populist Nandy are clear enough, the civilizationalist interpellation has to be carefully cautioned. The Huntington–Nandy clash on civilization discloses a wider structure of feeling, a cultural imaginary, not limited to the Indian or the US case. It perhaps projects an emerging realization in the so-called postcolonial context. That is, for the (ex)colonized, nationalism is no longer the panacea, once magnified into global capitalism; the hierarchical structure of the nation-state more or less continues the established order of colonialism,

which could not compete with its forerunners in Europe; at this moment, perhaps only by bringing out a 'higher' and 'larger' category, civilization, could seal the unsealed scar. The inventing and reinventing of signs familiar to the popular imaginary and then articulating them to a higher form of universalism is to regain the confidence to 'at least' beat the West in cultural imagination. This is perhaps one form of psychoanalytic identification of the 'postcolonial' imagination.

In a way, the signs of 'China', 'India', 'Islam' and 'the Orient' are not necessarily nationalist concepts but emotional signifiers; to reclaim 'a five thousand year history or four thousand' is once again a reaction and response to, shall we say, 'post' colonialism; it does not have concrete substance, but interpellates the scared subject to feel one can reside more safely in a world of cultural identity crisis. The danger here is of course that these so-called non-western big civilizations might fall into the logic of colonial competition, a struggle over representing the Other of the West, to occupy the center space of the non-West. Is this a reproduction of ethnocentrism in structure? Isn't the center still the opposing West? Isn't there an exclusionary practice? Isn't the appearance of the 'North and South' divide, beyond political-economic levels, expressing a symptom on the psychoanalytic account?

Surrounding these big civilizations, how do the little subjectivities, which do not have larger 'civilization' to hang onto, or are now forced into an identification proposed by Huntington, handle their destiny and feeling of marginalization? Sri Lankan anthropologist S.J. Tambiah's account (1986) of the island's relation with the Indian subcontinent brings out what I call the complex of 'little subjectivity' vs civilizationalism, which resonates in other geo-colonial relations if, for instance, one displaces the term Sri Lanka with Taiwan or Canada, India with China or the USA.

The point is the Huntington interpellation has historical-psychic support. The real danger is that Huntington's US proposal to interpellate civilizationalist identity can be an 'upgraded' imperial

nationalism. The Huntington Clash has already generated enormous antagonism from China and Southeast Asia, where all the nationalist-civilizationalist reactions are sucked into his framing rather than challenging the framework as a whole. Those geographical spaces with no clear belonging to the bigger civilizations are now forced to take sides and are boxed in by the Huntington categories. Sites where there are potentials to be more syncretically hybrid might be forced to change their affiliations. Australia used to claim to be 'a multicultural nation in Asia'; but once the conservative government was in power, the state identification has shifted toward a multicultural 'western' nation in Asia. The island of Singapore might have to be moved physically somewhere else to avoid being forced to make the impossible choice.

If nationalism is to be watched, civilizationalism needs to be watched with higher intensity.

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Civilizing Processes

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Keywords civilization, civilizing processes, Elias, habitus, state, violence

The control of violence is central to Norbert Elias's theory of civilizing processes, and to the research tradition of 'figurational sociology' to which it gave rise. The theory essentially links the growth of the social constraint exercised by the forces of a state over violent *acts* to the growth of habitual self-constraint over violent *impulses* exercised by individual people. Elias stated the kernel of his thesis quite briefly:

if in this or that region, the power of central authority grows, if over a larger or smaller area people are forced to live at peace with one another, the moulding of affects and the standards of the economy of instincts are very gradually changed as well. (Elias, 2000: 169)

Elias's most famous book, *The Civilising Process* (2000), which remained the reference point for most of his later writings, was first published obscurely in German (under the title *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*) in 1939, although it became well known only several decades later. One criticism often levelled against it amounts to asking how anyone could propound a theory of 'civilization' at a time when the violent nature of the Nazi regime – just on the brink of the Holocaust – as well as of Stalin's was already evident to anyone who cared to look. A more careful reading of Elias's book reveals that that is precisely his point: what Europeans from the late 18th century learned to refer to with pride as their 'civilized' ways of life are not only the product of a slow long-term process but are also very fragile, a veneer that easily cracks:

The armour of civilised conduct would crumble rapidly if, through a change in society, the degree of insecurity that existed earlier were to break in upon us again, and if danger became as incalculable as it once was. Corresponding fears would soon burst the limits set to them today. (Elias, 2000: 531–2)

Although subsequent writers have shown the relevance of the concept of 'civilizing process' in non-European contexts, Elias's own research was based on a study of European society since the Middle Ages. After an opening section analysing

how the word 'civilization' (and the related notion of 'culture') acquired its heavy load of collective self-approbation for Europeans, there follows the most celebrated part of the book, in which he shows how the manners of the secular upper classes changed from generation to generation – the changing social standards of behaviour *and feeling* concerning how they ate, blew their noses, spat, went to the toilet, and undressed. Elias shows that 'rational' explanations of these changes, in terms of material resources or hygiene, are inadequate, and emphasizes instead the role of competitive social display among a courtly upper class (and among those who aspired to membership of courts) in a context where kings and their government machines were steadily gaining dominance. Only gradually does it become clear that Elias's fundamental concern is much more with the civilizing of violence than with the civilizing of table or toilet habits. Whence come the courtiers of early modern Europe? They were the product of centuries-long conflicts between many rival warlords, out of which there gradually emerged a smaller number of central rulers, kings who gradually undertook the 'taming of warriors' as the key element in the internal pacification of their lands, a central component of state formation processes. (Elias follows Max Weber in defining a *state* in terms of the effectiveness within its territory of its claim to a monopoly over the means of violence – and, he adds, of *taxation*, since the means of violence and of taxation are ultimately the same, the state being a close cousin of the protection racket.) The taming of warriors would appear to be a component of state formation processes wherever they have been successful: see, on Japan for instance, Ikegami's *The Taming of the Samurai* (1995). It deserves attention in the early 21st century, when the actions of the global superpower have reversed the process, notably in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Far from painting an idealized picture of an inevitable long-term decline of violence, *The Civilising Process* shows how one major trend in European history was the steady development of the scale of warfare and killing undertaken by the growing states. 'Elimination contests' among the numerous local warlords around the beginning of the second millennium AD led on to the emergence of bigger territorial units which over the centuries conducted steadily larger-scale wars with each other, culminating in the World Wars of the

20th century. It is (in Goudbloom's [2001] phrase) the 'paradox of pacification' that *internal* pacification of a state's own territory is a precondition of its capacity to wage effective warfare against *external* rivals. In his late writings, Elias often expressed concern that the process would end in nuclear war and the destruction of the human species; against this, Van Benthem van den Bergh (1992) argued against him that, as long as the Cold War endured, mutually assured destruction (MAD) served as a functional alternative to a worldwide monopoly of the means of violence, exerting a 'social constraint towards self-constraint' upon the (then) two superpowers.

That phrase of Elias's, the 'social constraint towards self-constraint' (2000: 365–79), is more generally relevant to the question of whether broad changes in the overall organization of societies bring about changes in the social and emotional habitus of the people who constitute them. The hypothesis is that with the increasing scale and complexity of society – specifically, 'longer chains of interdependence' – people are subject to increasing pressure to exercise foresight and to curb their impulses. In a phrase of Goudbloom's (2001: 104–6), 'More people are forced more often to pay more and more attention to more other people.' This is not dissimilar to the Weberian idea that the growth of trade and markets fosters the growth of rationality, but in Elias's hands the principle is greatly generalized. More habitual self-constraint over impulsive action goes hand in hand with 'the advance of the threshold of shame and embarrassment'. And it applies, according to Elias, not just to anticipating in more complex ways the embarrassment that will arise from the reaction of other people if one misuses one's knife, fork or handkerchief but also to succumbing to violent impulses. What is more, it is suggested that longer chains of interdependence – and especially more even power ratios between the links – are associated with a 'widening circle of mutual identification'. In other words, people come to be able to 'feel the pain' of more and more other human beings.

A good deal of *The Civilising Process* and a large body of research stemming from it is concerned with documenting whether such changes in the emotional habitus of members of European societies (including the offshoots of Europe overseas) actually took place. In the early Middle Ages, Elias pointed out, the majority of the secular ruling class were leaders of armed bands. For them, war was a normal state of society; they had little other social function but to wage it; they loved battle. It is difficult for the modern mind to grasp the joy and exultation they felt in the clash of arms, but still less easy to come to terms with

the sheer pleasure warriors then derived from cruelty, from the destruction and torment of other human beings. But very gradually over the centuries, these military pleasures were subjected to increasingly strong social control anchored in the state organization. Indeed, tighter discipline and control over the impulses – foresight, tactics, strategy – came more and more to be conditions of success even on the battlefield.

It is equally difficult for people today to understand the pleasurable excitement their ancestors experienced in the spectacle of burning heretics, public torture and executions, or of cruelty to animals (on which, see Thomas, 1983), as well-known and abundantly documented as that is. They too come to be impeded by shame and repugnance, and they too come normally to find expression in only 'refined' and indirect forms. One prominent component of this transformation of the impulses of aggressiveness and cruelty identified by Elias is the transfer of emotions from direct action to spectating, a shift towards visual pleasures (2000: 170). The rise and decline of public executions are phases in this process (Spiereburg, 1984). The rise of modern sports is another (Elias and Dunning, 1986). The rules of many sports circumscribe the kinds and extent of violence that can be used, and the pleasure of spectators arises from the 'mimetic' character of the contest on the field.

One potential criticism of this theory of the connection between 'civilization' and violence control is that it seems to apply more directly to 'expressive' than to 'instrumental' violence. Even if habitus changes in the direction of people's having a greater habitual capacity for controlling their aggressive and potentially violent impulses, why should the instrumentally rational use of violence decline? It can be argued that while the central thrust of the process is towards a specific type of conscience-formation, producing feelings of guilt and repugnance with regard to any pleasurable use of violence, on the other hand increasing pressures towards competition, achievement, and the demand for foresight actually facilitate the use of violence in an instrumental way. This is the essence of Bauman's (1989) argument about modernity and the holocaust, but it is not at odds with Elias's own studies of Germany and the holocaust (1996). Criminologists and historians of crime (Garland, 1990, 2002; Gurr, 1981; Johnson and Monkkonen, 1996) have found that, contrary to popular belief and despite periodic upsurges, the long-term trend of violence in Western societies is downwards, and the theory of civilizing processes has become an influential component of their explanations of this finding.

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Posthuman

Nicholas Gane

Keywords cyborg, embodiment, genetics, human, information, materiality, posthuman

The posthuman is one of the most important concepts in contemporary literary theory, science studies, political philosophy, the sociology of the body, cultural and film studies, and even art theory. The origin of this concept is hotly disputed, with some tracing it back to the cybernetic movement of the 1940s, and, more specifically, to the writings of Norbert Wiener (Pepperell, 2003: 169). The explosion of this concept in the mid-1990s, however, can be traced to a more recent source: Donna Haraway's *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (1991). While Haraway does not use the term 'posthuman' explicitly in this work, she calls into question three key boundaries that have

helped preserve the sanctity of 'the human' as a self-contained being: those between humans and animals, animal-humans (organisms) and machines, and the realms of the physical and non-physical (Haraway, 1991: 152–3). For Haraway, such boundaries are no longer secure (if indeed they ever were), for they are now breached by an array of new hybrid creatures or *cyborgs*. These creatures, which are both organism *and* machine, are defined as follows:

hybrid entities made of, first, ourselves and other organic creatures in our unchosen 'high-technological' guise as information systems, texts, and ergonomically controlled, labouring, desiring, and reproducing systems. The second essential ingredient in cyborgs is machines in their guise, also, as communications systems, texts, and self-acting, ergonomically designed apparatuses. (Haraway, 1991: 1)

This figure of the cyborg proved enormously influential throughout the 1990s, not least because it shifted debate about the *inhuman*, or the negative power of technology and time to constrain and inhabit human life, to analysis of how intelligent machines and new technologies of genetic modification might be used to alter the basis of life in more positive ways.

This age of high technology, in which the human body is no longer tied to 'nature' but open to technological modification, has subsequently been termed *posthuman*: a time in which 'humans are no longer the most important things in the universe', where 'all technological progress of human society is geared towards the transformation of the human species as we know it', and where 'complex machines are an emerging form of life' (Pepperell, 2003: 177). The posthuman, however, is not about 'progress' *per se*, but is rather a new culture of transversalism in which the 'purity' of human nature gives way to new forms of creative evolution that refuse to keep different species, or even machines and humans, apart. The posthuman, then, is a condition of uncertainty (Pepperell, 2003: 167–8) in which the essence of things is far from clear. Halberstam and Livingstone capture the spirit of this condition in the following declaration: 'the "post" of "posthuman" interests us not really insofar as it posits some subsequent developmental state, but as it collapses into *sub-*, *inter-*, *infra-*, *trans-*, *pre-*, *anti-*' (1995: viii). Against this backdrop, a key (although not necessarily stable) point of orientation for analysis of posthuman culture and society is the body. Halberstam and Livingstone, for example, treat the posthuman as a series of 'nodes where bodies, bodies of discourse, and discourses of bodies intersect' (1995: 2). Such an approach aims to disrupt cybernetic readings of bodies as information systems (Haraway [1991], for example, reads immune systems in this way), and of information as a probabilistic, bodiless form (as declared in the early work of Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver). Against such readings, critical posthumanism reasserts the embodied nature of information and perhaps even technology, regardless of whether bodies themselves remain 'human'. Catherine Waldby reflects:

The term 'posthuman' has come to designate a loosely related set of recent attempts to reconceptualise the relationship between the rapidly transforming field of technology and the conditions of human embodiment. These attempts are, generally speaking, a response to the cybernetic turn and the vitalisation of information . . . (2000: 43)

Katherine Hayles (1999) formulates such a response in her key work, *How We Became Post-*

human, which starts out with a critique of post-human separations between information and matter, and mind and body. There are, she says, four main features of this type of informational posthumanism. First, it 'privileges informational pattern over material instantiation' (Hayles, 1999: 2). Second, it downplays the role of consciousness in the formation of human identity. Third, it treats the body as 'the original prosthesis we all learn to manipulate, so that extending or replacing the body with other prostheses becomes a continuation of a process that began before we were born' (Hayles, 1999: 3). And finally, the human is configured so that it can be 'seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines' (Hayles, 1999: 3). Taken together, these features add up to the following: 'In the posthuman, there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goals' (Hayles, 1999: 3). Hayles' response, however, is to configure an alternative reading of the posthuman by contesting the separation of materiality from information – a separation that she traces in great detail through different generations of cybernetic theory, from the work of Wiener, Shannon and Weaver onwards. Her main argument here is that information can never do away with matter or the body, because to exist it must '*always* be instantiated in a medium' (1999: 13, emphasis in original). For this reason, she talks not of computer simulation, hyperreality or of the possibility of downloading mind or consciousness into a machine, but rather of *embodied virtuality*, and of new forms of subjectivity that are born out of the interface between bodies and computer-based technologies. This approach gives rise to an alternative form of posthuman realism: 'my dream is a version of the posthuman that embraces the possibilities of information technologies without being seduced by fantasies of unlimited power and disembodied immortality' (Hayles, 1999: 5). This vision, in turn, frames Hayles' *Writing Machines* (2002), which considers literary works in light of the inscription technologies through which they are produced. Hayles extends this position by stating that 'computational engines and artificial intelligences' can never be treated simply as virtual or simulated forms for they cannot work without 'sophisticated bases in the real world' (2002: 6). In sum, matter, or more importantly, *embodiment*, are seen to be key features of the so-called virtual age.

The idea of the posthuman has also been prominent in recent debates over the future of liberal democracy. Frances Fukuyama – appointed by George Bush to the President's Bioethics Council in early 2002 – has argued vocally for state regulation of new biotechnologies that threaten to

change the basis of human nature. Fukuyama defines this nature, in the first instance, in statistical terms: it 'is the sum of the behaviour and characteristics that are typical of the human species, arising from genetic rather than environmental factors' (2002: 130), but also prioritizes the uniqueness of human language (2002: 140), consciousness and emotions (2002: 169). This 'stable human essence', he claims, underpins the basis of liberal democracy, and most notably the American constitution:

The political equality enshrined in the Declaration of Independence rests on the empirical fact of natural human equality. We vary greatly as individuals and by culture, but we share a common humanity that allows every human being to potentially communicate with and enter into a moral relationship with every other human being on the planet. (Fukuyama, 2002: 9)

While it is far from clear that 'natural human equality' is indeed an 'empirical fact', Fukuyama's argument about the posthuman is straightforward: if contemporary biotechnology can change the basis of human nature then it threatens also to change that which gives 'stable continuity to our experience as a species' (2002: 7), and upon which all political rights are built: 'the fact of natural equality' (2002: 216). Indeed, he warns that while it might be assumed that the posthuman world (the world of altered human natures) might look like life today – 'free, equal, prosperous, caring, compassionate' (Fukuyama, 2002: 218) – it is likely to be worse than we expect, for the waning of the natural rights of liberal democracy may well be accompanied by new, extreme forms of hierarchy and competition, and 'full of social conflict as a result' (2002: 218).

This presentation of life today as 'free, equal, prosperous, caring, compassionate' glosses over the fierce inequalities of global capitalism in order to protect and conserve the existing state or 'nature' of things. Katherine Hayles, meanwhile, challenges Fukuyama on different grounds, for she argues that his belief that 'humans are special because they have human nature' is not only tautological but is also based on a false separation of human nature from technology. By way of response, she 'disrupts' his position by claiming that

... it must also be 'human nature' to use technology, since from the beginning of the species human beings have always used technology. Moreover, technology has co-evolved throughout millennia with human beings and helped in myriad profound and subtle ways to make human nature what it is. (Hayles, 2005: 144)

For Hayles, then, there can be no easy separation between technology and the contested realm of 'the human'. This, in part, is because advanced computer-based technologies have become a, if not *the*, reference point for defining 'humans' and for measuring their capabilities. This situation marks a reversal of the cybernetic theory of Norbert Wiener, the purpose of which was 'less to show that man was a machine than to demonstrate that a machine could function like a man' (Hayles, 1999: 7). By contrast, Hayles observes that, today, 'rather than the human being the measure of all things, as the Greeks thought, increasingly the computer is taken as the measure of all things, including humans' (1998). In recent computer science, for example, influential figures such as Ray Kurzweil, Hans Moravec and Rodney Brooks have explored possibilities for the future convergence of humans and machines by downplaying the differences between these entities. At the same time, however, computers are also key reference points for more conservative thinkers such as Fukuyama, who concentrates 'on those aspects of behaviours that machines are least likely to share' (Hayles, 2005: 132), most notably emotions. What unites these positions is that the computational machine is taken as a benchmark for defining and understanding what is 'human'. What separates them is their approach to history, for while Brooks, Kurzweil and Moravec, along with a whole host of science fiction writers, have used the future to question 'the human', Fukuyama, by contrast, anchors human nature in the past, specifically in a 'history of human evolution' (Hayles, 2005: 147) that also allows for the presence of a human soul (Fukuyama, 2002: 170). Hayles, meanwhile, refuses to address the posthuman through either backward-looking conservatism or futurology, but calls instead for 'principled debate' about how to 'achieve the future we want' (2005: 148). In so doing, she reveals her own political preferences:

What it means to be human finally is not so much about intelligent machines as it is about how to create just societies in a transnational global world that may include in its purview both carbon and silicon citizens. (Hayles, 2005: 148)

This position, in turn, is part of wider contemporary debate over the meaning and future of the human and of nature more generally in an age of rapid technological change. These debates currently range from the basis of cyborg citizenship and the possibility of forging a posthuman democracy through to the politics of nature and the challenge of governing science, and even extend to highly charged exchanges over abortion

and the point at which human life can be recognized as such (Fernández-Armesto, 2004: 148–50). These debates are made ever more pressing by the following paradox:

Over the last thirty or forty years, we have invested an enormous amount of thought, emotion, treasure, and blood in what we call human values, human rights, the defence of human dignity and of human life. Over the same period, quietly but devastatingly, science and philosophy have combined to undermine our traditional concept of humankind. (Fernández-Armesto, 2004: 1)

It is in this paradox, however, that the value of the concept of the posthuman really lies: in the possibility of *rethinking* what we call human values, human rights and human dignity against the backdrop of fast-developing bio-technologies that open both the idea and the body of the human to reinvention and potential redesign.

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The Inhuman

Neal Curtis

Keywords affect, event, heterogeneity, Lyotard, other, self

The inhuman is perhaps most readily understood as a moral category, designating actions and practices that contravene in the most extreme way the parameters set for acceptable human behaviour. Ironically, however, the inhuman is thus a category that constitutes and saves the human; it upholds the human in its certainty and rectitude, projecting all animality and barbarity outwards. However, there is another inhuman, one that has been most eloquently described by Jean-François Lyotard, and which, while remaining a constitutive outside, constitutes us not in the certainty of our knowledge, practices and moral codes, but undermines our certainty, deposes the subject of knowledge

and questions our ordering of the world. While the inhuman understood as evil reinforces our sense of self and secures our autonomy, this other inhuman, understood as that which escapes and yet animates us, is the moment of both radical disruption and radical dependence. In this regard the inhuman does not serve the human but is a challenge to it.

With regard to the inhuman understood as evil, it is never we who are inhuman; it is always the other. When we kill it is done in the name of freedom and is done *for the sake of* the human. When they kill it is in the name of tyranny or extremism; it is an outrage and is absolutely inhuman. Of course, the eradication of the inhuman, or at least the war against its terror, legitimates the global extension of what is most human, understood today as the pacific beneficence of an invisible economic hand. Thus, despite the supposed processes of decolonization

the inhuman remains essential for empire, underpinning as it does the logic of 'development', the flow of capital and the expansion of the 'free market'. In this sense the inhuman is integral to the maintenance of a system, whether that be the moral code of a community (a community that increasingly defines itself in an exemplary way as human) or the institutions of a new world order. Against this the inhuman understood as the remainder, or that which resists, institutes a politics that is at once humble, sensitive and experimental. An inhuman politics as a politics of the remainder refuses the arrogance that celebrates the end of history and the victory of a single, vindicated model of the good society; it demands probity when dealing with events in order that their singularity is not lost in the haste to comprehend them according to the well-worn narratives of our habitual sense-making practices; it demands that we think in new ways, invent new concepts, new rules for understanding, new criteria for judgement and new modes of representation. Ultimately a politics of the inhuman refuses any notion of totality, finality and completion. As Lyotard reminded us, the inhumanity that consolidates the system 'must not be confused with the infinitely secret one of which the soul is hostage' (1991: 2), and it is with this conception of being held hostage that the otherwise hidden inhumanity of the remainder can be further described. Specifically we are hostage to the inhuman in that it is continually and permanently 'before us' in the dual sense of its antecedence and our exposure to it. In other words, the inhuman is the temporality of events, the happening of which we can never fully grasp, as well as our openness to them, an openness that first animates the soul.

With regard to the temporality of events, the event disrupts the assumed authority of the subject of knowledge. The event is a singularity that precedes and exceeds reference; it is prior to and heterogeneous to discourse. The event is the advent or presentation of the *It happens* rather than the signification of the *What happened*. In keeping with analyses of time offered by Augustine and Husserl, the presentation of events is something that becomes more remote, more elusive, the more thought directs itself to it:

Because it is absolute, the presenting present cannot be grasped: it is *not yet* or *no longer* present . . . Such is the specific and paradoxical constitution of the event. That something happens, the occurrence, means that the mind is disappropriated. (Lyotard, 1991: 59)

The inadequacy that thinking suffers in relation to the happening of events is masked, however, by the haste with which we claim to have

made sense of them. The training of the mind to subsume sensible data under this or that concept tends to contribute to the privileging of narrative over event, and of the general over the particular. Force of habit turns the mind towards what is the same rather than what is different or singular in our encounter with events. We deploy determinate judgement in instances where our judgement should be reflective; we assume a rule for judgement when one is still to be found, with the consequence that thinking becomes increasingly insensitive and lacking in probity. 'No event is at all accessible if the self does not renounce the glamour of its culture, its wealth, health, knowledge and memory' (Lyotard, 1988: 18). These become the pretexts that prevent any genuine encounter with the event. All events, even the most destructive or potentially catastrophic, get caught in the pretext in which, for example, the 'West' guarantees and underwrites the human. This is one of many narratives that allow us to make sense of the world, but one that also hides what is most demanding in the happening of events. Given that the full deployment of these sense-making processes is the sign of the mature human, the infant thus becomes an analogy for the inhuman. To think the inhuman remainder, to think in relation to this categorical excess or heterogeneity, demands we renew ties 'with the season of childhood, the season of the mind's possibilities' (Lyotard, 1992: 116).

The inhuman, then, is the advent of events, but it is also their affect. If, in the Hegelian schema, the human is the movement of the soul towards the absolute knowledge of self-consciousness, the inhuman is rather the *affectability* of the soul where the self is animated by a 'recurrent alterity' (Lyotard, 1991: 59). The inhuman, thus conceived, stipulates that the soul does not affect itself, but is affected from outside. The soul is not the motor of history, but the site of a calling, a birth in response to the affect or touch of the sensible, and it marks the absolute dependence of one on the other. No affect without soul, no soul without affect. In this scenario the soul can never be complete in itself. The soul is without autonomy. Without the sensible it is threatened with privation, or anaesthesia. The touch of the sensible 'tears the inanimate from the limbo in which it inexists' (Lyotard, 1997: 243). All science and all knowledge are beholden to this prior touch, to this donation, and avant-garde artistic and literary forms are charged with bearing witness to these events and to this affective dependency. Ordinarily, in an attempt to hold at bay the feeling of dissonance produced by this touch that undermines the comfort and harmony of the habitual, this exposure is reduced to an almost mute 'second

life', albeit one that continually 'opens little parentheses' (Lyotard, 1997: 118) in the 'first life' of conscious speaking and doing that marks the mature subject. This secrecy of the second life is treated with suspicion. It does not support public exchanges, easy translation, or comfortable communication as is demanded of all politically rational humans; and it is neither good nor beautiful. The second life instead generates the incommensurate, the experimental, and the difficult, even the sublime, and it is here that it too approaches the monstrous and the dreadful.

This inhuman second life is of a part with that which resists and that which remains. At the end of history we are supposedly without remainder, or rather the remainder is simply the invalid and the illegitimate. Understood as evil, the inhuman remains the cloak beneath which the supposedly 'legitimate' system continues to expand, but conceived as dissonance, dissensus and heterogeneity, the inhuman places demands upon our thinking and interrogates our knowledge in a

manner that may yet offer us a way to refigure our relations with difference and with others, beyond the system and without prejudice, maybe, even, beyond terror.

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Religion

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Abstract The emergence of a science of religion and religions in which the sacred became a topic of disinterested, objective inquiry was itself an important statement about the general character of social change and can be taken as an index of secularization. It implies a level of critical self-reflexive scrutiny in society. In the West, the study of 'religion' as a topic of independent inquiry was initially undertaken by theologians who wanted to understand how Christianity could be differentiated from other religions. The problem of religious diversity had arisen as an inevitable consequence of colonial contact with other religious traditions and with phenomena that shared a family resemblance with religion, such as fetishism, animism and magic. The science of religion implies a capacity for self-reflection and criticism, and it is often claimed that other religions do not possess such a science of religion. While different cultures give religion a different content, Christianity was defined as a world religion. In Hegel's dialectical scheme, the increasing self-awareness of the Spirit was a consequence of the historical development of Christianity. The contemporary scientific study of religion and religions is confronted by significant epistemological problems that are associated with globalization, and the traditional question about the nature of religion has acquired a new intensity.

Keywords Enlightenment, reason, religion, sacred, secularization, violence

Etymological Roots

Jacques Derrida in 'Faith and Knowledge' (1998: 34) notes, following Emile Benveniste in *Indo-European Language and Society* (1973), that the word 'religion' (*religio*) has two distinctive roots. First, *relegere* from *legere* means to bring together, to harvest or to gather (in). Second, *religare* from *ligare* means to tie or to bind together. The first meaning indicates the religious foundations of any social group that is gathered together, while the second points to the disciplines or morality that are necessary for controlling human beings and creating a regulated mentality. The first meaning indicates the role of the cult in forming human membership, while the second meaning points to the regulatory practices of religion in the discipline of passions. This distinction formed the basis of Kant's philosophical analysis of religion and morality. In *Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason* (1960), Kant distinguished between religion as cult (*des blossen Cultus*), which seeks favours from God through prayer and offerings to bring healing and wealth to its followers, and religion as moral action (*die Religion des guten Lebenswandels*), which commands human beings to change their behaviour in order to lead a better life. Kant further elaborated this point by an examination of 'reflecting faith' that compels humans to strive for salvation through faith rather than the possession of religious knowledge. The implication of Kant's distinction was that (Protestant) Christianity was the only true 'reflecting faith', and in a sense therefore the model of all authentic religious intentions. Kant's distinction was fundamentally about those religious injunctions that call human beings to (moral) action and hence demand that humans assert their autonomy and responsibility. In order to have autonomy, human beings need to act independently of God.

In a paradoxical fashion, Christianity implies the 'death of God' because it calls people to freedom and hence the Christian faith is ultimately self-defeating.

These Kantian principles were eventually translated into the sociology of Max Weber (1864–1920). In the *Sociology of Religion* (1966), Weber distinguished between the religion of the masses and the religion of the virtuosi. While the masses seek comforts from religion, especially healing, the virtuosi fulfil the ethical demands of religion in search of spiritual salvation or enlightenment. The religion of the masses requires saints and holy men to satisfy their needs, and hence charisma is corrupted by the demand for miracles and spectacles. More importantly, Weber distinguished between those religions that reject the world by challenging its traditions (such as inner-worldly asceticism) and religions that seek to escape from the world through mystical flight (such as other-worldly mysticism). The former religions (primarily the Calvinistic radical sects) have had revolutionary consequences for human society in the formation of rational capitalism. The implication of this tradition is paradoxical. First, Christianity (or at least Puritanism) is the only true religion (as a reflecting faith) and, second, Christianity gives rise to a process of secularization that spells out its own self-overcoming (*Aufhebung*).

The History of the Sciences of Religion and Religions

There is an important tension between religion and philosophy in terms of their claims to truth. This tension is between revelation and reason as different modes of understanding. The Enlightenment was significant in the development of classifications of religion, since the Enlightenment philosophers treated religion as a form of false knowledge. The Enlightenment philosophers emphasized the importance of rational self-inspection as a source of dependable understanding against revelatory experiences. For Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot, Christianity was a form of irrational or mistaken knowledge of the world, and hence the Enlightenment sharpened the distinction between revelation and reason as modes of apprehension of reality. The sciences of religion are a product of the Enlightenment in which knowledge of religion was important in the liberation of human beings from the false consciousness of revealed religion. Diderot was specifically critical of Christian institutions, and Hume, who was critical of the claims made by revealed religion for miracles, wrote somewhat ironically of the differences between monotheistic and polytheistic religions. The former religions are more likely to support authoritarian states, while the polytheistic traditions are more conducive to pluralism. The Enlightenment associated political intolerance with monotheism in general and Catholicism in particular, and advocated the separation of church and state as a necessary condition of individual liberties.

While Enlightenment philosophy was overtly hostile to religious institutions, the Enlightenment itself had an important impact on religious thought. The Jewish Enlightenment or Haskalah emphasized the rational individual, natural law, natural rights and religious tolerance. The Jewish Enlightenment attempted to make Jews equal citizens with their Christian and secular counterparts in European societies. Moses Mendelssohn played an important part in presenting Judaism as a rational religion and these European developments partly paved the way towards Zionism. The problem of religion as a form of rational knowledge also preoccupied the young Marx who, in 'the Jewish Question' (1844), argued that the 'solution' to the Jewish problem was their movement into the urban proletariat and adoption of secular socialism, but the final emancipation of the Jewish worker could not be achieved by political emancipation alone without a total transformation of capitalism. The point of Marx's argument was that the final demise of religion as a form of consciousness could only be achieved through a transformation of the actual structure of society.

In other societies similar developments took place. In Russia Peter the Great was responsible for imposing many of the ideas of the Enlightenment on a society that was historically backward. The building of St Petersburg was intended to demonstrate architecturally the importance of western reform and Enlightenment values. Russian Orthodoxy was held to be a particularly barbaric form of Christian religion. Peter's contact with German Enlightenment

was in fact a combination of German Pietism and the rationalism of Leibniz. In this form of benevolent despotism, modernization and Enlightenment ensured that opposition to these foreign cultural standards involved a combination of Russian nationalism and Russian Orthodoxy.

The connections between the Enlightenment and religion were a good deal more complex than this introductory note might suggest. One can claim more accurately that the Enlightenment philosophers were hostile to institutionalized Christianity, specifically the Roman Catholic Church, rather than to religion per se. If we set the Enlightenment within a broader historical framework, it is clear that the 18th-century philosophers were drawing inspiration from the Reformation of the 16th century and the Renaissance humanism of the 15th century. The Renaissance (1400–1600) involved a rediscovery of the humanistic literature of Greek and Roman antiquity. The Renaissance placed Man at the centre of learning and knowledge, emphasizing human perfection through education rather than human sinfulness and depravity. Humanistic philosophy was spread by the invention of printing in the mid-15th century, and printing in turn facilitated the growth of the Reformation in the 16th century. Both Christianity and humanism were influenced by the European discovery of the Americas in 1492 and by new routes to China and Japan. Colonialism and the discovery of aboriginal cultures presented a significant challenge to the biblical notion of the unity of humankind. The Enlightenment philosophers had much in common with the Cambridge Platonists and the latitudinarian movement of the 17th century, which sought to reject what it saw as the fanaticism of the Civil War and attempted to present Christian practice and belief as reasonable. The English notion of reasonableness was not quite what Marx and Hegel had in mind by the historical march of rational knowledge and the spirit, but it was a long way from the experiential intensity of the conversionist sects. This broader historical picture indicates a greater philosophical (indeed theological) continuity between the Christian humanism of Erasmus, the rationalism of Diderot and the dialectical idealism of Hegel; it also explains why their contemporaries suspected a political plot between freemasonry and the Enlightenment to attack the authoritarianism of the Catholic Church and the monarchy.

Secularization

In the 1970s and 1980s, religion ceased to be a topic of central importance to sociology, and the sociology of religion was confined to the study of sects. With the dominance of modernization theory, it was assumed that religion would not play a large part in social organization. At best it would be confined to the private sphere. In short, secularization, which was assumed to be a necessary component of modernization, proved to be enormously difficult to define. Secularization involves the following:

- (1) There is the social differentiation of society into specialized spheres in which religion becomes simply one institution to provide various services to its followers or to the community; secularization is the decline of the scope of authority structures. Fundamentalism is the attempt to halt this differentiation;
- (2) Rationalization involves the corrosion of the power of religious beliefs and the authority of religious specialists (such as priests). This argument is associated with Weber's notion of 'disenchantment'. While this argument acknowledges the impact of science on public explanations of phenomena and the conduct of public life, social survey research shows that belief in magic and superstition remains very high in advanced societies. Eschatology can also have a potent role in secular society. In the United States, the Christian fictional series *Left Behind*, depicting the return of Christ, has sold over 70 million copies. These stories are loosely based on the book of Revelation and this literary genre gives expression to what evangelicals call 'the Rapture', which is the contemporary account of the disappearance of Christians from the earth and their entry into heaven, leaving behind sinners and unbelievers. The series combines a traditional apocalyptic religion with conservative political attitudes. For example, in the struggle with evil forces, the UN

appears as the anti-Christ on earth. Around 8 million American Christians believe that the Rapture is coming soon, and this transformation of the world is indicated by, for example, the crisis in the Middle East.

- (3) Modernization (often a combination of differentiation and rationalization) is a cluster of processes emphasizing individualism, democratic politics, liberal values, and norms of efficiency and economic growth. Because modernization undermines tradition, it cuts off the communal and social foundations that supported religion as a traditional institution. However, religion continues to play a role in supporting national, regional or class identities in industrial capitalism, for example in Northern Ireland, Catholic France, the Solidarity movement in Poland or the Orthodox revival in Russia;
- (4) Secularization may simply be the transformation (metamorphosis) of religion as it adjusts to new conditions. There are many versions of this argument. Sociologists have argued that the social is essentially religious, and what counts as 'religion' does not decline; it just keeps transforming. Thomas Luckmann (1967) has argued that modern societies have an 'invisible religion' that characterizes the transcendence of the everyday world. There is an 'implicit religion' of beliefs about spiritual phenomena that are not necessarily Christian or components of formal religion. In modern societies there is 'believing without belonging', because religious membership and attendance decline, but belief in the Christian faith is still prevalent (Beckford, 2003).

Over the last two centuries, secularization in the narrow meaning (decline in church membership and attendance, marginalization of the Church from public life, the dominance of scientific explanations of the world) has been characteristic of Europe (especially northern, Protestant Europe) and its former colonies (Australia, New Zealand, Canada), but not of the United States, where religion remains powerful, or in many Catholic societies, especially in Latin America and Africa. In these societies, Pentecostalism and charismatic movements have been growing. In Islam, Christianity and Judaism there have been powerful movements of fundamentalist revival. In many societies, in youth cultures and popular culture generally, there have been important hybrid forms of religiosity, often employing the Internet to disseminate their services and beliefs. In post-communist societies, there is clear evidence of a revival of Orthodoxy (in Russia and eastern Europe) and Islam (in China), and Buddhist movements and 'schools' have millions of followers in Japan. Shamanism thrives in Okinawa. In some respects, this conclusion is compatible with Weber's sociology of virtuoso-mass religion in that rational and individualistic Protestantism (Kant's moralizing faith) appears to be self-destructive and there is also an ongoing demand for mass religious services (Kant's cultic form of religion) in most human societies. There is one difference here. In the past, the educated and disciplined virtuosi determined the official form of religion. Periodically religion gets 'cleaned up' as the virtuosi expel the magical, popular, cultic accretions – the Buddhist monks, often with the help of a righteous monarch, reject the magic of their followers; Christian reformers – from the desert fathers to John Wesley – condemned the corrupt practices of the laity; in Islam, according to Ibn Khaldun, prophets enter the city to reform the House of Faith. In the modern world, the laity have some degree of literacy and they can access radio, the Internet, TV, travel and mass consumerism. The globalization of popular religion makes it increasingly difficult for the virtuosi to regulate the mass. In Thailand, popular Buddhist charismatics sell magical charms and amulets over the Internet; on Muslim websites, popular American mullahs offer *fatwas* on every aspect of daily life. The growth of global spiritual marketplaces means that 'religion' constantly transforms itself, becoming increasingly hybrid and reflexive. Fundamentalism is in this sense an attempt to control the consumerist spiritual market place, but this growing hybridity may only be a problem from the perspective of those religious traditions that represent the Kantian moralizing faith. Syncretism has been historically the norm.

Religion and Political Violence

By the end of the 20th century, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of fundamentalism, and the retreat of assertive humanism, sociologists abandoned the secularization thesis; religion, far from declining, is central to modern political life. Sociologists and philosophers have become more interested in the relationship between religion and violence (de Vries, 2002). Given the contemporary relationship between terrorism and political Islam, it is difficult to avoid the popular question: is there any relationship between Islam as a religious system, violence and authoritarian rule? The traditional answer of mainstream political science has been to argue that, because Islamic culture does not differentiate between religion and politics, it assumes an undemocratic and, typically, an authoritarian complexion. This conventional answer follows Weber's thesis of caesaropapism – namely the integration of state and Church power, or the combination of Caesar and the Pope – and liberal political philosophy.

A more promising argument might be that no religious system has a deep relationship to democracy. Charisma is hierarchical and religious communities (churches, temples and monasteries) do not democratically elect their leaders. Prophets receive revelations that are not tested by popular assent. In this respect, the principle of authority in Islam might be an exception. Whereas Shi'ite Islam saw authority in terms of descent from the Prophet, Sunni Islam accepted the idea of communal consensus for the first four Rightly Guided Caliphs. In Christianity, there is the argument that the Protestant sects embraced the idea of 'priesthood of all believers', a politics of 'No King, No Bishops', popular assembly, presbyterianism and the rule of local chapels, and female ministries, but the openness to debate also led to antinomianism and the quest for 'godly rule'. There is also the view that Confucianism is essentially a philosophy of good governance and good order rather than a religion as such. In Buddhism, there is a tradition of powerful and just (but undemocratic) monarchs who periodically clean out the monastery (*Sangha*) and the kingdom to establish a just society and personal merit – a tradition that has its origin in King Asoka's rule over the Magadha Empire (270–232 BC). Any religion whose system of authority claims to be the result of revelation (hence of prophecy, ecstatic visions, charisma) does not support the idea of truth as the outcome of communal consensus. Holy war, crusades and just war have been used to illustrate the relationship between violence, monotheism and hostility to the outside world. In these political struggles, *jihad* has become a popular description of violent confrontation. Sympathetic interpretations of Islam normally argue that *jihad* means 'spiritual struggle' but has been corrupted to mean 'armed struggle'. Watt's account of the origins of *jihad* in the inter-tribal raids (*razzia*) that were common in Arabia is important for understanding the greater *jihad* (war against external enemies) and the lesser *jihad* against polytheism. In *Islamic Political Thought* (1999), he argues that *jihad* ('striving' or 'expenditure of effort') had entirely secular economic origins, namely camel raids. In the great expansion of Islam in its first century, there was little intention of spreading the religion of Islam 'apart from other considerations that would have meant sharing their privileges of booty and stipends with many neo-Muslims' (Watt, 1999: 18). In subsequent generations, it 'has roused ordinary men to military activity', while later mystics have described it as 'self-discipline' (1999: 19).

In sociological terms, 20th-century political Islam is a product of the social frustrations of those social strata (unpaid civil servants, overworked teachers, underemployed engineers and marginalized college teachers) whose interests have not been well served by either the secular nationalism of Nasser, Muhammad Reza Shah, Suharto or Saddam Hussein, or the neo-liberal 'open-door' policies of Anwar Saddat or Chadli Benjedid in Algeria. The social dislocations created by the global economy produced ideal conditions for external western support of those secular elites in the Arab world who benefit significantly from oil revenues; bureaucratic authoritarianism has been the political result. In summary, Islamism is a product of a religious crisis of authority, the failures of authoritarian nationalist governments, and the socio-economic divisions that have been exacerbated by neo-liberal globalization.

Roy (1994) and Kepel (2002, 2004) have developed an influential interpretation of the failure of political Islam. Their account of the radicalization of Islam starts with the Algerian

crisis, the October riots of 1988, the coup of 1992, and the increasing violence between the state, the GIA (Groupe Islamique Armé) and FIS (Fronte Islamique du Salut). The failure of radical Islam to establish itself in confrontation with the Algerian state resulted in the export of political Islam to Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, but these revolutionary Islamic movements have failed to establish fundamentalist Islamic states. Political Islam is the consequence of social frustrations, articulated around the social divisions of class and generation, following from the economic crises of the global neo-liberal experiments of the 1970s and 1980s. The demographic revolution produced large cohorts of young Muslims, who, while often well educated to college level, could not find opportunities to satisfy the aspirations that had been inflamed by nationalist governments. Kepel's thesis is simply that the last 25 years have witnessed the spectacular rise of Islamism and its failure. In the 1970s, when sociologists assumed that modernization meant secularization, the sudden irruption of political Islam, especially the importance of Shi'ite theology in popular protests in Iran, appeared to challenge dominant paradigms of modernity. These religious movements – especially when they forced women to wear the *chador* and excluded them from public space – were originally defined by leftist intellectuals as a form of religious fascism. Over time, however, Marxists came to recognize that Islamism had a popular base and was a powerful force against colonialism. Western governments were initially willing to support both Sunni and Shi'a resistance groups against the Russian involvement in Afghanistan after 1979, despite their connections with radical groups in Pakistan and Iran.

These religious movements largely cancelled out the legacy of Arab nationalism that had dominated anti-western politics since the Suez Crisis of 1956. The ideological basis of Islamism was devised in the late 1960s by three men: Maududi in Pakistan, Qutb in Egypt and Khomeini in Iran. For Kepel, Islamism is the product of both generational pressures and class structure. First, it has been embraced by the youthful generations of the cities that were created by the post-war demographic explosion of the Third World and the resulting mass exodus from the countryside. This generation was poverty-stricken, despite its relatively high literacy and access to secondary education. Second, Islamism recruited among the middle classes – the descendants of the merchant families from the bazaars and souks who had been pushed aside by decolonization, and from the doctors, engineers and businessmen, who, while enjoying the salaries made possible by booming oil prices, were excluded from political power. The ideological carriers of Islamism at the local level were the 'young intellectuals, freshly graduated from technical and science departments, who had themselves been inspired by the ideologues of the 1960s' (Kepel, 2002: 6). Islamic themes of justice and equality were mobilized against those regimes that were corrupt, bankrupt and authoritarian, and often supported by the West in the Cold War confrontation with the Soviet empire.

Conclusion: Enlightenment, Violence and Revelation

In the last decade, Huntington's analysis of 'the clash of civilizations' (1993) has orchestrated much of the academic discussion about inter-cultural understanding. While Edward Said's criticisms of Orientalism offered some hope that intellectuals could cross cultural boundaries and establish a road towards mutual respect and understanding, in the post 9/11 environment, Huntington's pessimistic vision of the development of micro fault-line conflicts and macro core state conflicts has more precisely captured the mood of western foreign policy in the era of global terrorism. Huntington, of course, believes that the major cultural division is between the Christian West and the Muslim world. Given Huntington's description of 'the age of Muslim Wars', any attempt to engage with Islamic civilization is now seen as a 'war for Muslim minds' (Kepel, 2004).

Although the Enlightenment has been much criticized by postmodern philosophy, this criticism is somewhat misleading when applied to Leibniz (1646–1716), the German founder of the predominantly French Enlightenment. He is best known as a mathematician, but Franklin Perkins (2004) shows a rather different, but equally important, side of Leibniz's philosophy, which appears extraordinarily pertinent to modern times. Leibniz lived in a period of intense

trade and commerce with the outside world and, alongside this emerging capitalist enterprise, Leibniz advocated a ‘commerce of light’ or mutual enlightenment. Contrary to Spinoza’s view that there is only one substance, Leibniz argued that the world is characterized by an infinite diversity, richness and completeness. This world is a teeming world of entities that exist in a state of harmony, and in the *Discourse on Metaphysics* he claimed that God has created the best of all possible worlds (a theodicy), which is ‘the simplest in hypotheses and the richest in phenomena’.

Recognition of the diversity of cultures and civilizations leads us to recognize the inherent value of difference. Leibniz advocated a tolerance of diverse views, but went beyond the philosophers of his day to establish a moral imperative to learn from cultural diversity. He applied this ethic to himself, committing much of his life to studying China from the reports of missionaries and merchants. Differences between entities or monads require exchange, but this also establishes a commonality of culture. Leibniz was not, in modern terms, a cultural relativist – if all cultures are equal (in value), why bother to learn from any one of them? While all knowledge of the outside world is relativistic, Leibniz argued that, because we are embodied, there are enough innate ideas to make an exchange of enlightenment possible. According to Perkins, from the doctrine of blind monads, Leibniz developed a hermeneutics of generosity that regarded inter-cultural understanding as not merely a useful anthropological field method, but as an ethical imperative. Leibniz developed a notion of cosmopolitan virtue in his attempt to establish an exchange with China that offers us a guideline for understanding our own times, especially a cosmopolitan exchange with Islam. Leibniz is a sort of rational and moral antidote to Huntington.

How might we best illustrate cosmopolitan or Leibnizian historiography? One starting point is the work of Marshall G.S. Hodgson in his monumental *The Venture of Islam* (1974). Hodgson, formerly a professor of history at the University of Chicago, set himself the task of *Rethinking World History* (1993). His thesis was that Islam was an integral part of Mediterranean civilization, which can in turn only be understood from the standpoint of world history. He shifted the central point of European historical geographical imagination eastwards and southwards, giving Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad greater prominence in European civilization. His work embraced a cosmopolitan virtue in that he was a Quaker, attempting to understand Islam hermeneutically. From a sympathetic, pacifist stance, he criticized the militaristic evolution of imperial Islam as a social system. These imperial systems were alien to the inner religious tradition of Islam. Hodgson showed hermeneutic generosity to both faiths, demonstrating for example how a sense of justice was crucial to Islamic theology. Hodgson’s world history was an attack on western provincialism, but it also contained a critical assessment of the relationship between faith and political empire. From Hodgson we might conclude that the recognition of cultural difference does not mean uncritically accepting those differences. On the contrary, we need a critical recognition theory in which there is a place for dialogical critical understanding. I call this perspective a ‘critical recognition ethics’ that is at the heart of cosmopolitan virtue in which caring for the differences of the other does not rule out critical judgement of other cultures.

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The Gift and the Given

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Keywords donation, ethics, exchange, God, Mauss, ontology

The gift, according to ancient Seneca (1989) and modern Mauss (1990), is supposed to form the primary social bond. Here, especially for Mauss, generosity precedes contract. The latter may be necessary in order to protect, but it is not fundamental. Gift, rather, is what connects and unites.

And yet it has come to be that which we most disagree about, beginning with the question of 1: *gift and contract itself*.

Is gift always gift-exchange? In order to give, must one already be in a relationship, and if gift is socially fundamental, does that mean that gifts have always already been exchanged? But if gift in this way begins as a return gift and itself expects in return a counter-gift, then is not gift itself an exotic mode of contract? But can that be a true gift? Already Seneca (1989) asked whether there can be an aristocratic, pure, disinterested gift, giving for the sake of giving. In that case gift has more to do with absolute duty than with social bonds, with absolute ethical respect for the other, rather than with practices sustaining a specific community.

And so one gets the contrast between the pure, disinterested, unilateral gift on the one hand and the idea that any gift is always involved in the complex reciprocity of gift-exchange on the other. But then it has come to be asked 2: *Is the gift purely a social matter, or is it also ontological?*

In the case of the imperative to give freely and

disinterestedly, this has been grounded ever since Kant in an absolute divine imperative, a command to be good more fundamental than the divine bringing about of being and the human modification of the same. Equally, the perennial adepts of gift-exchange – most of humanity hitherto – have understood this exchange not to be merely social or cultural at all, but to be an aspect of a cosmic ecology: a vast circulation encompassing natural beings, the gods and the ancestors.

This is a circumstance still perhaps reflected in our language, in which we speak of 'the given' to refer to the inertly factual, and yet with a language that paradoxically conveys the notion of a personal transfer. When theorists, in turn, have reflected in the 20th century on this circumstance, one gets 3: *The debate about the given and the gift*.

All of modern philosophy, analytic and continental, sought to evade metaphysics by confining itself to the given, beginning with the given and remaining with the given, whether as the logical and grammatical parameters of possible sense, or as the noetic processes within which we receive and actively constitute a meaningful world.

But nothing, it turned out, was given in this inert fashion. There was no inviolable empirical data uncontaminated by synthesis or interpretation or evaluation. To find anything uncontestedly given one had rather to turn to our entire existential circumstance. Here, 'it is given' that we are beings able to reflect on the fact that there is being at all. Here, our specific existence in time and space is also 'given' to us. Finally, things are only 'there' for us because they are able to appear to us in diverse and never exhaustive aspects, both

across space and through time. Things arrive to us via spatial journeyings and temporal advents. This may be the crucial reason why we can speak of the factual as the 'given' – in excess of ancestral habit. What is there arrives and is in this sense 'donated' – we naturally greet the budding tree and the new dawn with grateful welcome.

But what can this mean? Here, 4: *the analytic and the phenomenological approaches part company*.

For analysis, once the given has become a 'myth' and this is fully admitted, only the inanity of practice in order to be practical remains ('pragmatism'). For phenomenology, on the other hand, it may be that we can salvage the anti-metaphysics of remaining with the given by re-interpreting the given literally as gift (Levinas, 1991; Derrida, 1992; Blanchot, 1993; Marion, 1991). But does that mean that one turns at first to the rising dawn? No, because the phenomenological presumption of confinement to the given is that one remains with what appears within the realm of the thinking subject. If what is given within this appearance is fundamentally a gift, then this cannot be guaranteed by the of-limits 'transcendence' of thought-independent being, but only in terms of this subjective space itself.

Therefore, it must be this space, as such, and not what appears to it, that is a gift. The gift of the thinking subject to itself? But how could such self-reference be a gift, or indeed fully proven as given even to itself? Instead, the subject must be given to itself before itself by an other in a 'history' always older than itself (Levinas, 1991). No representation of an ineluctable given is required here, since the other is registered by my inescapable ethical response to her needy demand – a response which first of all ensures that I am 'there' at all.

But how can we know such an imperative without characterizing the suffering other? And how else, if this subject does not, as an ethical subject, 'appear' to me (as Levinas insists) except by projecting my own experience of what it is to exist, to feel and to know onto the other? Is not the 'given' Cartesian subject still secretly prior in this *schema* after all? But this sort of givenness is supposed to have lapsed, along with all the other mythically 'givens'.

Therefore, the priority of the ethical does not clearly work, and one is left with the question 5: *Is the gift/given first enacted ethically, or first known about theoretically?*

Instead of trying to save givenness as gift, could one not instead admit (now that the anti-metaphysical 20th century is over) that one has always already speculatively ('metaphysically') transgressed the boundary between the immanently appearing and the excess of non-appearing

in the real? If, as Marion (2002) says, the typical phenomenon is 'saturated' in terms of an appearing that exceeds our full conceptual grasp, then does not this mean (beyond Marion, 2003) that we receive such an appearing also with the supplement of our poetic, constructive speculation concerning the hidden – else the non-appearing excess will be merely a sublime hyper-presence without character, neatly segmented from that which does definably appear? And an uncharacterizable hyper-presence might be menace as much as it is gift.

This consideration, of course, tends to return us to the issue of language and interpretation. But it also brings us back to the arriving dawn and the budding tree. For now it is possible that things as well as persons can be initially conceived as gifts. Already, Heidegger (1972) suggested that *es gibt* was the deeper name for being. So, 6: *Can one substitute the gift for the given in ontological terms, instead of reading the given as the gift in phenomenological terms?*

Yet to read being as time necessarily but tragically interrupted by presence (Heidegger, 1972) is to ensure that the gift is still an impersonal given and, moreover, that it is perpetual mutual sacrifice (of Being to beings and vice-versa) rather than gift-exchange. In addition, to claim that this is a true phenomenological reduction is still, after all, to locate the gift in the supposedly given.

Is another ontological strategy possible? Supposing that I am myself, really, ontologically a gift? Then one does not immediately need to invoke the other in order to grant oneself this status. If mind or spirit is more than an illusory epiphenomenon, then it does not derive from matter, and must be in consequence a mysterious and fundamental gift from the unknown (Bruaire, 1983). If I am myself a gift, then what lurks in me from before myself is more than the human, horizontal other. It is rather the trace of a vertical donor. And it seems appropriate that this donor, 'God', who gives gifts to nothing, and so gives gifts to themselves in order to establish gifts, should create first of all a creature able reflexively to exist by giving this gift to herself in turn. Is this not what it means to think (Bruaire, 1983)? Then gratitude for the gift of self spills later over into generosity towards the neighbour in imitation of that generosity that has first constituted us in being at all.

But if spirit is appropriately the first given, is it absolutely the first given? Is this not rather being in general, and does not this then allow that 'I' am first co-given along with others? And what of the role of merely material things? Are they not also first given? And do they not ensure that there can be between people a concrete shared community,

rather than mere mutual sympathy and respect at a safe distance?

This raises 7: *The question of whether our approach to the gift should be primarily philosophical or else primarily ethnographical.* Or, in other terms, can we define the gift most securely as an eidetic possibility (within phenomenology) or as an ontological pre-condition of finite existence (Bruaire's metaphysics), or must we rather discover it from the complex actuality of historical practice? A phenomenology combined with an ontology of the gift (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) might perhaps conclude that gift is interpersonal, that to give one must already be responding and must already be in a relation of exchange to the proposed recipient. Moreover, it might also conclude that a gift, if it is to be accounted a gift, must be an appropriate gift – therefore the complex business of combining thing with person ('finding the right gift') is essential and not dispensable. Such a perspective suggests that gift is always a moment within gift-exchange.

But can there be an exchange that is not pure formal contract? That deconstructs our modern divisions between private freedom (of donation) and public duty (of binding prior word)? This would have to be in terms of timings and spacings judged equivalent, even though not measurable as such. Non-identical repetition. Asymmetrical reciprocity. Plus the appropriateness of the gift combined with a surprisingness that exceeds the 'just what I have always wanted' which can derisively suggest that the recipient was about to obtain the article for himself in any case. The difficult question then of the appropriate surprise – which judged wrong could even be a violent intrusion. And since the horizon invoked here depends upon the reality of objective value, the possibility arises that a real but difficult gift might be wrongly received as a curse.

One can see, then, in abstract formal terms, the possibility of an exchange that still sustains gift. It would be less a circle than an ongoing never foreclosed spiral (Godbout and Caillé, 1998). But to know if this apparent possibility can really be instantiated, one has to regard and judge historical actions – both on a micro and a macro scale. At this stage historical ethnography becomes essential. But within ethnography, as much as within philosophy, the question has been asked 8: *Is the gift unilateral or is it reciprocal?*

Many anthropologists have seen in gift only disguised contract, and have assumed in effect the modern division between reciprocal contract and unilateral gift. Especially they have suggested that a gift is only a kind of loan secured by capitalized, ungiftable items (Godelier, 1999; Weiner, 1992). But could it be that the ungiftable and that which

must be given are two halves of the same unmodern picture? Namely, that, in ancient times, objects were not yet commodities, and so were seen as specific things with specific characteristics liable to achieve specific but not quite predictable effects. Able, in fact, to move the human plot almost as much as persons do. Then the ungiftable belongs to the person it defines, while its surrogates must return or return in some equivalent mode, because they must always *remain him* in some sense. Gift-exchange is possible in part because of a certain belief in the animation of objects (Godbout and Caillé, 1998). This is the question 9: *of the spirit of the gift.*

But beyond this discussion one can ask 10: *Is the unilateral/reciprocal contrast absolute?*

Perhaps both paradigms assume that a situation of equality between social parties is the norm. But is there not rather usually hierarchy? Or always at least temporary hierarchy in that one person talks – gives orders, reports etc. – and is thus superior for the moment, or else one person listens – and judges – and is so likewise thereby superior? The person who talks both gives in a one-way sense and creates the theme and space of a subsequent conversation. In a sense he (somewhat) unilaterally gives the space of future reciprocity. Thus unilaterality and reciprocity can operate simultaneously, yet at different levels of causality. Supremely, one could note, God unilaterally gives a creature whose whole existence must be response to him. It is, indeed, this interaction of two causal levels that helps to sustain the neverforeclosed spiral of gift-exchange.

But to speak of spoken sign as gift – what does this mean? If a gift is a signifying convention then is it at bottom a fiction? Is the impossibility of the pure gift according to Derrida (because we award ourselves economically even in telling ourselves that we have been generous) coterminous with the endless deferral of meaning by the sign, such that to speak is to endlessly project the arrival of meaning, while to act ethically is endlessly to strive towards a generosity that cannot be enacted? This implies, however, as Derrida was aware, that postponement of meaning nonetheless remains 'truer' than a foreclosed presence of truth, while equally the impossible gift remains 'the good' in a way that economic and contractual self-assurance cannot be. So 11: *What is the co-implication between gift and fiction?*

Is meaning just postponed? Or can it be in some measure anticipated? And if not, then is the gift basically a sign, a promise of special attention that can never be realized? But perhaps, to the contrary, a sign has always a material vehicle, like the person speaking, the medium in which it is inscribed, the actions, place and time that

accompany it. This vehicle itself supplements the import of the sign, and not just the next sign to which it gives rise. This ensures that *some* meaning is already realized. Is this meaning a suppression of indeterminacy, or does it of itself open up a specific but open horizon of meaning? If it does not, then the significance of the material for meaning seems to be suppressed, by arbitrary *fiat*.

But a sign proffered by a material someone deploying a material vehicle is not just a sign, it is also a gift. Inversely, a material thing handed over must be also a sign in order to be a gift. So gift is the exact point of intersection between the real and the signifying. It thereby exceeds the contrast between history and fiction, just as, at the instance where we receive joyfully a gift, our lives have become saturated with meaning, like novels, as if we were truly living out a dream. Thus, the instance of the gift is the instance of the closing of the gulf between the fictional and the desired on the one hand and the real and the tedious on the other.

And yet this instance only reminds us that such closure is more fundamental than the rift since, originally, no material thing appears to us before it has been interpreted as in some way significant; nor, on the other hand, can any signified meaning ever entirely float free of material actuality. Where this cultural presupposition is seen as itself a response to a prior gift (sign/reality) then one has 'religion'. Where the latter is absent, then the unavoidable presupposition of original gift – the givenness of gift, both historically and ontologically, for human existence – is placed, with a constant effort, in ironic brackets. Then the gift is seen as only a fantasy in order to escape the givenness of an endless drift, rising up without generosity from a fundamental void. All then unravels: there can be really no gift, unilateral or reciprocal, but only the assertive gestures of power and their self-interested mutual contracting.

So, finally, 12: *Is the gift the echo of divine creation and of divine grace? And otherwise, is it an illusion?*

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Religion and Non-hierarchy

Robbie B.H. Goh

Keywords abjection, election, eschatological continuity, intimacy, religious narratives

The study of religion, particularly as classificatory system, has had a relatively brief but complicated history (see entry on 'Religion' by Bryan Turner). Problems of knowledge and analysis are exacerbated when we turn from religious systems (the major structures of belief, corresponding to main headings like 'Christianity', 'Islam', 'Buddhism', 'Hinduism' and so on, each with its own recognizable variations, denominations, sects and branches) to the praxes and social patterns that might in some sense be called 'religious' (including 'cults', 'myths' and 'rituals' addressing a supernatural order). The additional knowledge-problems thus encountered, include:

- (1) historical changes in religious emphases, interpretation, practices and doctrine, which put pressure on the synchronicity implicit in a religion-as-system. Thus, for example, the view that Hinduism underwent a 'Puranic' (pertaining to the body of Sanskrit scriptures known as the 'Puranas', but also used to refer more widely to the Aryan conquest and cultural transformation of India) change from the 8th to 19th centuries, characterized by a Brahminic decline as a result of Muslim conquests, and manifested in 'gross forms of idol-worship' and 'guru-worship' (Bose, 1894, cited in Copley, 1997: 41). These and other examples, which show how some of the main features commonly associated with a religion are the products of a particular historical phase, problematize the hypostasis of the 'religious system';
- (2) the relationship between religion and political power. It is one thing for a political group to claim religious justification for an extremist act (thus problematizing the 'religious' and 'political' definitions of the group/act), but even more problematic is the case of 'official' or 'state' religions, where the religious institution in various ways endorses the political one. The many and varied examples of this – from the relationship between the established Church and the Crown in Tudor England, to that between Buddhism and the monarchy in contemporary Thailand, or between religions

like Islam and Buddhism and the (ethnic, social and political) dominant groups in contemporary Pakistan and Myanmar – blur the defining boundaries of religious systems by associating them with the agendas and actions of various political groups;

- (3) the distinction between 'religion' and 'cult', which not only raises the problem of signifying versus non-signifying religious features, but also involves various issues of state legitimation and tolerance (for example, the 1999 crackdown on the Falungong or Falun Dafa sect in China, for, among other reasons, the fact that it constituted a threat to social stability and the Communist Party);
- (4) the (as it were) idiolects of religious practices and attitudes which, contained under the rubric of a particular religion, also pose a heterogeneity and variety which constantly undermine doctrinal/ritualistic unity. If a particular ritual (scheduled fasts, key liturgical events) features prominently in a particular religion, does the coherence of that religion become undermined if a significant number of adherents do not in fact observe this ritual?

Clearly such considerations militate against a study of religions as abstract entities which remain stable and unchanged long enough to be labelled and categorized.

Yet several theoretical templates suggest ways to analyse and compare religions, acknowledging their socially constructed natures without abandoning the field to an infinite series of phenomena in localized and micro-social conditions. First, religion, like language, can be seen as a structured and collective system (*langue*), which nevertheless has a wide range of possible performances (*paroles*) among its belief-community. Derrida quite rightly observes that in approaching religion today:

... what is at stake is language, certainly – and more precisely the idiom, literality, writing, that forms the element of all revelation and of all belief, an element that ultimately is irreducible and untranslatable – but an idiom that above all is inseparable from the social nexus, from the political, familial, ethnic, communitarian nexus, from the nation and from the people. (1998: 4)

Still, the proliferation of religious idioms threatens to overwhelm any grammatology of religions,

unless a religion is regarded as an underlying (unconscious) narrative, a response to deep human needs and anxieties which constitutes (as Lacan says of the agency of the letter in the unconscious) an ‘elementary structure of culture’ through which alone such needs and anxieties can be expressed (Lacan, 1977: 148).

As deep unconscious narratives, religions precede and in some sense order the wide range of religious manifestations, offering an organizing principle that does not deny the multiplicity of praxes, any more than a language structure denies the possibility of creative and inventive word-usage. The fact that religious narratives are social constructs also avoids a kind of abstract humanism which only posits vague psychological categories expressed in primitivist (mythic) terms, allowing instead the incorporation of various forms of unconscious social anxieties (ideologies); in this sense we depart from accounts of religion as primal stories residing only in an originary and unchanging collective unconscious. Instead, we need to be able – like Weber’s account of *The Protestant Ethic* (1958: 39–40, 53) – to read conditions of social exclusion or persecution as reinforcing a particular religious form, one which emphasizes justification through ‘economic acquisition’, and which in turn goes on to found a ‘peculiar’ and ‘specific’ socio-economic form (the ‘Spirit of Capitalism’). This social unconscious of religion, as a kind of ‘collective representation’, then forestalls the artificial split between social life and a ‘wizeden’ theology, which is removed some distance from it.

Some of the key tropes that may be identified in this grammatology of religions include:

- (1) ‘election’, the setting apart of a tribe (or caste, hieratic clan, or even select ‘enlightened’ or ‘anointed’ individuals). Election might be considered the stimulus or motive cause within religious narratives, the point at which general and inclusive creation-stories give way to the special career and function of the elect. Since this often involves an historical process (the ‘manifest destiny’ of the elect to bring about a divinely ordered plan), it accommodates social conditions of persecution, ethnic conflict, the necessity of suffering (received or imparted), rationalized rituals or codes of behaviour. ‘Election’, far from being merely a myth of origins, is also a (historically and socially flexible) discourse of ethnic (in the wider sense of *‘ethnos’*) conflict as the means and cost of ultimate power and victory;
- (2) ‘abjection’, a ‘strategy of identity’ (Kristeva, 1982: 92), which marks out a consecrated or purified group by ritual definitions of ‘unclean’ outsiders. This is not limited to

biological markers (race, gender and associated features like menstruation and skin-colour), nor the traditional and inherited social functions derived from the former, but also describes some of the religious transformations which negotiate abjected positions for conquered peoples, such as the ‘hierarchical policy’ of Hindu castes instituted by the ‘Rigvedic invaders’ of India (Hutton, 1946: 145), as well as modern cultural practices of taboo-formation and the identification of ‘achievement’ and ‘success’ involved in this;

- (3) ‘intimacy’, a sense of ‘immanence’ and knowledgeable ‘belonging’ (between the individual and world, including its spiritual aspect; Bataille, 1992: 43–5). Some of the common components in this movement towards intimacy include ‘worship’, ‘sacrifice’, and rituals of reconciliation and atonement. This might be regarded as the religious face of the reconciliation between ‘self’ and ‘ego’, ‘elect’ and the spirit-world, but also between *‘ethnos’* and *‘oikoumene’*;
- (4) ‘eschatological continuity’, in which present/immanent behaviour results in differentiated spiritual states in an ‘afterlife’ which continues from the present one. Within this gesture might be incorporated the various ‘consolations’ for (or ‘reinforcements’ of) social sufferings, or, on the other hand, the spiritual reward which may serve as the inducement for acts of religious violence.

Far from being an exhaustive list, these tropes merely suggest a possible means of reading the unconscious (ideological, psychological, deep structural) levels of religions, which nevertheless does not deny their changing, socially constructed and nuanced manifestations. Knowledge, in this way, is analytical and capable of taxonomic comparisons, while respecting classificatory alternatives as well as the many differences between religions and their sub-categories; the fact that Christianity has strongly eschatological discourses while religions like Buddhism and Hinduism generally place less emphasis on such discourses is already a means of comparative analysis which (since it is discursive) does not rely on the privileging of one religion over others. The historical dimensions of such an approach also forestall the problems of abstraction or essentialism which threaten religious studies at the ‘theological’ or ‘primordial’ levels.

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Religious Sites

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Keywords diasporic movements, religious sites, territorialization, virtual places of worship

The study of 'religion' arguably requires a supplement on religious 'sites' alone, as the issue of siting in religious terms is simultaneously contradictory, problem-fraught and (due to globalization and technology) rapidly changing in qualitative ways.

The notion of the religious 'site' – the location, placement, investment in physical or material terms of religious attachments and feelings – is in the first instance contradictory, both rigorously insisted upon and strenuously dismantled, often within a single religion, and certainly with different and often contradictory emphases placed on sites (and siting) by different religions. On the one hand, the principle of the divine/spirit is that which cannot strictly be bound, contained or located in one specific place. In the Christian tradition, God's spiritual omnipresence stands at odds with the temple which King Solomon seeks to build: 'But who is able to build [God] an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him?' (2 Chronicles 2: 6). Zen Buddhism, for its part, prides itself on being entirely free of religious sites and objects: 'Do your devotions before the camellia as it opens its blossom and worship it, if you so desire. This is as much a religious experience as prostrating yourself before the Buddhist deities, or sprinkling holy water or receiving Holy Communion' (Suzuki, cited in Ohm, 1959: 111). The belief in the 'God within' each individual of the faith, seen (in different ways) in a wide variety of religions, from

Protestant Christianity to Hinduism to Javanese *Kebatinan* mysticism, is a translocation which simultaneously locates the divine within an individual, and also dislocates the divine by placing it in any and all believing individuals, transcending fixities of time and space. In terms of the localized 'place of worship', there is a corresponding tension between the heavily invested physical site on the one hand – the grand Romanesque cathedrals of Europe, the 'royal mosques' of Turkey and other parts of the Islamic world, the ornate major Hindu temples – and the strands of world-denying, 'mystical' emotionalism within the major religions which dis-locate faith, detaching it from orthodox rituals and sites (Copley, 1997: 48). The tension between religious orthodoxy and various forms of its 'fundamental' interpretations might be seen in terms of a constant negotiation between the relative rootedness of orthodoxy, and the 'striking fluidity and adaptability' of fundamentalisms in playing off their 'external environments' (Marty and Appleby, 1994: 6). It is also in the nature of religious sites to employ different strategies of social interaction, which place pressure on the definition of the religious site: if a Buddhist temple or Christian church seem fairly well-defined loci of religious teaching and practice, what of the Buddhist school, founded as a charitable concern through which Buddhist doctrines could also be propagated, or the Mission school, which was generally a little-disguised institution for direct and indirect evangelism?

In a sense, religious territorialization offers to cut through the problems of the spirit–site divide. In the form of classical religious nationalisms – for example the biblical account of the Abrahamic covenant, the exodus and the establishment of the nation of Israel in the place of divine appointment

(‘a land that I [God] will shew thee’, Genesis 12: 1), or the account in the 5th-century chronicle the *Mahavamsa* of the establishment of the kingdom of Sri Lanka as ‘a place of special sanctity for the Buddhist religion’ – territorial siting creates a spiritual homeland whose boundaries are manifest and co-terminous with the nation, but whose integrity usually did not last beyond the originary narrative. Trade, cultural contact, intermarriage, invasion and conquest in the pre-modern world introduced religious heterogeneity and division within the site of the ‘chosen’ nation. Such spatial-religious contestations were intensified in the ages of European colonialism (which brought religious territorialization that was often as aggressive as its colonial-mercantilist underpinnings) and decolonizations and nationalisms (which often saw the establishment or restoration of a ‘traditional’ religion as the official or state religion, resulting in conflicts with other religions introduced or tolerated by the colonial regime). In many cases, this led to the intensification of religious sites rather than their abandonment – to the creation of smaller spiritual regions within the national space, each consecrated to a particular religion, for example the Sikh spiritual homeland of Khalistan in the Punjab region, or the Christianity-dominated states (Nagaland, Mizoram) in North-East India. The partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947, and of Bangladesh and India in 1971, indicate the extent to which the political attempt to site religion is taken, in the age of Asian nationalisms; nevertheless, religious nationalisms tend to result, not in the definition of a space dedicated to the official religion and its adherents, but the establishment of uneasy and competing zones marked by different religions (for example, the tribal Christian highlands versus the Buddhist capital regimes in countries like Myanmar and Thailand).

The impulse to locate religious sentiments becomes highly complicated, but no less emphatic, in the age of globalized capital and communications. To a certain extent, the effect has been to draw the territorial lines more sharply, demarcating a ‘Third World’ phenomenon of religious ‘fundamentalism’ and ‘militantism’ perceived as being at odds with ‘the West’ with its experience of a ‘secularization tide’ (Haynes, 1999: 6; Esposito and Watson, 2000: 4, 10). Recent scholarship, however, points to a losing of faith in this ‘religion of secularization’ in recent decades, together with a realization that there is hardly a homogeneous or even uniform phenomenon of religiosity located in the ‘Third World’, but instead a ‘great diversity’ of religious groups in relation to a variety of local conditions (Swatos, 1989: 147–50; Haynes, 1999: 10).

Conditions of knowledge with regard to

religious sites are, if anything, more problematic in the era of globalization. In the first place, advances in electronic finances, the speed of international logistics and of the transmission of information, expand and diffuse the notion of the physical religious site, as indeed they do to all physical sites. Thus the support (in economic, and to a lesser extent political, terms) of external agencies may give some oppressed minority religions in less-developed countries a larger social stake than their mere numbers or territorial influence would suggest; such international links effectively enlarge the religious localities in a particular country, adding (as it were) overlays of affiliated international religious sites. Second, diasporic movements, which have intensified in reach and scale in the last decades of the 20th century (and into the 21st), mean among other things that religious structures and links become established on diasporic-ethnic lines as well, fostering increasingly concentrated religious variety within cosmopolitan sites. New notions of ‘flexible citizenship’ characterized by multiple allegiances (Ong, 1999) also extend the space of religious affiliations far beyond originary sites: the cosmopolitan believer in a ‘Korean-American Church’ or in a ‘Lotus Sutra School’ of Buddhism effectively participates in and reinforces the multiple international locations of those networks, which both suggest and dismantle the original ethnic-national site of those religious ‘denominations’. Along the same lines, the Internet – as a technology enabling a virtual site which is to all effects and purposes permanent, and even less prey to the vicissitudes of fortune and society than the brick-and-mortar site – adds a significant new dimension to the religious site. Virtual places of worship (including possibilities of real-time chatroom counselling, MPEG homilies and rituals, bookstores, archives and other resources), while yet to develop their real potential, already suggest the ways in which textual/semiotic analyses of religious ‘sites’ might complicate and enrich older physio-sociological definitions.

The study of religious sites increasingly has to take on board micro-institutional (rather than ‘territorial’ or ‘movement’-wide) approaches to religion, sensitive to a wide range of strategies of socio-cultural location or siting, to the heterogeneity of socio-political conditions within which religions increasingly function, and to the possibilities of multiple and overlapping claims and allegiances.

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Law and Religion

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Keywords faith, morals, rituals, sacred, sovereignty, state

In the positivist theory of jurisprudence, law is the command of the state, and hence laws are separate from both religion and morality. The positivist tradition sought to turn jurisprudence into a science and to remove any (subjective) evaluation of law. The validity of 'law as a system of rules' (Dworkin, 1977) depends not on content but on the procedures by which they are produced. Moral rules and legal rules can only be distinguished by the procedures by which they come into existence, and the scope of the law has to be determined by an appropriate official such as a judge. These rules create a 'legal obligation' that forces somebody who falls within that jurisdiction to do something or to forbear from something. The positivist version of law was classically expressed by J. Austin in *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* in 1832 as the coercive command of a sovereign. In the sociology of the law, this command theory was taken up by Max Weber in his definition of the state as that institution which has a monopoly of force in a given territory. Weber defined law in the following way:

An order will be called *law* if it is externally guaranteed by the probability that coercion (physical or psychological) to bring about conformity or avenge violation will be applied by a *staff* of people holding themselves specially ready for that purpose. (1954: 5)

Weber influenced Carl Schmitt's theory of politics

and the state in *The Concept of the Political* (1996 [1932]) in which a sovereign is described as that person who has the power to decide that an emergency exists. This positivist tradition was therefore hostile to the legacy of natural law in which just laws expressed a (religious) notion of the good society. In the natural law tradition, procedural correctness was never a guarantee of the existence of a just law. The critique of positivism and the legacy of Weber owes much to Leo Strauss's *Natural Right and History* (1950).

Before the rise of the modern state and the development of secular legal systems, it was not possible to make clear distinctions between law, religion and morality. In the Abrahamic religions, for example, law is produced by revelation and its authority depends on charismatic powers. The ultimate authority of the law was divine. In Judaism, the texts dealing with law and ritual were known as the *halakhah*, the root of which means a way or path. In this sense it describes the customary ways of the people. More specifically, it describes the religious customs. Moses was the central prophetic figure behind halakhic laws, because it was through Moses that God revealed the law. In more recent history, much of the codification of Jewish law was undertaken by Moses Maimonides (1135–1204). His *Book of the Commandments* catalogued the 613 biblical laws, his *Commentary on the Mishnah* explained the rational purpose of the rabbinic code and the 14-volume *Mishnah Torah* was a catalogue of talmudic law. The *Mishnah* is divided into various sections dealing with, for example, agricultural laws, the conduct of women, civil laws and festivals.

Islam shares with Judaism this centrality of law

to ritual and religious practice. The Prophet was the divinely appointed lawgiver of the community and subsequently the caliphs were deputies responsible for the good order of the Household of Faith. The *Shari'a* or Holy Law is governed by *Fiqh* or understanding, and in Sunni Islam there emerged four major schools of law (Hanafis, Hanbalis, Malikis and Shafi'is). Shi'ite Islam had its own systems. The term *Shari'a* means literally the way to the watering place, namely the source or fountain of life and good order. Islam has no church or priesthood, and in this sense its legal structure is the core of its religious consciousness. The principle of justice lies at the heart of Islamic spirituality, a justice that demands the application of law to public and private life. The law had four roots – the Qur'an (the revealed word of God), the *sunna* (the recorded practices of the Prophet as recorded in *hadith*), *ijma* (legal judgments that follow the consensus of the community) and *qiyas* (the application of logical reasoning and analogue to cases not covered by existing law). Because Islamic legal systems were often dislodged or displaced by Western law during colonization in the 19th and 20th century, there has been a significant revival of Islamic legal thinking in, for example, Malaysia, in order to modernize legal practice and to make the impact of Islamic law more widespread in the community (Peletz, 2002). This modernization of law often results in legal pluralism where *Shari'a* competes with English common law, tribal codes and human rights legislation.

Weber was critical of the legal rigidity in Holy Law. He argued that Holy Law could not change to meet the changing conditions of society and that the gap between law and reality could only be closed by arbitrary legal pronouncements. For example, in Islam the law or *Shari'a* was regarded as complete and therefore it was not open to further development or evolution. The ability to make decisions was over; in short, it was argued that 'the gate of interpretation' was closed or the exercise of independent judgment (*ijtihad*) was finished. This closure has been much disputed by Muslim scholars. Nevertheless, in the Islamic case, Weber argued that the *fatwa* (legal decision of a *mufti*) was such an arbitrary device. The *qadi* or judge issuing a *fatwa* created unstable and arbitrary judgments that were not subject to rational inspection.

Weber's critical commentary on 'qadi-justice' was one aspect of his general argument that law had undergone a process of rationalization. This development had a number of components: (1) there had been a gradual secularization of legal authority, that had also contributed to the decline of the natural law; (2) the codification of the law

had produced a logically deductive system of universal laws that were not subject, or at least less subject, to judicial discretion; (3) legal officers were trained in a rational system of law, and legal education was controlled by professional bodies; and (4) legal decisions were fully recorded. The drift of this argument was simply that rational law is not an arbitrary or ad hoc system.

One major criticism of this Weberian tradition has been that English case law is not a system of logically coherent, deductive principles. The Anglo-Saxon legal tradition is based on precedent, namely judge-made law (Turner, 1996). This is an important historical issue, since Weber regarded English case law as unstable and arbitrary, and paradoxically not entirely compatible with the needs of a capitalist economy that requires stability. More profoundly, does common law count as law in Weber's sense? Common law is often defined as precedent in which judges see themselves as part of a chain of legal decisions that, as a whole, constitute a consensus. But these chains might also be said to define what is common to the rules of a community, and in this sense common law is simply the ensemble of rules in a community that defines the common good. The common law is the bundle of social norms by which social control and social order are established. If the common law embraces the normative order of a society, then we are so to speak back with religion. Following Émile Durkheim in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (2001), religion is the most fundamental classificatory system of any society, and therefore religion and law can never be separated.

Anthropology of law reflects this pragmatist version of common law by describing primitive legal systems as the way of a people. Perhaps the most influential essay in this regard was Clifford Geertz's 'Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective' (1983). Geertz attempted to show that, while many non-Western societies had no indigenous notion of law as *Gesetz* or *loi*, they had a clear notion of *Recht* or *droit*, namely what was right or appropriate, or fitting and customary. This communal idea of right is encapsulated in the idea of correct behaviour or *haqq* in Arabic. This word conveys the notion of customary practice, but this by no means exhausts its richness, because reality itself is governed by *haqq* and *al-Haqq* means the divine truth. In this concept, we see how law and religion are inextricably entwined. The comparable word in Indian religions is *dharmā*, which again conveys the sense of human duty and the correctness or orderliness of reality.

In these examples, law and religion have the same meaning, namely the way or path by which the good government of nature and of society are

achieved (Benveniste, 1973). In China the comparable concept was *tao*, which gives us the name of an organized religion or Taoism. In Confucianism *The Analects of Confucius* (Waley, 1938) were concerned with the traditions (*tao*) of the ancestors and with the proper methods of government between men. These *Analects* spell out the legal pathway of a good society.

Many non-Western systems were subsumed under Western law during the colonial period, and the process of decolonization has produced as a result of globalization a complex legal pluralism in which, because the legal sovereignty of the nation-state is compromised, there is often competition between native laws of first nations, the common law tradition of the British Commonwealth and the United States, the continental Roman traditions of Europe, and so-called religious systems of holy law (Twining, 2000). This legal hybridity is partly solved by the creation of some hierarchy. For example native legal systems are subordinate to federal control in the United States, and the rights of self-government are limited by the plenary power of Congress (Williams, 1996). The sovereignty of autonomous nation-states has been challenged by the growth of human rights legislation, which works towards some form of global governance. The irony of this human rights legislation is that it can be seen as a revival of natural law, the foundations of which are religious. For example, human rights approaches to reconciliation and the notion of 'crimes against humanity' often presuppose a notion of evil.

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Justice

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Keywords description, differend, Kant, law, Lyotard, prescription

In *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant argues that the moral law provides 'a fact absolutely inexplicable from any data of the world of sense or from the whole compass of the theoretical use of reason [. . .]' (1956: 44). The realm of practical reason is demarcated from the theoretical and

cognitive in order to 'check the dangerous pretensions of the understanding' (1951: 3). In contrast to what Kant refers to as concepts of the understanding, that is, cognitions proper, concepts of reason such as justice, freedom, first cause and totality, furnish 'absolutely no objects for experience' (1964: 128). Justice, therefore, is not something we might know in the sense that it might be cognitively grasped and executed; it is rather an opening in thought. In enquiring after the nature of justice Jean-François Lyotard claims that such

an opening demands a mode of questioning that does not seek:

. . . to determine the reply as soon as possible, to seize and exhibit some object which will count as the cause of the phenomenon in question, but to be and remain questioned by it, to stay through meditation responsive to it, without neutralizing by explanation its power of disquiet. (1991: 74)

It is precisely through this power of disquiet that the command 'Be Just' works; it disturbs and disrupts our numerous attempts to make it the object of social science, or render it commensurate to a description of a just society, and hence to a procedural model.

In keeping with Kant's division between practical and theoretical reason, and inspired by Wittgenstein's analysis of the particularity of language games, Lyotard argues that the law is prescriptive and cannot be reduced to any particular description of it. As prescription the law is the practical condition whereby we are first and foremost addressed. The law, then, is this condition of being held (as an addressee). It is the duty of a response, as well as the responsibility for the manner of that response. The law, however, because it is irreducible to knowledge, does not signify what is to be done and remains indeterminate in this regard. As a consequence there is a diversity of possible responses to its address; a diversity that permits Lyotard to speak of 'the constitutive withdrawal of the law' (1988: 12). There is, then, a summons to respond and explore, but we do not know what this law commands for 'the law is only prescription as such' (1988: 10). In talking of the constitutive withdrawal of the law, or the prescript of being held as an addressee, Lyotard is attempting to resist what he calls a 'problematic of the Platonic type', where justice is seen as compliance with a pre-established definition, or conformity to the signification of some philosopher's or politician's discourse. Numerous political models, including liberalism, operate according to the equation that if the discourse is correct the practice that agrees with it will be just. A logical analysis given by Lyotard in *Just Gaming* represents this as; 'If (if P then Q) then R' (Lyotard and Thébaud, 1985), which Lyotard calls a meta-ordering. The bracketed 'if, then' proposition means 'if a given distribution obtains, then justice obtains', and is the conclusion of theoretical discourse; the larger 'if, then' is prescriptive in that it proposes actions that ought to be taken in order to achieve justice in practice. The problem with this meta-ordering is that, despite its common-sense appeal, it is in fact unintelligible because of the differend that exists between the two phrase

regimes from which the 'if, then' propositions are taken.

The lack of fit between the prescriptive phrase 'Be Just' and, for example, the descriptive phrase 'Autonomy is just', comes about because each sets in play a phrase universe with its own set of rules for its formation. One is imperative, the other is predicative; one focuses on the pole of the addressee while the other focuses on the addresser. The phrase 'Be Just' posits a referent to be found, while 'Autonomy is just' posits a referent assumed to be known. Any translation of phrases necessitates a refiguration of the phrase universes and this invariably undermines the specificity of the translated phrase. If the prescriptive phrase 'Be Just' is taken over by a descriptive in which justice is to be worked out, authority is no longer the withdrawn law but the word of a philosopher/politician. What is more it is as if the particularity of the prescriptive phrase 'Be Just' was never felt as a command, but only as an interrogative: 'What is justice?' By driving a wedge between prescriptives and descriptives, Lyotard saves justice from the critique that truth is open to. Thus, when critical philosophies and innovative natural sciences overturn assumed notions of truth, the just is not also left scattered and ineffective. Claiming that justice is resistant to knowledge or calling for thinking justice without criteria is not, therefore, a version of epistemological and moral relativism, but rather its opposite: the maintenance of the law in an age of uncertainty.

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Modernity

Couze Venn and Mike Featherstone

Abstract Whilst presenting a number of features that have been put forward to characterize modernity as a way of life and a social system, this entry suggests a dissident genealogy that reveals a hidden history of continuities and alternatives. It thereby problematizes the norms about periodization and the assumptions about the elaboration of a logos that underlie the concept of the modern. This approach to modernity as a complex of processes, institutions, subjectivities, and technologies challenges the more familiar history of linear temporalities and progressive transformations. The fruitfulness of seeing modernity, as much as other historical periods, as hybrid assemblages in a state of flux is that it draws attention to the heterogeneity and processual nature of cultures and feeds into the possibility of the critique of the present.

Keywords capitalism, dissident genealogy, modernism, public sphere, religion, technocratic reason, tradition

Latour's (1993) claim that we have never been modern is particularly provocative for those who are comforted by the progressive value attached to modernity, and for those who take it for granted that we know what modernity is. His intervention came after a period of often irate polemics around the loose concept of the postmodern that had started to appear from the 1960s, especially with regard to the changing relation of the arts to the project of the 'emancipation of humanity', and in relation to the perception of a crisis of legitimation, forcefully signalled in the work of Habermas and Lyotard from the late 1970s. His emphasis on modernity as a hybrid assemblage – constituted in, and constitutive of, 'social needs and natural reality, meanings and mechanisms, signs and things' (1993: 35) – that a certain discourse of modernity disassociates and makes invisible, calls up the contrasting problematization initiated by Foucault in *The Order of Things*. That pivotal work in the contemporary understanding of modernity identified a new, if enigmatic, object of knowledge, 'Man', as the central figure constituted through the dynamic but unstable intersection of three new fields of enquiry and domains of practice, namely, language, life, labour. Whilst Latour argued against the purification of an episteme as a discursive strategy in the constitution of modernity as different from preceding epochs, Foucault claims that modernity is announced in the shift from the system of representation that pertains to the classical age towards the new logos, centered on the epistemic subject, inscribed in the human sciences. It should be noted, however, that Foucault is careful to temper the claim of epistemic break with the proviso of conditions of possibility and thus the possibility that 'man' may well be erased 'like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea' (1966: 398). The point of highlighting the problematic status of modernity is to put into context the new form of purification at work today which is seeking to bring about through a renewed modernization the age of the market and of the economic subject as its calculating agent. Much is at stake, therefore, concerning a critique of the present, in one's interpretation of modernity as a period.

Though explicitly or implicitly present in a great deal of the literature in the arts and philosophy from the 19th century, the concept of modernity has not always enjoyed the current prominence in the conceptual landscape of the social sciences. In the postwar era, up until the

mid 1970s in sociology, it was capitalism which was the dominant term. The influential *Introduction to the History of Sociology* (Barnes, 1966) has no place for modernity in the index, although it had a large number of references to capitalism. Anthony Giddens' (1973) key early work *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory* clearly indicates the emphasis by foregrounding capitalism, which is prominent in the index, whereas there is no place for modern or modernity. Yet by the early 1990s the focus for Giddens was more directly on spelling out the contours of modernity in books with titles such as *The Consequences of Modernity* and *Modernity and Identity*. In cultural studies, it may well be possible to chart a similar shift with Stuart Hall and his associates producing the influential Open University volume *Formation of Modernity* in 1992. When terminology shifts it is possible to see this renaming process as a strategic move in the field of academic and intellectual cultural production (Bourdieu). Our task is to examine what is at stake in such shifts.

Our approach is to bring into view a longer and more diffracted history of the modern, so that the break with classical antiquity from the 16th century and the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns in the 17th century appear as part of the landscape. A literature has emerged that regards developments in the European Renaissance as announcing an early modernity, and here one could refer to Dante, da Vinci, Luther, Cervantes, Augustine's reflections on time, memory and the self, Arabic science and medicine, the Copernican revolution, the emergence of the New World as significant markers of the shifts in the imagination and the gaze that prepare the ground for the later reorganization of knowledge that one associates with modernity. Foucault strikingly began his study of these shifts with Velasquez's painting 'Las Meninas' (1656) to bring to light the re-centring and de-centring of the gaze that fractures the ideal of classical representation, and betrays the lack at the heart of its episteme. The more familiar meaning of the term began to appear from the 18th century when the verb 'to modernize' first appears in the English language, introduced to denote alterations to buildings, language and fashions. From the mid-19th century in Europe the modern acquires the connotation of improvement and efficiency that persists in the common usage, a meaning that has acquired the force of dogma in the current largely neoliberal strategy of an injunction to 'modernize' or disappear.

A different line of interrogation of modernity, and a different periodization, is indicated by Todorov (1992[1982]), who identifies 1492 as the birthmark of modernity, arguing that the linking of knowledge with dispossession and subjugation triggered by the colonization of the Americas must be seen as a central feature of modern reason. Serres (1982) similarly noted the association of reason with subjugating power that follows when the reason/reasoning of the mightiest comes to be always identified with the 'best reason'. Thus, from the beginning, the tensions in the modern reorganization of knowledge are bound up, on the one hand, with the effects of power and with the form of economy and governmentality emerging at the time; on the other hand, they attest to the alternative visions and trajectories side-lined when modernity acquires the force of a project of worlding a world according to a singular vision and temporalization of history.

Alongside these developments one finds certain themes that echo with the ambivalences and paradoxes signalled in Latour's claim and in the debates about the postmodern, specifically, regarding the claim that the modern effects a break with tradition or community, as in Tonnies' dichotomy of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, the notion of disenchantment that Weber detects in the privilege of instrumental rationality, and the idea of alienation and evanescence expressed in Marx, and explored in different registers from Baudelaire to Benjamin and Marshall Berman (1983). They are themes that surface in different forms in the history of modernity, expressing the enigmatic quality that, following Buci-Glucksmann (1994), one could refer to as 'baroque reason', that is, a reason that opens up the heterogeneous and inassimilable zone where the affinity between thought and affect and 'the infinite materiality of bodies and images' (1994: 139) are played out in visions of the uncanny, the horrifying, the 'strange beauty' and 'swift joys' explored in the modern aesthetics (Venn, 2000). At the worst of times, such as in the wake of Fascism, the violence latent in these

themes has been embodied in the destructive figure of the ‘angel of progress’ as depicted in Benjamin’s vision of modernity as the ceaseless production of the new on the ruins of the old. It is important to note that in the post-Enlightenment period these ambivalences and misgivings about the modern have been amply elaborated or refigured in dissident works and thoughts in movements like Romanticism (see Bowie, 1990) and in conceptualizations of life and the living – in Leibnizian science as well as in early vitalist discourse – at odds with Mechanism and Newtonian natural philosophy that were becoming hegemonic from the 18th century. Of course works like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Goethe’s *Faust* were themselves exemplarily modern. One should add to this problematization the effects of oppositional politics in Europe and the colonies that drew on the emancipatory and critical elements within Enlightenment discourse in support of resistance to the advances of capitalism and emergent imperial governmentality. They reveal a genealogy of counter and alternative modernities, of ‘the insurrection of subjugated knowledges’ (Foucault, 1984: 42) that we shall address below, focusing on a number of features that have come to be thought central to modernity.

A persistent feature of the discourse of modernity is the fact that in its emergence it has instigated a dichotomy between modern and traditional societies, that is, between processes of legitimation and the inscription of meaning based in rational calculations and institutions, in legal contract and individual volition as opposed to custom, religion and communal forms of wealth. Whilst clearly modernity has seen the emergence of state and non-state institutions that have not existed before, and whilst one can understand the logic of difference at work in this discursive constitution of modernity, analyses of modern culture too often forget the reality of the vestiges and mutations of older values, beliefs and ways of being, for instance regarding feudalism, monarchism, and ‘traditional’ forms of sovereignty and power that co-exist with secular state institutions. For example, for a long time in Europe and in many colonized states, family law remained the prerogative of the church or religion and ‘tradition’. In any case, the values that secular law inscribes often have a foundation in religious and traditional belief systems. Indeed a dissident genealogy of modernity would restore, amongst other things, the central place that non-conformist beliefs like Unitarianism and Deism continued to have in shaping the transformations in society that have made the world as modern – in education, in legislation, in the opposition to slavery, in the history of socialism and even the development of the Enlightenment. In its making of difference, the discourse of modernity has reconstructed a view of preceding periods and a sense of its own coherence that simply does not accord with the historical reality. The operation of this systemic discursive distortion has been equally at work in the understanding of concepts of civilization, of nation, of the Orient and the ‘Other’, and of science itself.

Conventionally, in the social sciences, a series of terms like secularism, democracy, technology, the nation-state, citizenship, industrialization, urbanization comes to mind to qualify what one means by modernity. One may even add to that list ideas of the epistemological superiority of science, the autonomy of reason and the law, the existence of a public sphere, human rights, a number of fundamental freedoms, individual ownership of property and individualism. But as soon as one starts to make such a check-list of the characteristics or the criteria that one would use to distinguish a modern society from a non-modern one, or to categorize modernity as a period, one begins to encounter difficulties. Not only is it the case that many states that take their modernity for granted do not display many of the key features that social theory ascribes to modernity; the point is that all these terms are open to problematization. In fact if one were to imagine the ideal-type of modern state, almost no existing state qualifies. For instance the political institutions of the USA may in principle be secular, but religion, although technically a separate sphere from the state, continues to occupy a central place both symbolically and at the level of legitimation. Indeed, appeal to a transcendent domain in the institution of modernity and in the authorization of everyday practices in conditions of modernity is deeply ingrained. The effect of the neglect of belief systems in the history of modernity is yet to be properly established; it will completely alter our view of modern cultures. Similarly, arguments that point to the emergence of a ‘society of control’

and 'Empire' undermine faith in the existence of democracy even in the so-called 'advanced' states. Latour's claim in a sense draws attention to counter-discourses that open the way for a questioning not only of modernity as a period, but of the system of classification and periodization that have been taken as paradigmatic for a considerable time.

The notion of a break with 'tradition' and with the old, central to the modern imaginary, has its exemplary instantiation in Descartes' gesture of *tabula rasa*, that is, of brushing aside from the table of knowledge the authority of ancient texts; it is the gesture whereby the clean slate of reason and evidence is made to replace appeal to an ultimately transcendent authority. Older knowledges may be readmitted but subject to the critical and sceptical judgement of a rational method, uncluttered by faith and dogmas. This gesture also installs the epistemic subject in the place of the logos or principle guaranteeing rational thought, and so inaugurates a privilege of cognitivism, and the 'forgetting' of metaphysics that remain symptomatic well into so-called postmodern times. One encounters it today in the models of artificial intelligence that assume a unitary, autonomous, rational, self-sufficient mind or brain. This assumption about a singular author of truth runs counter to the collaborative and inter-subjective reality of the process of production and validation of knowledge, then and now, as the social studies of science have established; it is to be hoped that new information technologies like the Internet and digitalization will undermine such assumptions, though they too will have to change, for the hold of logocentrism runs deep in the conceptual and technical apparatus of modernity and postmodernity.

Another instance of a construction by the social sciences that casts into invisibility features central to the institution of modern societies concerns the question of the emergence of a public sphere which, since the early studies by Habermas (1983 [1980]), has been thought intrinsic to modernity. The argument is that in democratic societies new public spaces have emerged for the formation of public opinion about matters concerning the good order of the state; they facilitate the free exchange of information and rational debate, and thus help to constitute an informed public capable of making rational choices about issues relating to group and national interests. Yet the dichotomous framing of modernity has meant that liberal as well as many radical accounts of this element of the democratic polity have tended to neglect the role both of traditional sites – the marketplace, the church – and dissident forums located in local or communal settings. The history of resistance demonstrates the extent to which mechanisms were invented that served the goals of dissident publics in the modern period. This includes a large number of societies and associations, such as syndicalist organizations or 'combinations', mutual help associations, salons and societies like the Lunar Society, as well as non-conformist sects, such as the Quakers, or the Unitarian Church. Such new elements of the public spheres emerging in response to bourgeois institutions and spaces, and thus themselves belonging to modernity, nevertheless relied on values and socialities that reconstituted older social relations and ways of being or constituted new publics that one should describe as hybrid.

Thus, Linebaugh and Rediker (2000) show the extent to which sailors, slaves, and commoners constituted a kind of 'many-headed hydra' forging new alliances and fomenting rebellion. This process is even clearer when one considers the history of slave and colonial resistance. For instance, Genovese (1974) shows the importance of ambulant preachers and religious gatherings, the role of the Book alongside mutations in music and songs and ways of storytelling in forming opinion and coordinating action that sustained rebellion (something Toni Morrison has dramatized and analysed in her writings). Similarly, the Subaltern Studies Group has shown the extent to which new emergent forms of organization and knowledges and older 'traditional' institutions and sites combined to determine the form and modalities of resistance to subjugation in India, for instance about the Santal, Basarat, and Sepoy uprisings, or jute workers organization (studies by Guha, Pandey, and Chakrabarty in Guha and Spivak, 1988). Whilst print technology was important in these activities, the interesting issue is both the emergence of non-bourgeois publics and spheres and the process of circulation of ideas through the network of dissident groups that has tended to remain mostly invisible in accounts of modernity. Whilst it can be argued that these forms of resistance are modern, it is also the

case that continuities existed, say about religious sites and the role of religious ideas, which the conventional account of modernity neglects because of the dichotomies inscribed in its systems of classification.

In opposition to the neat break which conventional social science descriptions assume, our interrogation underlines the hybrid, cosmopolitan, heterogeneous or creolized character of the institutions, organizations and subjectivities that construct the modern period in Europe and elsewhere. For example, Viswanathan's (1989) study of the introduction of English in India in the 19th century to constitute a cadre of functionaries for the machinery of imperial governmentality shows the importance of the discussions about the constitution of an appropriate literary canon and the place of religion in the curriculum that had effects for the modernization process in both the colonies and in England. A more pertinent case for the reconstruction of knowledge today is that of the formation of a cosmopolitan corps of intellectuals and artists spread across the continents who were involved in exchanges and networks and collaborations that increasingly determined the content and destiny of movements like modernism and socialism. For instance, the '1922 Generation' of D'Andrade and others in Brazil, the Harlem Renaissance movement in the USA involving poets, novelists, musicians, activists, modernism in India, China, Japan from the 1920s were not only central in the transformation of the culture and landscape outside Europe, but had effects on artists and intellectuals in the 'metropolitan' centres of empire, in terms of subject matter and influence – indicatively: jazz, African art and cubism, a novel like Forster's *A Passage to India*. The history of modernism would have been utterly different without these diasporic fusions, which have since become commonplace, if ignored in conventional accounts of modernity. At the level of politics, one can note the emergence, from the late 19th century but particularly after the First World War, of political parties and movements for decolonizations and vernacular alternative modernities in China, India, Latin America, Africa, Japan, Turkey that have altered the landscape of modernity worldwide.

This standpoint about the hybrid or composite character of much of what one recognizes as modern is in keeping with the recognition of several conjoined processes: the slow and uneven pace of change of social institutions as understood within the framework of the *longue durée*; the heterogeneous character of all cultures, resulting from the borrowings, admixtures, grafts, cross-cultural exchanges of all kinds that work in pragmatic ways rather than according to the rationalist re-descriptions generated by the discourse of modern governance; the relative stability of the mechanisms, values, beliefs and sensibilities that participate in the formation of subjectivities and of inter-subjective worlds. Such worlds, constitutive of socialities, operate alongside as well as outside institutions subject to more direct state regulatory and disciplinary devices; indeed the latter often rely on the existence of the former for their own mechanisms of control to have a purchase. The point is to draw attention to the multiplicity, specificity and mobility of the assemblages that sustain real communities and ways of life, put into place or emerging as part of the practices of everyday life, and thus ubiquitous even if more visible in communities associated with small-scale farming or mining. Equally, they provide spaces and resources for alternative socialities and for resistance to hegemonic forces (Escobar and Alvarez, 1992). Interestingly, neo-liberal interventions in the domain of the social threaten to homogenize such mechanisms in their effort to make them amenable to economic calculations and governance, and thus open to the forces of domestication.

So, underneath the paradoxes of modernity lies a history that a dominant view of modernity, promoted or encouraged by the social sciences, has managed to make invisible. Critiques developed from the standpoint of feminist and postcolonial theory, and interrogations pursued in the social studies of the technosciences or instigated in the light of deconstruction, have challenged the 'history of the victors' as well as the authorized framing of knowledge within the occidentalist purview of modernity. And here one needs to bear in mind, as Foucault has argued, that critique itself and its apparatus, especially in the sense of 'the permanent critique of our era' that 'simultaneously problematizes man's relation to the present, man's historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject', is part of the

'philosophical ethos' of modernity (1984: 42). The co-articulation of capitalism, the European form of colonialism and technocratic and phallogocentric reason in the elaboration of modernity has over-determined the privilege of instrumental rationality and the narrative of progress-as-domination and increasing efficiency; it has encouraged the counter-emancipatory tendencies latent in the discourse of modernity and hastened the postmodern 'end of history' and its fundamentalist dangers.

The Postmodern

The prefix 'post' points to something after the modern, albeit with a certain hesitancy and sense of semantic inadequacy, suggesting something emergent and derivative, yet to be clearly delineated and formulated as a positive term in its own right. The postmodern, like its affiliate terms postmodernism, postmodernity and postmodernization, takes its impetus from modernity. The modern can be seen as the generic term which generates the set. Adding the term 'post' to the modern suggests some failure of the modern. This 'postmodern condition' means the loss of confidence in metanarratives, the 'big stories' of progress, science, human rights and citizenship which came out of the Western Enlightenment of the 18th century and posited both a linear direction to history and an expanding horizon of possibilities (Lyotard, 1984). The modern, as we noted, identifies itself with its differentiation from its own past: to be modern is to continually anticipate or produce the new and different. The postmodern challenged this modern capacity and suggested the end of the new and of originality: the end of art, the end of the subject, the end of history.

The family of terms deriving from the postmodern gained its impetus from the popularity of the term 'postmodernism' in the 1960s, seen as a reaction to artistic modernism. In the United States in particular, young writers, artists and critics such as Burroughs, Barthelme, Rauschenberg, Cage, Fiedler, Hassan and Sontag portrayed modernism as exhausted, as institutionalized into high culture in the museum and academy. Postmodernism pointed to the collapse of the hierarchical distinction between high and mass culture, the mixing of codes and stylistic eclecticism, the loss of the distinction between art and everyday life and the end of the originality of the artist, for instance in the debates about Warhol and Pop Art. This entailed a positive attitude towards everyday consumer culture and a rejection of the central (high) cultural values of modernity. It was this challenging critical aspect, with its suspicion of totalizing reason and value hierarchies, which proved attractive to some intellectuals and academics. In the 1970s and 1980s a number of high profile debates ensued, as the term was batted back and forth between Europe and the United States and a range of major figures were involved or invoked such as Bell, Baudrillard, Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Habermas, Jameson, Lyotard and Vattimo. As the term postmodern was seized upon by critics and commentators and used in a variety of imprecise ways, the more dramatic epochal associations came to the fore, linked to French poststructuralist theorists such as Deleuze and Foucault (later Baudrillard), despite regular denials. The dramatic contrast was made between Foucault's provocative remark at the end of *The Order of Things* about the possible disappearance of 'man' and Habermas's assertion that modernity was an unfinished project.

Other themes are opened up here, particularly in relation to temporality/historicity, as for example in Jameson's work, and to a critique of technics. Jameson's (1991) intervention in the debate arises from the widespread concern about the effects of developments that were beginning to become definite: the 'legitimation crisis' to which Habermas and others had drawn attention, the emergence of the 'society of the spectacle' (Debord, 1977), shifts in the relation of culture and the economy that were thought in terms of consumer culture (Featherstone, 1991); the transformations in science and technology, not just in the wake of cybernetics, but in relation to an uncoupling of science from critique and from a certain mode of questioning that had nourished the Enlightenment idea of modernity as a project. It is implicated for example in his reference to the erosion of the distinction between high and mass culture and the radicalizing role that the avant-garde was supposed to have. He targets problems of pastiche, of the fragmentation of experience and subjectivity, the flattening of time and the

erasure of history, and the self-referentiality of mass culture. These have become familiar issues in the debate about postmodernism. However, his analytical apparatus relies on his ideas of a political unconscious and the logic of consumer capitalism, ideas that are fraught with assumptions and misunderstandings about so-called ‘post-structuralist’ critiques, though they provide a purchase for the analysis of the culture of modernity.

It is important to contrast the stakes in this debate with the vibrant and hopeful output of modernist work coming out of postcolonizing countries after the Second World War. It would require several books to redress this balance, for artists, writers, architects in the ‘Third World’ were busy producing works that engaged with the project of decolonization and the experience of colonialism, and that forged the imagination of hybrid, diasporic worlds. Because of their subject matter, their attachments to vernacular cultural forms and their political commitments, they do not easily fit into the categories of ‘avant-garde’ though technically they belong to modernism; besides, the critiques levelled at the culture industry or the dichotomy of high versus popular culture do not apply to the same extent. An indicative list of this output would note, for example, The Progressive Artists Group in India, writers and artists like Achebe, Soyinka, Empahlele, wa’Thiongo, Okeke in Africa, Brazilia as icon of modernity in Latin America, alongside artists and writers like Wilfredo Lam, Neruda, Marquez, Allende, Kahlo. This output, whilst being modern and contributing to the culture and history of modernity, is not burdened by the obsessions of modish Euro-American postmodernism. Today the contrast in meaning and concern is exemplified in the difference between the work of, say, Damien Hirst and a Palestinian artist like Khaled Hourani; it is repeated in the kind of corpus of work represented in the Documenta series of exhibitions (Enwesor et al., 2003) and artistic activities discussed in many journals, e.g. *Small Axe*. Other elements of a ‘minoritarian’ (post)modernity come into view here; they are an integral aspect of the dissident genealogy of modernity that we are outlining.

Curiously, one starting point for theorizing this alternative account is Lyotard’s (1984[1979]) much cited and misunderstood analysis of the postmodern condition. Although the impact of this text has focused on the question of the postmodern, the underlying issue, as the subtitle, ‘Report on Knowledge’, indicates, is about foundation, namely of truth, of the good society or the ethical community, of living well, of their inter-relationships and their grounding. It is also about the impossibility of foundation, its slippery character, and its secret or veiled existence. Truth, the good society, ethics refer to a transcendent domain; they operate according to the logic of the promise, a ‘to-come’ that asks that one trust in a virtual or ungrounded ground. Premodern societies took this world for granted, in which the virtual and the actual interpenetrated in a magical or miraculous domain, inhabited by spirits and intangible entities. The grand narratives circumscribing the spatio-temporal field of this imaginary in which the ‘to-come’ and the ‘having-been’ encompass ‘the totality of life within the same unity of time’ (Lyotard, 1988) work according to the mythical organization of time, whereby the beginning and the end refer to each other. Modernity invents linearity, and thus inscribes the repetitive erasure of preceding moments. This gesture of *tabula rasa* must be ceaselessly re-enacted, and its costs worked through. For Lyotard, it recalls the repetition-compulsion that drives the search for the lost object of desire. A forgetting of foundation ensues, and thus its dissimulation into an absent-present metaphysics – the trace of which Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida have deconstructed in their different ways. There is also the temptation to refigure the desire for an emancipation into a technique or an art of bringing forth, a *techne*. Lyotard (1988) discusses this avenue in order to make visible the relation to an ethics and an aesthetics, as well as to argue for the work of anamnesis that needs to be part of the process of (a problematic and interminable) emancipation. It is in that context that he says:

Postmodernity is not a new age, it is the rewriting of some features to which modernity has laid claim, and to begin with, of its claim to found its legitimacy on a project of the emancipation of the whole of humanity by means of science and technics. But this rewriting, as I said, has been at work for a long time already within modernity itself. (Lyotard, 1988: 202)

The implication about the work of memory that is called for to avoid compulsion-repetition is also for Lyotard a way of resisting the erasing of duration immanent in the overwriting and overcoding of modernity in the self-referential imaginary of new communication technologies. It is important to point out that this analysis of foundation is consistent with the arguments about the elimination of the emancipatory goals of the Enlightenment, inscribed in the idea of modernity as a project, brought about by the prioritizing of the criteria of technical efficiency and of productivity. This shift, as we noted earlier, is consistent with the privilege of 'purposive-rational' (Habermas) or technocratic rationality over ethical and aesthetic considerations that thinkers of the Frankfurt School as well as Habermas have underlined in their critique of post-Enlightenment reason and capitalism.

The thrust of the entry has been to problematize modernity as a period. A number of final reflections will enable us to point towards more fruitful grounds for the critique of founding principles and the context of globalization and its problems. They relate to the need to rethink the relation between life/the living, technology, socialities and projects of becoming that pursue the emancipatory ideals that had motivated the radical side of Enlightenment and modernity. Stiegler (1998), in his analysis of the relation of technics to time in the history of being, points to the arguments about the separation of *techne* and *episteme* that appeared in the history of Western philosophy. This distinction was not made in Homeric times, and we should add, in philosophies from South Asia and Egypt that fed into ancient Greek thought. This separation, he argues, arose as part of the instrumentalization of *logos* that readied it as an instrument of power, through rhetoric; it led to the renunciation of knowledge. Technics thereby became the unthought in the theorization of being, a forgetting with profound consequences if one thinks of the history of being as 'nothing but its inscription in technicity' (Stiegler, 1998: 4). Stiegler's exploration notes the complex genealogy of this splitting of knowledge, passing through Lamarck's distinction between organic and inorganic life and the effects of industrialization in the technicization of science, the instrumentalizing effects of which Habermas highlighted, as we saw. For Stiegler, the overthrowing of the order of knowledge and of social organization as a consequence of 19th-century industrialization meant that,

. . . philosophical reflection was now faced with such a widespread technical expansion that all forms of knowledge were mobilized by, and brought closer to, the field of instrumentality, to which science, with its ends determined by the imperatives of the economy and war, and its epistemic status shifting accordingly, became more and more subject. (Stiegler, 1998: 2)

We have noted the extent to which capitalism and the European form of colonialism were determining in this shift; their critique remains central. But Stiegler highlights an aspect of the privilege of instrumental rationality and goals that open up an additional avenue for a critique of modernity as a period, namely, the argument that 'the technicization of science constitutes its eidetic blinding [and] the ensuing displacement of meaning leads to an elaboration of method that is metaphysical' (1998: 3). Furthermore, technicization, Stiegler tells us, produces loss of memory whilst calculation comes to determine the essence of modernity. The process of technicization through calculation,

. . . drives Western knowledge down a path that leads to a forgetting of its origin, which is also a forgetting of its truth. This is the 'crisis of the European sciences'. Without a refoundation of rational philosophy, science . . . leads, it is argued, to the technicization of the world. (Stiegler, 1998: 3)

This interrogation of modernity, focusing on the questioning of technics and technical being, is part of the longer genealogy that we have tried to signal by returning to a number of moments in the mutations and departures that have renewed the critique of the present and still today provide resources for the struggle against 'the return of the worst' that Derrida (Derrida and Stiegler, 2002) argued was motivation for his commitment to the liberatory and critical ideals of the Enlightenment. It puts on the agenda the problem of rethinking the history of being in

terms of the diverse histories, in different cultures and periods, of the constitutive interrelationship between foundational narratives, technology, and the goals of society, that is, the interrelationships of metaphysics and religion, ethics, and projects of emancipation such as modernity. The analysis of this complex history of modernity encompasses spatialities and temporalities that stretch well beyond the European and Western purview of the becoming of being. The context of 'global knowledge' and its dangers is the backdrop against which we argue for dissident genealogies of this history.

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Modernism and Contemporary Art

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Keywords art, collaborative practice, contemporary, hybridity, modernism, modernity

At the beginning of the 20th century, artists responded to the changes in the modern city with a mix of awe and excitement. Modernity was ushered in by the power of new industrial technologies. The sweeping socio-economic changes pushed many earlier forms of culture and knowledge to the dustbins of history. The damage was often justified by the promise of increased liberation and understanding. As key players in the historical avant garde, artists saw themselves at the forefront of revolutionary ideas. New inventions and the destruction of barriers would open the way for a transformation of art. Modernism, as the cultural representation of modernity, promised to break from traditions that restricted creativity and embrace the spirit of progress.

While there have been multiple and sometimes conflicting narratives, two streams dominated the utopian visions of modernism. The formal innovations of abstraction were premised on the belief that these were the foundations of a new universal language. Experiments in colour, form and the fundamental contours of space – the cube, sphere and void – were considered as the pure expressions in a new universal language of art. Affiliation with social change was the other stream. The incorporation of direct political content was not just an effort to represent daily struggle, but also part of the struggle to bring the function of art closer to everyday life. New technologies like the camera were used to build links across art forms and tell the stories of ordinary experiences. Modernism promised to reveal the fullness of human creativity, providing new insights into the perception of and links to the world. It was meant to strip away superstitions and create a form of knowledge that was broader, deeper and closer to reality.

However, it also opened new and unexpected possibilities for hybrid and collaborative art practices. In this article I will draw from the diverse tendencies within modernism in order to highlight the sources that have inspired contemporary ideas of identity and community.

The most enduring belief in modernism was premised on the assumption that aesthetic work

could offer a distinctive representation of the real. This difference took numerous forms: in some cases it had a critical dimension that could be aligned to political ideologies; in others, the symbolic domain was abstracted to a level of universality. The common aim was to expand the parameters of consciousness and experience. What distinguished modernism from earlier historical cultural forms was its own role in understanding culture as the framework for a global dialogue, rather than as a local set of values, ideas and practices that in their own particular ways expressed an exclusive bond between place, people and cosmos.

To develop this open dialogue with others, to uncover the mind's hidden secrets, to overcome social barriers, to find new forms to convey the energy of the time, to connect things that were overlooked or kept remote from each other, artists developed strategies of juxtaposition and fusion, finding rhythms in discontinuous beats, splicing contrary segments together, producing complex layering systems and reclassifying the order of things. The montage of art and everyday life was meant to shock our senses into wider, sharper and more vibrant perspectives. Wonder, awe and critical thinking were meant to occur in the midst of everyday life, not through separation and isolation. Many remained sceptical of such blind faith in progress, but even artists, who had been critical of capitalism's social impacts, still believed the machine age could be harnessed to produce a new utopia. For instance, in the post-war period, Constant constructed images, models and maps for his imaginary city 'New Babylon'.

By the end of the 20th century modernity's glow was tarnished and contaminated. The promise of Le Corbusier and his followers to lift ordinary life sank. The gaze of the contemporary artist is no longer upwards and onwards, but lowered down to the ground to face the accumulated filth of waste and pollution. The artist's radical task shifted from dreaming of a new utopia, to dealing with the dystopia surrounding urban life. Contemporary artists like Bargmann and Levy now begin their practice in a 'clean-up' operation. Yona Friedman also stresses that the artist's task shifted from invention to recycling, from expressing a new vision for the future to developing new ethical collaborations to deal with the legacies of the machine age. The dustbins of history have become the key sites for cultural renewal.

Place and Displacement: The City and Modernism

The city was the fulcrum for both modernity and modernism. Before the first avant garde manifesto was written, Baudelaire was expounding the 'religious elation' cities could produce. He saw the artist as a ragpicker, finding value in the remains of the day, collecting what is discarded, recording those experiences that the blasé approach to city life would silently bypass. The fascination with urban life's neglected fragments and hidden forms, combined with a redemptive approach to the history and politics of modernity, has been evident in art movements from cubism to fluxus. The random walks across the city by the Dadaists, the Surrealists' public tours of the city's unconscious, the Situationist notion of the *dérive*, which encourages both idle wandering and deliberate disruption of urban landscapes, all expand on Baudelaire's definition of the flaneur's only dwelling ambition: to feel as much 'at home between the facades of the buildings as a citizen is in his four walls'.

After Duchamp's famous inverted urinal, the material for art could be anything. In the 1960s artists fossicked in the remains of industrial landscapes to comment on the solitude and poverty underpinning the crowded and wealthy cities of the North. Michelangelo Pistoletto, like many artists in the Italian *Arte Povera* movement, made art from found materials. In one celebrated work Pistoletto mashed old newspapers into a large sphere and rolled it through the streets. Arman, the French Nouveau Realist, crushed cars into a shape resembling a domestic refrigerator, and inserted the result into the gallery. Old cans, scrap metal, chipped concrete, plastic flags, ripped posters – this radical expansion in the choice of art materials also marked a crucial shift in the relationship between the artist and their place in the city.

In the post-war period, as the limits and dead spaces of urban planning became apparent, artists developed a more direct critique against architecture and the regulations of public space. Modernism's founding principle of the autonomous language for art and architecture, and the reduction of surfaces to objective and neutral configurations, faced growing scepticism and resistance. Installation and public art works were initiated to contest the obliteration of prior historical and counter-cultural associations with space. Art was made to dialogue with forces that were outside the hermetic history of modernism and more directly connected to its specific urban location.

Competition amongst signs, promiscuous displays of wealth, compulsive attention-seeking

buildings, and the clownish bent of new mod cons were, for the pop artists, not just the latest fads of hysteric capitalism, but the very material and subject for their own practice. The city, in all its garish and cumbersome forms, became the reservoir and the frame for art. Pop artists like Claes Oldenburg and architects like Robert Venturi looked to these complex and contradictory signs, not with pure lament and disgust, but as the materiality and parameters of their practice. Furthermore, the city, by its very nature of concentration and contradiction, provides a surplus of opportunities for surprise and wonder that could also offer a glimpse of alternative states of being and seeing. The city's infinite semiotic collisions, against which the blasé attitude so assiduously guards us, represented a new field for encountering novelty and difference. However, the gap between the architectural theories of urban modern planning and the ethical uses of buildings reached its apotheosis in the dynamiting of the massive St Louis public housing project, which was breathtakingly portrayed in Godfrey Reggio's film *Koyaanisquatsi*. A decade before this dramatic depiction of the city as imploding in a swirling vortex, Robert Smithson had already noted that ruins were part of modernism's foundations.

Multiple Modernisms

The story of modernism can no longer be told exclusively as a historical survey of linear progress, or as the subsequent cultural effect of socio-economic changes. To try to explain modernism in purely formal terms, or to assume that modernity is exclusively driven by the social and political agenda, is to miss the point. Modernism is always in a state of critical dialogue with modernity. With hindsight we can see that the dialogue shifted and oscillated between the different locales.

Parallel, and in some cases, counter forms of modernism, were developed by artists in places like Latin America and Australia. Japanese aesthetics were influential in shaping early modernist styles. Indian artists maintained the belief that an independent form of modernism could be developed to respond to specific national questions. In the 1960s, artists like the Brazilians Helio Oiticica and Lygia Clarke and Filipino David Medalla pioneered the use of new techniques for reaching new audiences, including their participation as part of the work's construction and experience. The work therefore finds its completion in the active experience of the public. A distinctive feature of the modernist forms outside of the Euro-American axis was the more complex relation to tradition. In these instances, the articulation of modern cultural forms did not

presuppose a clean break with the vernacular and traditional practices, but rather it proceeded by means of hybrid incorporation.

One of the most powerful examples of the way tradition is seen as a vital resource, rather than as a barrier to representing contemporary identity, was the emergence of central Australia's Papunya Tula artists. Their body of work raises complex questions about authorship, community involvement, historical retrieval and political affirmation. This art practice eschews the conventional vertical hierarchy of an individual artist orchestrating a given conceptual order, and allows a horizontal model of storytelling to emerge through the collaborative practice of a community. Hetti Perkins and Vivien Johnson have eloquently told the story of this remote community's meteoric rise in the international artworld without resorting to the triumphant discovery of the noble savage, nor overstating the formal correspondence between dot painting and minimalism, but rather, through an account of how a rural community could negotiate the transitions of modernity. They argue that the artwork is testament to the vitality of indigenous culture, as it interweaves an account of identity as it is being formed through moments of contact with modernity.

With the example of the Danish artists' collective *Superflex*, who work intensively with local communities and global technical experts, curator Charles Esche has argued that a new model of artistic and political practice has emerged: that radical practice is now developed through the negotiation of different institutional and communal spaces. Artists that engage in social issues are no longer concerned with eschewing the category of art, but in utilizing the various spaces of art to permit new levels of exchange between different communities. They believe that in the absence of totalizing regimes, and in the gaps of capital's colonization of the social, lies the hope of constituting new spheres of cultural, intellectual and scientific exchange. Esche sees these new collaborative models as indicative of a new pragmatic politics that is conscious of both the complicity with capital and the ambition to convert, co-opt and critique institutions from the inside, rather than from a distance. The emphasis is now on what Esche calls 'modest proposals', developed in a collaborative manner, rather than the individual as author of a monumental form of cultural production.

These 'clusters' of artists, activists, technicians and intellectuals are seeking to create new conditions in which information can flow and re-structure the institutions of everyday life. Rather than repeating the traditional separation between creative and technical production, the roles now intertwine on a series of lateral connections. This

transformation in the field of cultural production creates new networks of communication and responsibility.

A more sensitive appreciation of the internationalist aspirations in the avant garde, the revised mapping of the cultural innovations that occurred throughout the world, and the new networks of collaborative practice have produced an expanded vision of the legacies and global futures of modernism. The narratives of place and displacement are now central to the definition of contemporary culture. The artist's role is no longer to be at the forefront of the engine of social change, but rather to be an activator in global and local networks of communication. The coda for the contemporary artist is now defined by the desire for being *in* the contemporary, rather than producing a belated or elevated response to the everyday.

Modernity and Mobility: In Praise of Small Gestures

What happened to the link between art and the grand themes of the sublime and the sacred? From the modern to the contemporary, we see a steady revision of the scale and scope of creativity. For all the technical advances of modernity there has been a concomitant modesty in the utility of art. Art looked askance at the pinnacles of power. The seven wonders of the Ancient World were not just great engineering feats, they were also the aesthetic embodiment of a cosmic order. The tombs of the Pharaoh and the Persian satrap were symbols of immortality, the statues of Olympia and Rhodes honoured Zeus and Helios, while the temple of Artemis and the gardens of Babylon were places where sublime beauty met divinity. Only the lighthouse of Alexandria mixed the metaphysical with an instrumental function.

In the modern world beauty was put to work. The machine reigned supreme. According to a recent popular BBC documentary and bestselling historical account of the 'Seven Wonders of the Industrial Age', the objects of awe include: a massive steamship to transport emigrants to the antipodes without needing a port to refuel; a lighthouse to ensure safe passage for the new sea lanes; a bridge to unite the fastest growing city; a sewerage system to reduce disease in the dense metropolis; a railroad to unite a continent; a canal to shortcut the route around it; and a dam to hold water in its desert interior. Mobility is the spirit that runs through these modern wonders. The flow of people, goods, waste and water enabled the age to believe in its capacity to defy nature and reset the parameters for expansion.

However, for all the records of progress and accomplishment, what happened to the feeling of

wonder in modernity? Richard Sennett posed the question to the modern urban dweller: 'Where would you go in your city if you wanted to experience the sublime?' It was, of course, a rhetorical question. It is presumed that the Ancients knew their sites of wonder and that, in comparison, we live in a state of mute loss.

It is fitting that the wonders of the modern age celebrate the powers of 'man' in control of the cosmos. In this secular age the eternal is buried in some secret corner of personal ambition. And the power of that greater force – God, Time, Nature – is reined in to fit into the calculating reason of modern knowledge. So when the steamship sank on its maiden voyage, or the walls of a dam collapsed under their own weight, these failures were not seen as signs of the limits of man's power, but as mere scientific problems that could be solved by more, or better, science. Modernity was the age of the great escape and self-realization. All external constraints were meant to fall away.

Mobility has sharpened our awareness of difference but also our need to live together. Cuban curator and critic Gerardo Mosquera stressed that while the early forms of modernism were limited by problems of exclusion and appropriation, the contemporary condition of pluralism in contemporary art is 'a prison without walls'. He reminds us that the best labyrinth in the world is the desert. In its vast openness there is no escape. Dialogue does not depend on an ever-increasing range of choices, but in the slow process of learning to read the meaning of differences. If there is a place in the

modern city where we can see the sublime, it is not before the great monuments, but in the flowing moments of exchange and the small gestures of conviviality.

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Singapore's Routes of Modernity

Chua Beng Huat

Keywords Asian modernities, communitarianism, multiracialism, Singapore

Modernity has a relatively more straightforward narrative in Europe than in the different locations in Asia. In North East Asia, the Confucian cultural zone, a civilization had thrived on its own precepts, beliefs and practices until the arrival of Europeans at a time when the local economy and governance were in decline. Humiliation at the military prowess of the West caused a rethinking of the local culture as 'backward', 'traditional' against the

'modernity' of the West. The desire to be 'modern' was as much driven by the need to erase the humiliation as a people, as it was by the need to catch up with the West technologically; the latter being itself a means to the former. Western modernity was therefore never totally taken on board, there has always been an insistence that local, historical cultural resource can provide the necessary concepts for the organization of a new society that will embrace Western science within Asian culture; the latter as essence of the culture, of society and of self, with Western science and technology for economic development. The genealogy of this line of reasoning stretches from the early 19th century to the attempt to develop

an 'Asian Value' discourse in the late 20th century.

Stepping down the scale to a postcolonial settler place like Singapore, the narrative of modernity is even more truncated. Singapore was a known trading post to the Chinese traders in the 14th and 15th centuries; it was then known as Temasek. By the time of the arrival of the Anglo-East India Company in 1819, the island had scant permanent settlement (Miksic and Low, 2004). This was consistent with the economic geography of archipelagic South East Asia; an island would prosper under an able leader, and when the leader died or declined in power, the residents would move on to another island that was in ascendancy (Scott, 1998: 185). In this sense, archipelagoes do not provide the 'right' conditions for state formation that is conceptualized in continental terms. In any case, Singapore would not have been 'rediscovered' were it not for European mercantile capitalism of the 19th century, which constituted an earlier wave of globalization of capital. Economically speaking Singapore has, therefore, always been part of the Western 'modern', precisely by being a colony.

Under the colonial regime, Singapore thrived as a trading post with an immigrant population hewn from China, South Asia and the neighboring islands in the South East Asian archipelago. No indigenous population was massacred, no local economy displaced, no local cultures suppressed; thus, there was no past to be resurrected when Singapore became an independent island-city-state in 1965. However, on the way to this independence, modern political consciousness had already been ignited by the various political struggles in the homelands of its immigrant-resident population. The most significant of these political struggles were the resistance against Japanese and foreign invasions, followed by the civil war between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party in China, the independence movement in India and the bloody revolution for independence in Indonesia (Yong, 2003) and finally, at the end of the Second World War, the communist insurgency in peninsula Malaya. As the local condition of colonial Singapore provided neither material nor ideological basis for the immigrant-residents to invest and develop a 'national' identity, they committed their political consciousness and economic resources to the modern idea of 'nation-state' to their homelands. Political modernity of the then yet to be Singaporeans was therefore diasporic in origin.

Embedded in this emerging consciousness of politics of nation-state were of course the different strands of modern political thoughts and ideologies. Adherents to these varieties of

thoughts and ideologies were public intellectuals who were influential in the 'modernizing' of local culture. These cultural developments flowed into Singapore intellectual and cultural spaces through the vernacular schools which were ubiquitous; as a consequence of the negligence of the British colonial government, the different ethnic immigrant-resident communities took care of their own educational needs by building elementary and secondary schools which mirror those of the homelands.

This was particularly so among the majority resident Chinese population. By the early 1900s, with the emergence of republican revolution, all the local Chinese schools adopted Mandarin as the language of instruction, displacing local languages such as Fujian and Cantonese. Following this, the textbooks accordingly reflected the new literary and cultural movements that led up to the May Fourth Movement in 1919, among whose ideological desires was the total destruction of the 'Confucian shop'. The flow of ideas was reinforced by the flow of people, of individuals who came as teachers in the community schools. Consequently, ethnic Chinese who grew up and went to Mandarin language schools in Singapore, from the early 20th century until the late 1960s, were well versed in the modern Chinese literature, rather than in Confucian classics. These Chinese educated individuals in Singapore went from peasant immigrant roots to contemporary Chinese culture, skipping the classical Confucian traditions. Not surprisingly, their political orientation tended to be left-wing, pro-communist over other ideological tendencies and, significantly in the local context, anti-colonial. The left-tendency was further reinforced by the success of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949; the political investment had paid off in terms of a new 'nationalism'. From then on, socialist ideology held sway among local Chinese-educated political activists who were able to mobilize the local population into radical organizations, such as trade unions and student organizations (Clutterbuck, 1985: 75–120). This mobilization constituted the base for the decolonization process in the late 1950s, until it was suppressed by the repressive regime of the nascent island-city-state.

Since the formation of Singapore as an independent nation in 1965, the demands of building a modern nation-state and developing an industrial capitalist economy have been imposed on the population as citizens. These processes have been exacted on the population under a repressive state. Since 1968, when the long-ruling regime gained absolute parliamentary power for the first time, the single-party regime has been able to continuously modify the rules of general elections to its

political advantage and to stay in power. Consequently, the economic modernization has been spectacularly successful but political modernization, in terms of democratization, has been arrested (Chua, 1994).

The modern nation-state of Singapore also exacts costs in the cultural sphere. Through its emphasis on the economic importance of the English language, which was adopted as the language of public administration and commerce since political independence, and the primary language of instruction in state-run schools in 1974, each successive generation of Singaporeans has become progressively cut off from flows of cultural influences from the PRC, India, Indonesia and Malaysia, for want of linguistic competence. Furthermore, the new nation-state demands the inscription and primacy of a national identity on every individual citizen, over and above all other identities. Through the teaching of a 'national' history that casts the 'left' as the enemy which was defeated by the current regime, the nascent political modernity of the first half of the 20th century has been progressively displaced by the hegemonic narrative of the existing regime.

In an ironic twist of trajectory, the adoption of English as the 'utilitarian' language has unavoidably led to it becoming the dominant language of everyday life of Singaporeans, which consequently leaves them open to influences from the English-speaking West, particularly the United States, through its powerful popular culture industries. The fear of American-style liberalism has led to yet another ideological turn. Without a local indigenous cultural past to excavate for a national culture, the existing regime reaches far back into the deep past of the three component ethnic populations for resources to 'refashion' as national culture in the name of 'Asian Values'. These were meant to be distilled from Sinic-Confucian civilization, Hindu civilization of South Asia and Islamic civilization of the Malays (Chua, 1999). The core of these 'Asian Values' is a strong version of 'communitarianism' in which collective interests are privileged over individual interests, in contrast to weak versions of communitarianism which sees the need to preserve a concept of the social as a balancing act against the tendency of liberalism towards libertarianism (Chua, 2004).

This move towards 'Asian Values' is fraught

with difficulties. Take the case of the Islamic civilizational root – the state is now faced with the need to confront Islamic fundamentalism within the nation (Kadir, 2004). The Confucian route poses more promise in view of the intellectual interest in the larger North East Asia to fashion a 'new' Confucianism that is appropriate to our times. However, as mentioned earlier, contemporary Singaporeans are poorly schooled in Confucianism as a way of life, apart from its translation into a set of routine family practices. In the final analysis, Singapore would still have to wait for intellectual development in North East Asia for the next turn of its cultural modernity.

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The Body and Modernity in China

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Keywords China, modernity, the combatant body

Modernity in China seems to invoke an endless set of questions about both modernity as a meaningful cognitive framework and the ways in which modernity manifested in the Chinese cultural and political context. This, on the other hand, probably contributed to the fact that studies on modern China have become one of the fastest growing areas of scholarship in the past two decades. The account of modernization in China, until recently, had been relatively straightforward; encounters with the modern West beginning with the mid-19th century led to institutional tensions between new ideas and traditions, leading to a series of peaceful and violent revolutions marking the conflicts – the Opium War (1839–42), the Boxer Rebellion (1900), the May Fourth Movement (1919), etc. This account of the ‘key moments of rapture’ of modernization in China substantiated both the revolutionary hegemonic views of ‘stages’ of revolution and the metanarratives of freedom and progress mapped in a linear and universal pattern. As China’s archives opened up for research, and as intellectual inquiries shift from the Weberian interpretation of institutional changes, more nuanced studies are now possible from a multitude of spaces and views, generating new research questions and reframing old ones. As both a critique of modernity and a reconstitution of the Chinese modern, the new research traces shifting formations, always already hybridized and eclectic, of fractured and contested grounds between heterogeneous traditions and practices.

One useful point of entry into an understanding of modernization in China is through the reconstitutions of the body in the Chinese cultural and political context. When, in 1793 during his famous mission to China, Lord Macartney resisted the bodily movement of kowtow to the dismay of his Chinese hosts, he brought the cultural worlds constructed around the body into sharp relief. At the start of the first major violent encounter between China and the West during the Opium War, the Qing (1644–1911) court considered the body of the imprisoned site of opium-induced pleasures as undermining its normative functions

as a site of moral rectitude in the Confucian tradition, in which to establish your body (*lishen*) commanded a central importance. On the other hand, China’s defeat in this war and a series of other encounters with Western powers set forth a rethinking of the body beyond the conventional understanding of the body framed through the duality of pleasure and moral conduct. Both pleasure and morality were reconstituted to include the ‘combatant body’ – the strong and dexterous body sustained through sports and competitions in the Hellenistic formulation, and codified in the representations of the body since the Renaissance in the West. In China, the combatant body had been understood traditionally as something to be gradually overcome through the civilizing power of ritualized moral conduct or spiritual enlightenment. Vestiges of the combatant body remain through the metaphor of battle frequently used in Chinese erotic literature. Major reform thinkers and revolutionaries in China in the early 20th century paid extraordinary attention to the remaking of the body in a multiplicity of discursive formations. The Renaissance ideal of bringing together active life (*vita activa*) and contemplative life (*vita contemplativa*) became a new paradigm to be injected into the traditional role of intellectuals focused on literary and artistic activities. Education reforms in the early 20th century emphasized physical exercises, as shown by Wen-hsin Yeh in *Alienated Academy* (1990). Liang Qichao (1873–1929) stressed the central importance of the new Chinese person (the new citizen or *xinmin*) to the renewal of Chinese culture and society in the modern world. This understanding influenced a generation of Chinese reformers and revolutionaries: Mao Zedong, for instance, named his student organization the New Citizens’ Society (*Xinmin xueshe*), and he engineered a high visibility for his rigorous exercise regimes – a central theme of revolutionary propaganda in post-1949 China. China’s first participation in the modern Olympics in 1984 and its hosting of the 2008 event can be seen as symbolic manifestations of the reconstituted body advocated by successive political regimes in the 20th century, displayed in the international arena. Despite all these changes, the traditional body, seen in its speech (and the absence of it), memory, movement essential to the ever-present power hierarchy, has never ceased to be a significant layer

in the process of its hybridization with the new combatant body.

'The debating mind' as the counterpart of the combatant body demanded remaking of knowledge underlined with principles of precision and conciseness; this formed the main modern reform agenda for leading intellectuals such as Yan Fu and Liang Qichao as they introduced Western scholarship into China. The embodied knowledge of the traditional hegemonic power hierarchy of Confucianism was contested by the new hegemony of logo-centric knowledge. The new mind must now be sufficiently nimble to employ notions of global space and time (geography and history in the Hegelian sense), and to renew and recreate Chinese scholarship in this new framework. Developing this agenda, scholars such as Hu Shi (1891–1962) and Lu Xun (1881–1936) experimented with a new way of writing Chinese (*baihua*) which moved away, in form and content, from Chinese tradition symbolized by the dense scholarly language fostered by the traditional examination system. This distance between the new language and the traditional language became an important measure through which renewal and recreation of the Chinese culture in the modern context could be considered possible.

The prosthetic extension of the combatant body through technology was particularly receptive in the Chinese context. This may be attributed to the ease with which the notion of technology could be rephrased in the existing vocabulary in the Chinese scholarly tradition, albeit with technology now playing a reversed role. The conceptual framework for technology was traditionally framed as one side of the binary opposition of the *dao* and the *qi*. The *dao* (the contemplation of universal principles) and the *qi* (the making of things) were understood as separate endeavours, and the pursuit of the *dao* was seen to be a superior form of intellectual life. This concept can be found in early classics such as *Zhouyi* (The Book of Changes), compiled in the late Zhou dynasty (770–256 BCE). As China encountered the Baconian notion of use/power of technology, it sought to rethink its tradition of science and invention which, as Joseph Needham demonstrated in his monumental *Science and Civilization in China*, had always been a key component in traditional Chinese society. From the 1840s onwards, a number of capable Qing officials such as Zeng Guofan (1811–1872), Zuo Zongtang (1812–1885), and Li Hongzhang (1823–1901), who rose to prominence as commanders of armies suppressing various rebellions (Taiping, Nian, and Muslim) which plagued

the Qing Empire in the late 19th century, built shipyards, arsenals, and railways. They revived a historical phrase of self-strengthening (*zhiqiang*) to underscore the Chineseness of their endeavor. They wanted to overcome the 'shame of labor' of the Chinese literati, an effort which paralleled the medieval exultation of manual labor in the Benedictine monasteries described by Lewis Mumford in *The City in History* (1961). While the technological modernization of the Qing court in the late 19th century was undermined by incessant foreign hostility and conservative courtiers, Deng Xiaoping's pragmatic modernization program from the 1980s has been much more effective in restoring a modernizing agenda sidelined by political and ideological demands in the early 20th century.

The female body in the Chinese cultural and political context presents a uniquely complex question in China's modernization. The abolition of the female bound feet, a central fetish at the heart of the patriarchal pleasure/morality, became the first indication of a process of reconstitution of the female body. The May Fourth Movement championed the ideal of the Chinese woman through equality and freedom, an ideal that continued to gain currency in post-1949 China. Mao's impassioned writings in 1919 on the tragedy of Miss Zhao, a young woman who committed suicide as she refused an arranged marriage, reflected this ideal. The Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, in which the heroine Nora left her husband as she revolted against bourgeois hypocrisy and oppression, was translated and printed in the journal of the new culture, *New Youth*, in 1918; it was received with great enthusiasm by China's youth. As much as the cultural iconoclasm in the 1910s demanded the liberation of the female body, nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s exerted a counter-claim on it in the form of a return of the patriarchal authority, as Prasenjit Duara demonstrates in *Rescuing History from the Nation* (1995) and in 'Of Authenticity and Woman' (2000). The earlier representation of anti-Confucian and anti-familial women became a liability for nationalism, and was replaced by one of traditional virtues bound by the domestic space off limits to Western influences, playing a central part in the construction of the nationalist ideology. Within the 20th century, the female body in the Chinese cultural and political context was, and continues to be, the site of violence, oppression, and liberation in the multifarious formations of patriarchal authority, cultural iconoclasm, revolutionary hegemony, and nationalism with heightened intensity.

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Anthropology and Japanese Modernity

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Keywords imperialism, modernity, postmodernism, westernization

Although the discipline of anthropology is embedded in different socio-cultural entities, the West remains the primary 'we/here' that produces knowledge about 'others/there', thanks to its political, economic and academic dominance. Hence it is worth investigating the development of anthropology in the non-West with regard to different manifestations of 'modernity', which was originally a self-image of the West, a state of rationality and civilization that the dominant entity attributed to itself. Japan, a non-Western nation, has engaged with modernity as such in relentless pursuit of Western power, wealth and knowledge. The operation of anthropology in this process is twofold; on the one hand, Japan as 'others/there' has been scrutinized by the dominant West, while, on the other, it has joined the West, as 'we/here', in subjecting 'others/there' to the same scrutiny. In fact, Japan has become a locus of anthropology comparable to the West in terms of ethnographic and theoretical range. However, Japanese anthropology lacks critical perspectives on itself, as illustrated by its constant

failure to objectify Japanese modernity, the particular conditions under which it has developed.

Japan's engagement with modernity traces back to the restoration of imperial rule (1868); with the feudalistic regime of shogunate and its policy of national isolation abolished, Japan set out to catch up with the West in the name of 'enlightenment'. Anthropology was introduced to Japan in this course for modernization, mediated by Western investigation into the origins of the Japanese. Brought to a 'shocking realization' that they were observed by Westerners (Shimizu, 1998: 115), the Japanese vigorously produced knowledge about their origins, differentiating 'we/here' from 'others/there' in the North and the South. Such scholarship contributed to the modern attempt of Japan to forge its unity as a 'nation-state', which unfolded against a backdrop of the emergent world order centred on the West (Askew, 2003: 138). In search of a national identity with which to arm itself, Japan desired to join the West as dominant entity, thereby keeping distance from Asia, the subordinate entity of which it hitherto formed a part. This led on to the development of imperialism in Japan, affecting anthropology therein; 'we/here' increasingly considered itself superior to 'others/there', even

with regard to the West, let alone vis á vis Asia (Askew, 2003: 136–7).

Japan embarked on imperialist ventures with the Sino-Japanese war (1894–95), which resulted in the annexation of Taiwan. Following the Russo-Japanese war (1904–05), Korea and Micronesia were also added to the Empire. Correspondingly, Japanese anthropologists started to conduct research abroad, like their Western counterparts, assuming the power-based prerogative to observe ‘others/there’ (Shimizu, 1998: 117). Given its concern with the origins of ‘we/here’, anthropology served, in effect, to justify the Empire by establishing a prehistoric relationship between the colonizer and the colonized (Askew, 2003: 143). As it became more oriented towards contemporary ‘others/there’, the discipline meshed with imperialism at its height. In the 1930s and throughout the Second World War, the government was eager for the information that could be utilized in colonial administration and military operation (Nakao, 2000: 32). While imperialism did not entirely co-opt anthropology, the former facilitated the latter by not only securing access to ‘others/there’ but also providing a rationale for overseas research. As a matter of record, the Empire envisaged itself as a ‘Great Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere’, based on a self-righteous cause that Japan shall release Asia-Pacific regions from Western colonial rule.

Japan thus attempted to dominate the Asia-Pacific region under the guise of an egalitarian crusade against Western dominion over the world. Importantly, this attempt was connected with the nation’s aspiration to go beyond the modernity that had been achieved through ‘westernization’. Under such circumstances, many Japanese intellectuals endorsed the war, seeing it as a watershed in the national struggle to overcome the modern/the Western. It is fair to say that they were obliged to make a compromise between ‘imperial consciousness’ and ‘critical consciousness’ in reflecting on Japan’s modern experience, as social scientists in particular were (Barshay, 1996: 222). However, it is not evident that anthropologists had a critical perspective on Japanese modernity; they were disengaged from the discussions over the issue, while involving themselves in the war effort throughout the Empire. Apparently, anthropologists were so absorbed in ‘others/there’ that they failed to problematize ‘we/here’, particularly its modernization/westernization, of which their scholarship was a byproduct (Yamaguchi, 1966: 23–4). As it turned out, this largely remained a feature of anthropology in postwar Japan.

Defeated in the war over the Asia-Pacific against the West, Japan immediately transformed

itself into a ‘democratic’ and ‘pacifist’ nation under American supervision (1945–52). Accordingly, Japanese intellectuals questioned the wartime proposition of overcoming the modern/the Western; the majority considered that Japan was yet to achieve modernity as a positive Western ideal, failing to produce, for instance, the kind of individuals that ‘democratization’ requires (McCormack and Sugimoto, 1988: 2). Meanwhile, anthropologists continued to ignore the question of Japanese modernity, despite focusing on ‘we/here’, having lost access to ‘others/there’. Refreshing their old interest in the origins of the Japanese, anthropologists overlooked modern determinants of Japanese society, such as absolutism, capitalism and land ownership (Yamaguchi, 1966: 26–7). Hence their scholarship was not as relevant to the postwar reconceptualization of Japan as it could have been. More importantly, anthropology failed to engage in self-criticism with regard to its wartime operation; the discipline was implicated in imperialism, the most repugnant problem of Japanese modernity.

With a renewed impetus for modernization/westernization, Japan pushed forward with the postwar reconstruction. By the end of the 1970s, the nation turned out to be a non-Western economic superpower, outperforming most Western nations. Hence the national agenda of overcoming the modern/the Western resurfaced, coinciding with the emergence of postmodernism, the West’s self-doubt in modernity. The new current inclined Japanese intellectuals to argue that Japan had gone or was going beyond modernity, surpassing the West, with an emphasis placed on the socio-cultural ‘uniqueness’ of the nation. This kind of argument inevitably brought back the ‘fateful decision’ of Japan to transform itself in the image of the West (Miyoshi and Harootunian, 1988: 397), thereby inviting further probing into Japanese modernity. Anthropologists, on the other hand, barely participated in such debates; yet again they were busy exploring ‘others/there’, with ‘we/here’ reduced to a relatively minor field of interest. While postmodernism started to impinge on Japanese anthropologists in the 1990s, it did not necessarily lead them to reflection on Japan and its (post?)modernity.

Postmodern anthropology centred on the West’s attempt to redress the imbalance between subject and object of representation, which arose in part from the official end of colonialism. Modern/colonial anthropology indeed took the form of ‘epistemological dictatorship’ (Fabian, 1983: 140), drawing on the power inequality between ‘we/here’ and ‘others/there’. Japan, albeit a non-Western nation, was not only the object but also the subject in this dictatorship,

given its attempt to dominate the Asia-Pacific in place of the West. Hence postmodern/postcolonial currents encouraged Japanese anthropologists to investigate their past implication in imperialism, as well as to challenge the 'Western academic hegemony' (Kuwayama, 2004). However, earlier than this, they entertained postmodernism from a purely epistemological perspective, overlooking its political implications for the postcolonial world and specifically Japan as the periphery of the West (Ota, 1998: 175–246). Even now, Japanese anthropologists rarely make an issue of Japan as a particular locus of knowledge production, which not only adds to the Western hegemony but also hinders self-criticism on Japanese modernity.

Japan is possibly the sole instance of a non-Western nation wherein anthropology developed alongside imperialism and colonialism. At the core of this development is Japan's desire for the West, the main characteristic of Japanese modernity. It is difficult to say if contemporary Japan has overcome modernity; the nation seems to have been modernized/westernized to such an extent that it almost identifies itself with the West, neither coveting nor contesting the modern/the Western. Japan has indeed become an honorary member of the West, thanks to its success in international politics and its economy, including a huge investment in the 'Third World'. This has enabled Japanese anthropologists to explore 'others/there' in almost every corner of the world, a privilege that was originally limited to their Western counterparts. Given that, they ought to reflect on Japan as 'we/here', instead of uncritically identifying it with the West, the dominant 'we/here'. Japanese modernity is the starting point for such reflections.

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The Enlightenment

Couze Venn

Abstract For different reasons, and with different political goals at stake, the fundamental principles advocated by the Enlightenment are being challenged by both the left and the right. This entry sets out to clear a critical space for examining what is at stake in the present in interrogating its legacy as discourse for imagining alternative transmodern and transcolonial futures. A re-evaluation of the Enlightenment by reference to concepts of equality, liberty, emancipation, justice and becoming(s) is central to that task.

Keywords counter-Enlightenment, emancipation, evolution, informationalization, project, reason, transmodernity

The Enlightenment

In 1984, on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Kant's essay 'What is Enlightenment?', Foucault wrote an essay of the same title in order to examine its legacy for the present. His claim that this event 'has determined, at least in part, what we are, what we think, what we do today' (1984: 32) triggers many questions and suggests an inheritance that needs to be interrogated, and not only in relation to the modern discourse of philosophy that Foucault's rhetorical 'we' is meant to signal. To begin with, the invocation of a communal 'we' in the context of a supposedly postmodern age, while harbouring the spirit of the cosmopolitan universalism that the Enlightenment championed, comes up against the evidence of increasing and systematic inequalities and differences at all levels that obliges one to consider who is the addressee of the statement. Furthermore, inheritance today is bound up with a notion of inhabitation that directs attention to the reality of diasporic and contested places and spaces that trails the whole history of modernity with it. It is necessary therefore to make visible not only the broader epistemic and cultural context of the Enlightenment as a grand narrative, but also to question it regarding the purchase it may have now in the current moment of a world re-ordering which is set on countering its convictions about equality, liberty, fundamental rights and the promise of emancipation.

Kant, of course, did not invent the Enlightenment, though his reflections on the topic have given us key passages about the essential role of reason and critique in the progress or 'maturity of humanity', as he saw it, that have indeed come to encapsulate for many the salient features of Enlightenment as a project. Foucault's own discourse, by focusing on Kant, refigures this project in terms of a particular trajectory towards 'a critical ontology of ourselves' that, unfortunately, obscures its more explicitly political dimension. For these reasons, I want to present here a different reading of the Enlightenment, not in order to engage in some futile critique of Foucault or Kant – since their essays are in fact both still productive from the point of view of an interrogation of the present – but in order to re-examine the stakes in posing the problem from the point of view of knowledge today and against a background of emergent socialities and great turbulences in the world that remind one of the conditions of emergence of the Enlightenment.

When conceptualized as a project, the Enlightenment invariably calls up, and merges into,

the concept of modernity as a project. At the theoretical level, Habermas would be the figure that one associates with this convergence, both in his critique of the subversion of its radical potential because of the privileging of instrumental rationality in the historical elaboration of the project, and in his enduring faith in the possibility of the completion of its emancipatory goals. Lyotard counterposes a different perspective when he argues that the distinguishing trait of modernity is precisely that it presents itself in the form of a universal project, that is, as an Idea to be realized. According to him, its main goals expressed in the metanarratives of modernity are 'the progressive emancipation of reason and of freedom, the progressive or catastrophic emancipation of labour (source of alienated value in capitalism), the enhancement of the whole of humanity through the development of capitalist technoscience' (Lyotard, 1988: 31). To contextualize this idea of project, I will point to the fact that emancipatory discourses, or at least discourses that promise the possibility of escape from a presumed initial imperfection of the human being, have existed in all cultures, grounded in the idea of redemption or salvation or maturity, necessitating sacrifice and a process of self-reflection and discovery. This is often expressed in the idea of a journey towards something like the purification of the soul, a liberation from all-too-human defects through the acquiring of wisdom. These narratives of emancipation require that we free ourselves from the hold of the desires that keep us in a state of dependency or immaturity; the 'pilgrim' is counselled to seek out instead the knowledges that are meant to have a liberatory and transformative effect. Before modernity, such narratives referred to a religious discourse and inscribed their own grand or master narratives, so that the promise of the salvation or perfectibility of souls, and what that meant from the point of view of being saved from the abyss of finitude, cycles of rebirth, or the state of fall-ness, was guaranteed by a transcendental realm or force to which it was imperative for the believer to submit. This foundation in religion is far from the notion of the history of emancipation that aligns it with the linear and progressive unfolding of humanity's destiny that one encounters in the discourse of modernity; instead one encounters different temporalities where it is a matter of fixed trajectories and returns, of obedience and sacrifice, of listening to the proper.

By contrast, the master narratives of the Enlightenment insist on the secular foundation of its emancipatory enterprise, and on linear temporality. It distinguishes itself from other stories of human becoming by placing itself under the banner of reason and in the directing hand of the autonomous subject rather than that of religious doctrine and a divine being or purpose. The discourse of modernity, in breaking with previous systems of thought, refuses ideas that refer emancipation to a transcendent authority: God or fate/Karma. It claims to owe nothing to anyone except the effort of rational subjects and agency. It becomes its own authority. From the Enlightenment onwards, this authority is vested in Science. One needs to bear in mind the metaphysics of presence (Derrida, 1982) which this episteme covers over, though I shall draw attention rather to the break with the relation of faith to knowledge that this implies; it is something to which I will return presently, for it relates to conditions supporting contemporary servitudes. Today, as Lyotard (1993) notes, the idea that one has to labour and wait for emancipation is erased in the postmodern condition that not only desires to shorten the delay, but to instrumentalize the project of emancipation in the idea of development, and I would add, the equation of the latter with the notion of modernization itself.

I think it is important to highlight yet another feature which I will argue is determining, and that opens up the question of the political, namely, the idea of revolution. Kant locates its centrality for progress, and Lyotard has explained the extent to which it is precisely the 'enthusiasm for revolution', that is, the desire for a sociality yet to come, rather than specific advances in knowledge or progress in some aspect of society, which itself functions as the sign that attests to the 'maturity of humanity' (Lyotard, 1983: 244, 245). What I am thinking about here is the willingness to imagine and seek through action an unprecedented world, guided by nothing more than this idea of a possible or alternative world, brought about through human action. The readiness or disposition to contemplate such revolutionary change, inspired by the Enlightenment thought, is one of the key marks of modernity. It finds its initial instantiation

in the French and American Revolutions, exemplary gestures of starting anew that have been repeated many times since. It could be pointed out that religions too have explicitly sought to effect such total transformations, for example, in the case of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, which explicitly condemned the previous system of beliefs and values against which they defined themselves and advocated an entirely new form of sociality. The difference, however, is that religious revolutions do not imagine their own disappearance or mutation as an integral part of the process; indeed quite the opposite, for, in rejecting the previous world, they propose a new order that would forever be founded on the new unchanging and unquestionable doctrines and principles – the commandments of God, the Book, the sacred texts – (though schisms abound). Buddhism, interestingly, does not quite fit any of these models. By contrast, modernity posits a process of becoming. It brings the command of temporality itself within the perimeter of human agency, no doubt an excessive ambition with its own totalizing and totalitarian temptations. In this it differs from all other projects of emancipation or salvation.

It could, of course, be argued that other periods have known ambitious universalizing projects that similarly sought to establish a social order with a global, imperial reach, for example, in China at various points and with regard to Islamic expansion that stretched from the Balkans to Indonesia and central Africa. In relation to modernity's expansionary enterprise, one could point to the emergence of vernacular modernities, and counter-modernities, in response to colonial subjugation and capitalist exploitation, and indeed to modernity's own subjugating grasp (Gilroy, 1993). A brief look at the ideas that motivated the Enlightenment will bring to light the specificities of its discourse that enable one to judge competing projects of emancipation, as well as to rethink the narratives that continue to be both the stakes in the legacy of the Enlightenment and the inspiration for imagining different futures.

Central to the politics of Enlightenment thinkers was the rejection of the deep-seated belief that inequality and poverty were inevitable and reflected the natural state of human societies. This situation – of fixed social ranks, including gender relations, legitimated and essentialized on the basis of an idea of natural order or an idea of divine law, coupled to the claim of the divine authority of sovereigns – prevailed not only in Europe but in all other cultures (except perhaps small tribal communities). By contrast, people like Voltaire, Condorcet, Rousseau, or Diderot blamed existing social arrangements, and what they called civilization, for the unjust systems that had appeared everywhere. They thought change necessitated the rejection of the doctrines and values, including religious ones, that sustained such 'imperfect' systems, and that rational knowledge would be the means to put an end to them and bring about the 'perfectibility of human kind'. Emancipation therefore meant precisely this break with the old, mostly feudal and 'traditional' societies, with their fixed relations of power and religious ideologies and restrictions. It is a fundamental shift, especially when one reflects that today new forms and doctrines of naturalizing inequalities have emerged, for example in socio-biology and neoliberalism, supported by large sections of the press, while older religious doctrines continue to be used to underwrite inequalities of gender throughout the world. Enlightenment thought therefore still presents a challenge to such common sense and the dogmas they inscribe.

Condorcet, for example, believed that the new 'social art' based on rational knowledge would abolish the inequalities that existed within nations as well as between nations; it would bring about equality between men and women and among the 'races'. He argued that a system of social insurance rather than charity should be established, and 'free trade' instituted (though this was proposed in opposition to the prevailing trade monopolies and the licensing and restrictions of trade enforced by the state). He, like many of the encyclopaedists, advocated the abolition of slavery and the independence of the colonies, while he thought that the Enlightenment would help free Asia and Africa from 'our trade monopolies, our treachery, our murderous contempt for men of another colour or creed, the insolence of our usurpations' (in the *Sketch*, 1795). Paradoxically, the same Condorcet talked about the ignorance of 'Savages' and described Africans as barbarous, therefore needing the West's helping hand, or 'aid' in today's terminology – a familiar scenario. Kant, of course, expressed it in terms of Europe's responsibility and destiny to 'give laws' to the 'less advanced' regions of the world, as Derrida (1997)

points out in his discussion of the cosmopolitical. This paradox reveals the tension that existed between, on the one hand, the ethical and political goals of the Enlightenment as a project and, on the other, its instrumental purposive thrust, in alliance with capitalism and colonialism, which increasingly became dominant, especially with Liberalism and in the mechanical and scientific version of Marxism; thus, it is possible to argue that elements of a counter-Enlightenment were latent inside Enlightenment thought.

Other elements need to be added to give a firmer purchase on conditions today, and on the debate about contemporary counter-Enlightenment. I would underline Montesquieu's far-reaching argument that the separation and balancing of powers, between the executive, the judiciary and the administrative elements of state power – a principle enshrined in the American Constitution, but threatened almost everywhere by recent strategies seeking to secure the 'society of control' – were absolutely essential to guarantee democracy and to avoid despotism. Diderot, similarly, in arguing against the foundation of sovereignty in religious dogma, warned that there was but 'one step' from 'fanaticism to barbarism' and the curtailment of liberty. Interestingly, given contemporary developments in neurological and life sciences, in complexity theory and particle physics, he also supported the view of the interconnections between mind and matter and living and inorganic matter. One must note that the basis for his support for a flat ontology rested in the materialism prevailing among radical intellectuals at the time, though a different basis was proposed by Emilie du Châtelet – mathematician and translator of Newton, Voltaire's lover and collaborator – who belatedly came to favour the Leibnizian standpoint and defended vitalism, after her earlier support for the prevailing Newtonian world-view. If one were to add the birth and disputes about political economy, principally as developed by Turgot, whom Adam Smith visited and learned from, and about natural history, say, the differences between Buffon and Linnaeus regarding taxonomy, and the views about speciation developed by Cuvier and Lamarck, we would have many of the key areas and questions that have now resurfaced as part of the critique of modern regimes of truth.

These then radical ideas, debated for years by Enlightenment intellectuals, translated into a project of social change based on planned progress and development for which education, social contract and social insurance were central. The *Encyclopédie*, edited by Diderot and D'Alembert from 1751, not only promoted these positions, but was itself seen as the vehicle for the gathering of knowledges from across the world and their diffusion to all parts of the world. By the time of Kant's essay on the Enlightenment in 1784, knowledge was equated with what we now understand as science, and reason was allied with the view of freedom as the unconstrained use of one's reason in the critique of prevailing conditions and ideas; this, he asserted, was a necessary condition to achieve the 'maturity of humanity'. Let me add that these revolutionary principles were widely supported, evidenced in the French and American Revolutions and the principles they defended, such as liberty, equality, fraternity, enshrined in slogans and in the American Constitution, though fraternity, as we know, did not in practice include non-white people; Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* notably sold 250,000 copies in 1793.

I am going to propose that we regard Darwin's idea of evolution through 'natural selection' as the exemplary product of the Enlightenment, although it came a little later, initially in the Notebooks of 1837–40, the Sketch of 1842 and the Essay of 1844. The early arguments in Darwin's writings, bearing revealing titles like 'Man, Mind and Materialism' (1838), 'Essay on Theology and Natural Selection' (1838), the Transmutation Notebooks (from 1837), systematically addressed the issues and positions as formulated by many of the key thinkers of the Enlightenment, rehearsing the arguments about Creationism, about taxonomy and speciation (Buffon, Cuvier, Lamarck, Linnaeus, Herder), about rational necessity, the naturalization of reason, and so on, citing many of the authors who contributed to the *Encyclopédie* and referring to all the key debates (Venn, 1982). Evolution inaugurates the break with Creationism and the idea of divine intervention, and with accounts of nature and the place of human species in it that tried to preserve the thesis of a divine order in nature, specifically in the theories of Natural Theology (that rationalized nature) and Design (that conflated purpose and necessity in nature), and the notion of the Great Chain of Being. Today one associates the theory of

evolution with the linear temporality and the eschatology that supports the standpoint of progress and development, markers of modernity. Clearly, the Darwinian problematic of speciation could not have been put together without the theories established in the age of the Enlightenment; correlatively, it re-inscribes all the ambivalences that one finds in the discourses constructing its episteme, correlating history, life, causality, subjectivity, and emancipation. Thus, on the epistemological and ontological side, the theory of evolution supports the central pillars of Enlightenment discourse yet lends a hand to positivism by adding scientific weight to the identity: rational = scientific = natural = lawful that began to be formulated with the Enlightenment; one finds this epistemology at work in the sciences of the social and in the emergent biopolitics of the 19th century (see Venn, 1982, for a detailed analysis). On the political side, the shifts it encouraged feed into the radical movements for fundamental change in society, inscribing a loose alliance between the ‘dangerous classes’ and dangerous ideas.

Furthermore, one is struck by the way in which the positions in dispute split along political lines in the 19th century, with those supporting Design and a providential cosmology opting for a politically conservative status quo while the materialists and evolutionists aligned against them and for a secular and radical political philosophy of progress directed by human intentions. One must emphasize that the correspondence between theory and politics is far from the neat and straightforward relationship one might imagine, for evolution has nourished both radical and conservative politics, depending on context, e.g. invoked in support of women’s suffrage in the 19th century, as well as in support of the later eugenics movement, sociology, and racism. In radical re-readings today, it is aligned with the recognition that difference, chance, variation, multiplicity and the processual are immanent to temporal becomings (Grosz, 2004).

We need to bear in mind also that the 18th-century context of the elaboration of the Enlightenment saw a major transformation in Europe as a military, colonial, economic and technological power, so that by the mid-19th century China, Japan, and the Arab world that had so far paid little attention to Europe, convinced that it was merely an insignificant part of an underdeveloped and ignorant backwater of the world, suddenly realized they had a major power to contend with. The turn to Europe and to the ‘West’ from that time to seek out their knowledge and their way of doing things, and the shift in power relations that accompanied the post-Enlightenment period, is well known and has shaped the process of modernization. The relation of knowledge to social change played out differently outside Euro-America, for instance, in the view about an Asian project of modernity proposed by Fukuzawa Yukichi and others in Japan from the 1860s, and Tagore and Gandhi in India from the 1920s, according to which (what they understood as) Asian knowledge and values would combine with Western technologies and science to serve different, non-Western modernizations. In the Arab world it was both a matter of accommodating the new ascendant modern spirit, for example, with regard to the foundation of the state, and of the reconfiguration of Islam (in the work of S.H. Nasr and I. al-Faruqi, for example) as part of countering the Enlightenment’s epistemology that asserted an opposition between religion and science, faith and reason.

The Long Counter-Enlightenment

What does it mean for the present? First, I’d like to point to the instrumentalization of the project of the Enlightenment, discussed by Habermas and the Frankfurt School. I have shown in *Occidentalism* (2000) that the privilege of instrumental or technocratic rationality is historically and conceptually tied to the co-articulation of colonialism and capitalism in the unfolding of modernity. Furthermore, technocratic rationality is affiliated to key elements of Enlightenment epistemology such as logocentrism, mechanism, rationalism; it rhymes with the world-view of history as linear progression and its hierarchization and homogenization of cultures.

One must also note the postmodern and postcolonial critique of modernity’s grand narratives, especially concerning the Eurocentric privilege in the discourse of humanism and its

claims about the greater good of society that the modern project was meant to deliver. Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1984) is the text that brings the different elements of this critique together, pointing to two key developments: first, the bankruptcy of the claims of the master narratives in the light of Auschwitz as sign of the failure of modernity's project at the ethical level – one should add in this context the violences and pauperizations caused by European colonialism and capitalist imperialism, often under cover of the liberal-humanist 'civilizing mission' as Frantz Fanon noted nearly 50 years ago.

Second, the elimination of the critical dimension central to any project of emancipation through the operationalization of knowledge in the performative criteria of efficiency and productivity. Drawing attention to the transformations occurring since the Second World War, for example, in linguistics, informatics, cybernetics and intelligent machines, in problems of computers and their languages and the effects of information-processing machines, Lyotard says:

The nature of knowledge cannot survive unchanged within this context of general transformation. It can fit into the new channels, and become operational, only if learning is translated into quantities of information . . . The old principle that the acquisition of knowledge is indissociable from the training (*Bildung*) of minds, or even of individuals, is becoming obsolete and will become even more so . . . Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorised in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange. Knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its 'use-value' . . . Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to productive power is already, and will continue to be, a major – perhaps *the* major – stake in the world-wide competition for power. (1984: 4, 5)

There is much more in the text that I must leave aside. My aim here is simply to highlight the altered role of knowledge in the wake of the mutation of instrumental rationality into the 'tele-techno-media-scientific, capitalistic and politico-economic' figures of truth, to use Derrida's (2002) terminology. It is important to underline that the opposition between religion and science, which a 'certain tradition of the Enlightenment' decreed, dissolves the relationship between faith and knowledge and erases the distinction between the two that alerts critique to be vigilant about the 'theologico-political heritage' of claims to truth and trust that religion and science both make (Derrida, 2002: 63–6). The Enlightenment's absolute opposition to religion replaced the monotheism of divine order with the monotheism of reason, and allowed the monolingualism of positivist science to speak the truth of being. Thus, without this recognition of a relationship between faith and knowledge at the level of foundation, and without the recognition of what cannot be presented or translated – from one faith to another, from one experience to another, from one episteme to another – it is tempting for either religion or science to constitute itself as a self-referential system that maps into itself, so that visions of alternatives are erased through the kind of informationalization analysed by Lyotard. What is erased in the process is the domain of the ethical itself, and thus the promise of justice or liberation from oppressions and iniquities that are the ultimate ends of emancipation. Fertile grounds for fanaticism and fundamentalism are opened up, cultivated in contemporary counter-Enlightenment conditions.

My second point about the relation of knowledge to a project of emancipation relates to the mutation of the modern imaginary of modernity into the postmodern problematic of development. The latter retains the idea of linear temporal sequence whereby what come later is seen as always better than what had preceded, with the implication that this earlier stage must be rejected to allow the new to emerge. However, this newness is not judged by reference to a project of emancipation as understood within the Enlightenment's vision of increasing equality and liberty and ethical maturity, but within the scope of efficiency and productivity. Thus, not only does this problematic of development re-inscribe and naturalize the colonial and evolutionary classification of nations in terms of a hierarchy of development, a model which is still powerful in political economy and that dictates that 'developing' states

will always have to play 'catching up'. It eliminates the grounds for imagining alternative forms of sociality and alternative polities consistent with the Enlightenment ideals of historical becoming as emancipatory. Thus it ensures that development can only be understood within the conceptual frame of a (re-)modernization equated with neoliberal 'structural adjustments' and 'liberalization' programmes and the sufferings they inflict. Knowledge, instrumentalized and informationalized, has come to operate as counter-Enlightenment. It is Benjamin's vision of progress as the angel of history leaving ruins behind as it rushes towards a sightless future. I will use two examples to briefly examine some implications of the arguments I have been presenting, namely, the case of the market in derivatives, and the case of genetically modified foods.

The derivatives market concerns trading on the stock exchange centred on the predicted future values of assets; it is thus a trade in virtual assets, ultimately based on nothing but financial and information technologies that combine probabilistic knowledge and calculations with computer simulations of the future. The derivatives market generates value out of the future as resource. Derivatives have quickly become by far the most important element of finance capitalism. For example, the figures for the past five years indicate that this trade in its various forms has expanded to become the biggest business in the world, exceeding in value annual world GDP. Even in 1997 its combined annual value was \$675 trillion compared with a world GDP of \$147 trillion in 2000 (Arnoldi, 2004). But, like all capitalist ventures, it must calculate and manage risks and intangibles like market moods even as it bets on uncertainty. In particular, it must attempt to minimize risk by making risk itself the object of a system of calculation as well as what provides the ground for the complex practice of gambling that trading on the futures market involves.

My point is not about this virtual world of finance that informational technology has produced (a good account is given in Lee and LiPuma, 2002). It is about the fact that it is time itself which is being traded, and the extent to which the drive to minimize the risks involved means the abolition of the future as emergence and as indeterminate becoming. Basically, with the derivatives market, capital is obliged to organize the present in such a way as to ensure the future conforms to what has already been predicted by the probabilistic calculations. In order to ensure the future happens more or less as anticipated, capital must abolish contingency even as it plays with it, and it must bring everything within the order of the orderable and the calculable – paradoxically using the sophisticated, and potentially disruptive, mathematics of complexity theory, chaos theory, fractals. The future thus becomes an extension of the present, and the present an intensification of the future. Capital controls the present by controlling the future. Extending some ideas from Deleuze and Guattari, one can say that it is time itself which is being colonized. Information and its maximization are crucial here – as were statistics and probability theory (of Quetelet) for the Enlightenment's 'social art' – and so is the predictability of human action. But risk continues to haunt capital in the form of the indeterminate and the event – not only natural disasters, climate change, corporate crashes, but also the fact that the 'natives' get restless and think of resistance, and knowledge is always provisional, and newness erupts out of the complexity of world (and from the Thing, which I must leave out). Capital deals with the uncanny spectrality of the event by killing: the future-as-difference, and anything and anyone who introduces uncertainty and resists calculation and informationalization. The temptation of totalitarian thought is precisely to abolish recalcitrant difference; in this way it makes truth and faith coincide. And, importantly, this coincidence of truth and faith is the basis of all fundamentalisms.

The implication for transmodern and transcolonial critique is the extent to which the post-colony and its resources – water, power, labour, forests, minerals, products, etc. – are the assets that function as 'supplement' for the virtual assets derivatives trade upon. Without the oil, foods, diamonds, critical materials like coltan, uranium, and so on, the rest of the machinery and imaginary with and on which finance capitalism operates would not work; the ratio of market value to assets would break down (as it did in the case of the dot.com crash). Capital must acquire these material assets and control them, indeed informationalize them, that is,

own them as immaterial property. But this immaterial property has the capacity for material actualization: as capital, as corporate and individual wealth. Another implication is that the abolition of the future as difference eliminates the possibility of alternatives. This too is part of a new form of colonization. Indeed, a global map of the location of the kinds of assets I have mentioned, e.g. oil, coltan, uranium, coincides with a map of military and ethnic violence, and a map of postmodern 'enclosures' and pauperizations. If we were to define the post-colonial, or rather the transcolonial as a virtual space, that is to say, a space of potentiality and unprecedented becomings, it follows that it must resist the logic at work in these intensifications of inequalities.

My second case, that of GM foods, will reinforce the arguments about ownership and the society of control (Hardt and Negri, 2000). Today anyone, anywhere can grow wheat or corn, raise chicken, and so on, that is to say, survive without having to pay a licence to anyone for the genetic information of the wheat or the corn. Let us call the knowledge that makes this agriculture possible wealth-knowledge, in contrast to property-knowledge, bearing in mind here the important distinction between wealth and property that Arendt underlines. Wealth-knowledge, as collective capital, is a form of inheritance, belonging to a collectivity, it is part of the common good, it belongs to the language of heteronomy (Derrida and Stiegler, 2002). What GM foods introduce through new varieties of seeds and, soon to come, biotechnologically modified animals, are new strains and specimens that are supposed to be more resistant to pests and diseases and also have greater yields. But knowledge of new plants and animals as genetic information is owned by the biotech corporations. The GM seed as bar-coded information is the property/knowledge that one must buy and use under licence. The logic of genetic modification in the current global economic system is that knowledge that was once free will in the future be owned by those who already have most of the wealth and economic power. Indeed, the industry is producing varieties with 'terminator genes' that make the seeds infertile so that farmers cannot use them. The interesting scenario then is to imagine the situation in which the biotech companies will own most varieties of seeds and breeds of animals, the native varieties will have become contaminated through genetic pollution and eliminated as viable crops and species. Wealth-knowledge will have been converted into property-knowledge worldwide, privately owned in its immaterial form. Once again, the logic of the informationalization of knowledge in the context of capitalism, institutionalized in Trade-Related-Intellectual-Property-Rights or TRIPs, is to acquire as assets the wealth of the world. As with derivatives, the future is being bar-coded.

Already the experience where GM seeds have been introduced, as in Canada, India, Africa, Brazil, is that farmers must buy new seeds each year and are not allowed to save them from their crops. The history of the Green Revolution points to the real dangers for 'developing' countries. Introduced from the early 1970s, the new varieties of, for example, rice were meant to have greater yield, but needed new pesticides and chemical fertilizers to fulfil their potential, and could not be grown alongside other crops. Only the wealthier farmers could afford them, and poorer ones were made destitute. Interestingly, from 1974–2000 farm gross income grew by 300 percent but net income fell because the suppliers took 100 percent of farmers' increased gross returns. For example, the Green Revolution did help India to increase food production, but the poor cannot afford to buy this extra food which is kept in vast silos where it mainly rots away or is eaten by rats. The mechanisms I am describing reproduce and deepen inequalities of wealth and power.

The decisive issue is the implications for subjectivity and for politics of the emergence of the biomediated body, the prosthetic body and its mediatized prosthetic memory, that advances in bio-info technologies promise. From the point of view of the ownership of knowledge-as-information, one wonders who will own one's genetic information and one's body. For instance, what will happen when one can no longer rent or pay for the body parts one has 'acquired', or the medicines and nutrients that will maintain the biomediated body? And, shall we see in the near future the emergence of human farming, concerned with the production of human babies, kidneys, blood plasma, and so on, sold as commodities? Does the

commodification of knowledge produce the commodification of life and a new biopolitics (of the biomediated and genetically modified body)? And what does all this mean for the role of knowledge in the process of political liberation from exploitation and oppressions?

A few brief points to conclude. Through the examples and the transformations that I have described I have tried to show that the location of knowledge by reference to a project of emancipation such as that of the Enlightenment has become very problematic and is in crisis. The capitalist context is crucial, and so is the legacy and continuities of colonialism in other forms, including the colonization of time – I should note here that I understand colonialism to refer to any system of subjugation and exploitation based on the homogenization and privileging of a centre, an origin, a sovereignty or a world-view, or their permutation. The informationalization of knowledge without an archive and without a critical language and practice undermines any politics that aims to alter the relations of power and privilege. The politics of knowledge within Enlightenment thought, in spite of its ambivalence with regard to Europe's others and to capitalism, intended to bring about forms of socialities that would be more just. We now have a great deal more knowledge than in the 18th century, yet inequality and poverty and the gap between rich and poor, after a period of improvement, is moving back towards the distribution of opportunities and freedoms as it was at the time of the Enlightenment. Globally, inequalities of wealth, gender, and race are once more being normalized in the form of new servitudes, hastened by kleptocracies. The commodification of knowledge, incited by its mediatization and informationalization, amplifies tendencies inherent from the beginning in the great shifts that announced modernity. An age of fanaticism has appeared, evidenced in market fundamentalism as much as in a variety of religious fundamentalism, preparing the ground for a century of despotism. The question for knowledge now is about the kind of world for which it is being recruited and repositioned, as a postmodern technics or *techne*, divested of ethical substance. What emerges for the work of reorganizing knowledge which the New Encyclopaedia Project is undertaking is the interconnections between a politics of memory, a politics of information and knowledge, and the link between the encyclopaedia and a new discourse of emancipation, that is, a new, necessarily post-colonizing, thus a transcolonial 'enlightenment'.

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Cosmopolitanism

Pheng Cheah

Abstract In modernity, the concept of cosmopolitanism has changed from an intellectual ethos to a vision of an institutionally embedded global political consciousness. The central problem that troubles cosmopolitanism from its moment of inception in 18th-century philosophy to the globalized present is whether we live in a world that is interconnected enough to generate institutions that have a global regulatory reach and a global form of solidarity that can influence their functioning. Examination of Kant's pre-nationalist cosmopolitanism, Marx's postnationalist cosmopolitanism, and decolonizing socialist nationalism indicates the normative attraction of the nation as a mode of solidarity. Contemporary arguments about new cosmopolitanisms focusing on the rise of transnational networks of global cities, postnational social formations created by migrant and diasporic flows and Habermas's recent revival of Kant's project of cosmopolitan democracy have likewise failed to address the persistence of nationalism as a normative force within the field of uneven globalization.

Keywords cosmopolitan democracy, cosmopolitanism, diaspora, global civil society, globalization, Habermas, Kant

The story of the concept of cosmopolitanism in modernity is that of a passage from an intellectual ethos to a vision of a global political consciousness that is generated and sustained by institutional structures. The central problem that troubles the modern concept of cosmopolitanism from its moment of inception in 18th-century European philosophy to the globalized present is whether we live in a world that is interconnected enough to generate, on the one hand, institutions that have a global reach in their regulatory function and, on the other, a global form of political consciousness or solidarity, a feeling that we belong to a world that can take root and be sustained within these institutions and influence their functioning in turn. Any theory of cosmopolitanism must therefore address two related questions, first, an empirical question concerning the cosmopolitan extensiveness of a regulatory power embedded in institutions, and, second, a question about the normativity of these institutions, whether they can be in a relation of mutual feedback with a global political consciousness that voices the universal interests of humanity and tries to maximize human freedom. If both these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily, cosmopolitanism remains an intellectual ethos of a select clerisy, a form of consciousness without a mass base.

Arbitrary Conceptual Roots: Cosmopolitanism in Modern European Philosophy

D'Alembert's entry in the *Encyclopédie* notes that 'cosmopolitan' derives from the Greek words for 'world' (*cosmos*) and 'city' (*polis*) and that it refers to '*un homme qui n'a point de demeure fixe, ou bien un homme qui n'est étranger nulle part* [a man without a fixed abode, or better, a man who is nowhere a stranger]' (Diderot and d'Alembert, 1751–65: 4, 297). The term's philosophical usage to indicate a 'citizen of the universe', however, emphasizes that this intellectual ethos or spirit is not one of rootlessness. Instead, what is imagined is a universal circle of belonging that involves the transcendence of the particularistic and blindly given ties of kinship and country. The cosmopolitan therefore embodies the universality of philosophical reason itself, namely its power of transcending the particular and contingent. Hence, the popular view of cosmopolitanism as an elite form of rootlessness and a state of detachment and nomadic non-belonging is mistaken. The cosmopolitan's universal circle of belonging embraces the whole of humanity. When cosmopolitanism is criticized for being a form of elitist detachment, the real point of dissatisfaction is that it is merely an intellectual ethos or perspective espoused by a select clerisy because the philosophers of the French Enlightenment could not envision feasible political structures for the regular and widespread institutionalization of mass-based cosmopolitan feeling. The bonds of humanity, whether they are predicated in terms of reason or moral sentiment, may be the strongest possible ties. But for various reasons, not many people are able to feel their pull. Rousseau lamented that in relations between different societies, the Law of Nature, or natural pity, the original root of social virtues such as clemency and humanity, has lost

almost all the force it had in the relations between one man and another, [and] lives on only in the few great Cosmopolitan Souls [*grandes âmes cosmopolites*] who cross the imaginary boundaries that separate Peoples and, following the example of the sovereign being that created them, embrace the whole of Mankind in their benevolence. (1766: 174)

In many respects, the true inaugurator of modern cosmopolitanism is Immanuel Kant. Kant retained the idea of membership to humanity as a whole by insisting on the importance of 'knowledge of man as a citizen of the world [*des Menschen als Weltbürgers*]' in his writings on pragmatic anthropology and universal history (1968a: 400). However, Kant was primarily concerned with man as a practical being and actor in history, someone who not only knows the world as a spectator of a play but knows his way about the world as a participant (1968a: 400). A world-citizen acts from the pluralistic standpoint of humanity as a collective actor as opposed to that of an egoistic individual (Kant, 1968a: 411). Accordingly, Kant articulated at least four different modalities of cosmopolitanism that would become the main topoi of contemporary discussions of the concept in normative international relations theory (including accounts of global civil society and the international public sphere), liberal political economy and theories of globalization. These different modalities, which are part of a systemic whole, are: (1) a world federation as the legal and political institutional basis for cosmopolitanism as a form of right; (2) the historical basis of cosmopolitanism in world trade; (3) the idea of a global public sphere; and (4) the importance of cosmopolitan culture in instilling a sense of belonging to humanity.

What Kant calls 'a universal *cosmopolitan existence*' is nothing less than the *regulative idea* of 'a perfect civil union of mankind' (1968b: 47). It is a constitutional global federation of all existing states that is

based on *cosmopolitan right* [*Weltbürgerrecht*], in so far as individuals and states, coexisting in an external relationship of mutual influences, may be regarded as citizens of a universal state of mankind [*allgemeinen Menschenstaats*] (*ius cosmopolitanum*). (Kant, 1968e: 203n)

Although it would not possess the coercive means of enforcement available to a world-state, it would nevertheless be a legitimately institutionalized world community, able to make rightful claims on its constituent states regarding their treatment of individuals and other states.

Individual states would retain their sovereignty, but would be held accountable by a universal citizenry – humanity – with regard to issues such as disarmament and imperialist expansion. Kant's world federation would therefore fall somewhere between the political community of the state in its lawful relations with other states and a world-state.

Kant regarded state sovereignty as inviolable because the state was formed through an original contract by rational consensual individual wills. He also believed that the state had a fundamental role in the moral-cultural education of its citizens. Hence, his idea of cosmopolitan right remained restricted. The cosmopolitan community is a federation of states and not of world citizens, and the ultimate purpose of 'a cosmopolitan system of public political security [*weltbürgerlichen Zustand der öffentlichen Staatssicherheit*]' is to bring about lasting peace so that states can devote their time and efforts to the cultural education of their citizens and increase their aptitude for morality instead of wasting their resources on expansionist war efforts (Kant, 1968b: 44–7). Consequently, the scope of cosmopolitan right is limited to the provision of hospitality. It is 'the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory', a mere right of resort and not a right of a guest to expect to be entertained (Kant, 1968e: 213–16). The protection of individual rights that we call 'human rights' does not fall under cosmopolitan right but is left to the civil constitution of each state (Kant, 1968e: 204–6). Matters concerning relations between states such as the principle that a state has no right to use its citizens for war against other states are also not governed by cosmopolitan right, but come under the right of peoples (*Völkerrecht*) (Kant, 1968d: 467–9).

In Kant's view, world trade provided the historical basis of cosmopolitan unity. As the spirit of commerce spreads throughout the world, states find that it is in their self-interest to enter into a world federation to prevent war and violence because these deplete their financial power (*Geldmacht*) (1968e: 226). Moreover, the unity brought about by trade and other forms of encounter between countries creates something like a global public sphere that will safeguard cosmopolitan right by protesting any violations of it in the same manner that a critical national public sphere safeguards the rights of citizens vis-à-vis the territorial state:

the peoples of the earth have thus entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*. The idea of a cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastic or overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a public right of humanity [*öffentlichen Menschenrechte*]. (Kant, 1968e: 216–17)

In addition, forms of culture also instill a deeper subjective sense of cosmopolitan solidarity or the feeling of belonging to humanity by encouraging universal social communication and sympathy. The fine arts and the sciences play a crucial role in developing our humanity (*Menschheit*) because they involve 'a universally communicable [*allgemein mitteilen*] pleasure' (Kant, 1968c: §83, 321). The humanities (*humaniora*) cultivate our mental powers by instilling in us

the universal feeling of sympathy, and the ability to engage universally in very intimate communication. When these two qualities are combined, they constitute the sociability [*Geselligkeit*] that befits humanity and distinguishes it from the limitation of animals. (Kant, 1968c: §60, 300)

It is important to emphasize that although the different modalities of cosmopolitanism exhibit universalistic tendencies, unlike the philosophers of the French Enlightenment, Kant did not conflate the normativity of cosmopolitanism with that of moral reason and universal freedom. True freedom or autonomy could only be found in a kingdom (*Reich*) of ends, a systematic union of all rational beings through the moral law that each member is to treat himself and all others never merely as means but always at the same time as ends in themselves. Such a community could never be realized in the finite, sensible world because all sensible existence,

including the actions of human beings, is determined by circumstances and principles that are not wholly rational, for instance, sensuous impulses and inclinations in the case of human action. The best we can hope for is that cultivation will curb our sensuous inclinations so that our resistance to acting out of obedience to the moral law can be minimized. What cultural education within the external institutional framework of a cosmopolitan federation attempts to create is ‘humanity’, the unity of the species as an empirical consciousness in general. But this can only be a simulacrum that asymptotically approximates the realm of ends.

Marx’s Proletarian Cosmopolitanism and the Mistaken Antinomy between Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism

The distinction between the normativity of morality and that of cosmopolitan right indicates that cosmopolitanism is not identical to moral freedom but is merely an institutional vehicle for its actualization. Consequently, cosmopolitanism is not necessarily opposed to nationalism in the way that universalism is opposed to particularism. Both forms of solidarity are alternative vehicles for the actualization of moral freedom. It is also erroneous to regard cosmopolitanism as the transcendence of the particularistic and parochial limits of the nation-form because cosmopolitanism may in fact precede the popular nation-state in history and nationalism in the history of ideas. Significantly, Kant does not have an understanding of the nation (*Volk*) as a self-conscious and strong form of popular solidarity that constitutes the basis for political solidarity. Like many of his contemporaries in the 18th and early 19th century, Kant spoke of the character of nations as a set of distinctive acquired or artificially cultivated traits that have developed from an innate character. However, national character is not considered a basis of solidarity. Solidarity only comes about in a civil condition (a society with distributive justice) and this is instituted by an original contract that constitutes the people as an articulated whole (*Volk, populus*) and the state (which has rights over the people) in one and the same moment (Kant, 1968a: 174; 1968d: §41, §43). Hence, for Kant, the people is defined by the state. ‘It is absurd,’ he suggests, ‘to speak of the majesty of a people [*Völkermajestät*]’ as a reason for war. It is the majesty of a state that leads a ruler ‘to order thousands of people to immolate themselves for a cause that does not truly concern them’ (Kant, 1968e: 209).

This means that Kant’s cosmopolitanism is not opposed to nationalism but to absolutist statism. His vision is formulated prior to the spread of popular nationalism in Europe, the period between 1825 and 1831 where nationality, in search of statehood, emerges for the first time as the primary basis of revolution. This period saw the rise of Greek, Belgian and Polish nationalist movements, first aroused by the Napoleonic invasion, and now rebelling against their Ottoman, Dutch, and Russian governments for the primary reason that these were foreign regimes. Formulated too early to take into account the role of nationalism in the transition between the age of absolutism and the age of liberalism, Kant’s cosmopolitanism is more a philosophical republicanism and federalism designed to reform the absolutist dynastic state than a theory opposing the modern theory of nationality. Indeed, because Kant writes at a time when the phenomenon and concept of ‘the nation’ is still at an embryonic stage, he points out that the Right of Peoples or Nations (*Völkerrecht*) is a misnomer since it actually refers to the lawful relation of states to one another, *ius publicum civitatum* (Kant, 1968d: §53, 466).

Kant could not predict that global capitalism was also the material condition of possibility of a different type of collective glue with similar humanizing aims. Like cosmopolitanism, nationalism in the initial moment of its historical emergence is a popular movement distinct from the state that also sought to provide rightful regulation for the behavior of absolutist states towards their subjects (Anderson, 1991). Before the tightening of the hyphen between nation and state through official nationalism, the ideals of cosmopolitanism and European nationalism in its early stirrings are almost indistinguishable (Meinecke, 1917). Pre-stated nationalism had an unbounded and cosmopolitan extensiveness and patriotism was viewed as a concrete actualization of ideals and ends that would merely be abstract under cosmopolitanism. One could describe Giuseppe Mazzini’s argument that the nation is the only

historically effective threshold to humanity as well as the nationalism of Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1808) as types of cosmo-nationalism (Mazzini, 1961; Fichte, 1978). Cosmo-nationalist themes are revived in the republican nationalism of Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern China, the idea of the proletarian nation in early Chinese socialism, and the decolonizing nationalisms of Frantz Fanon and Amilcar Cabral (Fanon, 1963; Meisner, 1967: 47–8; Cabral, 1979).

In the history of ideas, the notorious tensions between nationalism and cosmopolitanism become more apparent from Marx onwards. For Marx, proletarian cosmopolitanism is no longer just a normative horizon of world history or a matter of right growing out of international commerce. It is a necessary and existing form of solidarity grounded in the global exploitation that has resulted from the global development of forces of production. In stark contrast to Kant's vision of cosmopolitanism, Marx's characterization of the nation and its appendages – national economy, industry, and culture – in naturalistic and primordial terms in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) indicates that a significant sense of national belonging had already developed (Marx and Engels, 1932b). But the nation is a false natural community, an ideological construction that masks the class interests of less developed bourgeois states such as the various German states and obscures the truly cosmopolitan essence of economic activity and civil society. Because economic activity transcends territorial borders, modern civil society is inherently cosmopolitan:

It embraces the whole commercial and industrial life of a given stage and, insofar, transcends the state and the nation, though, on the other hand again, it must assert itself in its external relations as nationality and internally must organise [*gliedern*] itself as a state. (Marx and Engels, 1932a: 25–6)

The proletarian revolution must be directed against the national state because it contradicts the unbounded nature of civil society *qua* medium and form of economic activity. Because universal exploitation creates a universal class in advanced countries that has been dispossessed and freed of any illusions by utter poverty, the bourgeois ideology of 'humanity' will be demystified and bourgeois cosmopolitanism will be sublated (*aufgehoben*) and replaced by the cosmopolitan solidarity of the proletariat.

Marx's proletarian cosmopolitanism is thus different from Kant's pre-nationalist cosmopolitanism. Kant missed the potential of popular nationalism as an emancipatory force against statism because he could not predict that the material interconnectedness brought about by capitalism would engender the bounded political community of the nation. Marx's socialist cosmopolitanism is an anti- and post-nationalism that reduces the nation to an ideological instrument of the state. He dismissed nationalism although he witnessed its rise. Identifying the nation too hastily with the bourgeois state, Marx reduced the nation to an ideological instrument of the state and saw nationalism as a tendentious invocation of anachronistic quasi-feudal forms of belonging in modernity. However, this antagonistic relation between socialist cosmopolitanism and nationalism has almost never been maintained from a historical-practical standpoint. The uneven character of capitalism as an actually existing global system implies an irreducible disparity between the working class in different parts of the world. This has repeatedly posed obstacles for the formation of a global proletarian consciousness or world community based on labor. The national question was most notably raised in response to anti-colonialist struggles in Asia and Africa. In the historical scene of decolonization, it is not only the material economic wealth that workers have produced that needs to be reappropriated. The nation's spiritual or cultural personality has been taken away by territorial imperialism and continues to be expropriated by neo-colonial forces. In Amilcar Cabral's exemplary reformulation, national liberation

[is] the phenomenon in which a socio-economic whole rejects the denial of its historical process . . . [T]he national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of that people, it is their return to history through the destruction of the imperialist domination. (1979: 130)

Imperialism determines that the primary shape of struggle for the (neo)colonized peoples who make up the mass of the world's population is nationalist. To remove the *nation* from the global circuit of property and commodification so that its people can have access to the products of their labor, the people must first achieve or regain their rightful cultural *personality*, which imperialism has violently usurped.

The same challenges to the formation of cosmopolitan solidarity continue to be raised today by popular nationalist responses to neocolonialism and uneven development. Two central issues stand out here. First, in a world where the nation-state is the primary form of political organization, can socialist cosmopolitanism have an adequate institutional basis if it does not work through a form of popular nationalism that seeks to shape state actions in accordance with the interests of humanity? Second, does a postnationalist form of cosmopolitan solidarity leave peoples in the postcolonial South vulnerable to the unequal and predatory imperatives of capitalist globalization under its current neoliberal dispensation?

The Challenges of Contemporary Globalization: A New Cosmopolitanism?

Although visions of cosmopolitanism have mutated from an intellectual ethos to an institutionally grounded global political consciousness, this institutional grounding has been put into question by the uneven character of global capitalism. There is an inadequation or lack of fit between the material interconnectedness brought about by global capitalism and the degree of formation of global solidarities. In other words, we cannot automatically assume that experiences of a globalizing world where people, things, and events have become more and more connected necessarily lead to and form the substrate for a cosmopolitan form of politics that displaces that of the nation-state. In the past decade, various processes of contemporary globalization such as transcultural encounters, mass migration and population transfers between East and West, First and Third Worlds, North and South, the rise of global cities as central sites for the management of global financial and business networks, the formation of transnational advocacy networks, and the proliferation of transnational human rights instruments have led to greater hopes that this inadequation can be overcome and that feasible global forms of political consciousness have in fact arisen. It is suggested that whatever its shortcomings, contemporary transnationalism furnishes the material conditions for new radical cosmopolitanisms from below that can regulate the excesses of capitalist globalization. In comparison with older philosophical approaches, some of the proponents of new cosmopolitanism attempt to dissociate it from universal reason, arguing that cosmopolitanism is now a variety of actually existing practical stances that are provisional and can lead to strategic alliances and networks that cross territorial and political borders. However, these new cosmopolitanisms still contain a normative dimension. It is claimed that they are normatively superior to more parochial forms of solidarity such as nationalism and that they represent, however provisionally, the interests of humanity because they exhibit a degree of autonomy from the imperatives of economic globalization.

Theories of new cosmopolitanism are essentially syntheses of three different arguments, which can be found in different combinations. First, it is suggested that cultural and political solidarity and political agency can no longer be restricted to the sovereign nation-state as a unified spatio-temporal container because globalization has undermined many of the key functions from which the nation-state derives its legitimacy. Second, the various material networks of globalization are said to have formed a world that is interconnected enough to generate political institutions and non-governmental organizations that have a global reach in their regulatory functions as well as global forms of mass-based political consciousness or popular feelings of belonging to a shared world. Third, this new cosmopolitan consciousness is characterized as a more expansive form of solidarity that is attuned to democratic principles and human interests without the restriction of territorial borders. In some cases, it is also suggested that the new cosmopolitan consciousness is in a relation of mutual feedback with emerging global institutions, taking root and finding sustenance from these institutions and influencing their functioning in turn.

The thesis of the spatial-geographical destriation of the world economy is most clearly expressed in Saskia Sassen's work on global cities. Whereas the globalization of industrial production under post-Fordism created a hierarchical new international division of labor between center and periphery, Sassen argues that the outstripping of industrial capital by much more profitable non-industrial forms of capital such as international finance and the production of high-value specialized producer services crucial for the managing of global production networks (such as legal, accounting and business management services) have led to the rise of new geographical formations, global networks of interlinked cities, that no longer respect the center-periphery distinction. New York, London and Tokyo, the paradigmatic global cities, have become dislocated from their respective nation-states, and function instead as 'a surplus-extracting mechanism vis-à-vis a "transnational hinterland"', 'as a transterritorial marketplace' in which each plays a different complementary role (Sassen, 1991: 127, 327). These networks are a complex border-zone that facilitates the penetration of the nation-state by global forces.

However, for 'the partial unbundling' of the nation through global economic processes to have any normative significance, it has to be aligned with the rise of new supranational political formations that can replace the normative deficit caused by the nation's weakening. Otherwise, the denationalization of the state merely serves the predatory rights of global capital. Here, the focus inevitably shifts to the concomitant proliferation of global political institutions radiating from the UN system and organizations and discourses centered on human rights and the rise of a new cosmopolitan culture through transnational migration and global cultural and media flows (Sassen, 1998: 21–2). A combination of these two phenomena is seen as constituting globalization's normative payoff, namely a cosmopolitan political culture that exceeds the imperatives of merely economic globalization.

The progressive implications of a cosmopolitanism arising from the social experience of global cities – a cosmopolitan corporate work culture, the sophisticated consumption patterns of this high-income bracket, and the global culture of its growing immigrant population from the Third World, who are needed to support the lifestyle of the former group – are, however, dubious. The cosmopolitanism of corporate workers is essentially the cosmopolitanism of a new technocratic professional class whose primary aims in life are making a profit and conspicuous consumption. The only feelings of solidarity manifest here are to the global firm as a terrain for professional self-interest and advancement. This type of attachment is gradually disseminated throughout the world through the global outsourcing of white-collar jobs, which in turn establishes more bridges for higher-end South–North migration.

Similar questions should be raised about the cosmopolitanism of transnational underclass migrant communities in the North. Contemporary studies of global culture that focus on post-colonialism often connect this kind of cosmopolitanism to the political culture of human rights activism as evidence of the postnational spatialization of politics. For example, Arjun Appadurai has grouped transnational NGOs and philanthropic movements, diasporic communities, refugees, and religious movements under the rubric of actually existing 'postnational social formations', arguing that these organizational forms are 'both instances and incubators of a postnational global order' because they challenge the nation-state and provide non-violent institutional grounding for larger-scale political loyalties, allegiances and group-identities (1993: 421). It is claimed that these global social and political movements emanate from the grass-roots level and exhibit autonomy from dominant global economic and political forces ('grass-roots globalization' or 'globalization from below') and that they can be the sustaining basis for transcending or overcoming the constraining discourse of nationalism/statism (Appadurai, 2000).

The connection between transnational migrant experiences of global cultural diversity and institutionalized forms of cosmopolitan solidarity, however, remains largely unelaborated. The world is undoubtedly interconnected and transnational mobility is clearly on the rise. But this does not inevitably generate meaningful cosmopolitanisms in the robust sense of pluralized world political communities. One should cast a more discriminating eye on the various emergent forms of cosmopolitanism and distinguish them in terms of how they are connected

to the operations of neoliberal capital. For instance, over and above interventions on behalf of underprivileged migrant minority groups on an ad hoc basis, to what extent can activist cosmopolitanisms take root in the latter in a consistent manner to generate a genuinely pluralized mass-based global political community within the Northern constitutional nation-state as distinguished from the defensive identity politics of ethnic, religious or hybrid minority constituencies? Can these cosmopolitanisms be embedded in a global community in the South forged from transnational media networks?

It is doubtful whether transnational migrant communities can be characterized as examples of cosmopolitanism in the robust normative sense. It is unclear how many of these migrants feel that they belong to a world. Nor has it been ascertained whether this purported feeling of belonging to a world is analytically distinguishable from long-distance, absentee national feeling. It is, moreover, uncertain that cultural minorities who have achieved multicultural recognition in Northern constitutional democracies are naturally sensitive to the plight of their former compatriots in the peripheries. They are more likely to be driven by the desire for upward class mobility and to become the new bearers of the imperatives of national/regional economic competition. The example of Asian-American entrepreneurship shows that Americans of South Asian, Chinese or Vietnamese heritage often lead the vanguard of outsourcing initiatives in their countries of origin, justifying super-exploitation in the name of transnational ethnic solidarity. The NRI (Non-Resident Indian) businessman or multinational executive professes diasporic patriotism as he sets up call centers in India, just as the diasporic Chinese investor who exploits cheap female labor in Southern Chinese factories wishes to benefit people in his ancestral village. The argument that transnational print and media networks extend a world community beyond transnational migrancy to include peoples dwelling in the South has to reckon with the banal fact that many in the South are illiterate and/or do not have access to a television or hardware capable of receiving CNN and Rupert Murdoch's Asia-based Star TV.

What is sadly missing from celebrations of new cosmopolitanism in the softer social sciences and cultural studies is a thorough discussion of the normative implications of globalization, or more precisely the relationship between universality or weaker normative forms of wide inclusivity and the global extensiveness of economic, political, and cultural processes. There are, however, more recent arguments from philosophy that suggest that contemporary post-Cold War human rights regimes, other emergent transnational legal and political institutions, and the so-called international civil society of NGOs constitute a contemporary revival and updated affirmation of Kant's vision of cosmopolitanism. Among these arguments, that of the German philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, is the most sophisticated. For Habermas, the curse of globalization turns out to be a blessing in disguise. In his view, globalization is not reducible to global capitalism, but has relatively autonomous cultural and political aspects that create the conditions for an *Aufhebung* (transcendence/sublation) whereby the earlier national shell that imprisoned democratic republicanism will be destroyed and its kernel or truth-content, preserved in the form of deliberative democratic procedures, will rise up, phoenix-like, to a higher supranational state of existence.

First, the homogeneous national-cultural base of civil-political solidarity, which is already undermined by the global dissemination of mass culture, is further eroded by economically-driven South to North and East to West migration, which changes the ethnic, religious and cultural composition of European nations. Habermas regards such cultural pluralization/multiculturalization of society as a boon. Xenophobic conflicts and the tyranny of the hegemonic cultural majority can only be controlled by the construction of a multicultural civil society that respects the differences of minority cultures. Hence, transnational migration, Habermas argues, actually accelerates the decoupling of political culture from the pre-political identity of the majority cultural group so that it can be completely co-extensive with the public-discursive democratic process (2001: 71–6). Second, following Ulrich Beck's thesis of the rise of a world risk society, Habermas suggests that political solidarity is also decoupled from its national base by the creation of globally shared risks such as ecological and environmental

damage, international organized crime such as the traffic in arms, drugs and women. Because the political interests of the people affected by such global issues will no longer be co-extensive with the territorially-based decisions of nation-states, these actions will suffer from a legitimation deficit (Habermas, 2001: 68–71). Third, the growing number of regulatory political institutions and forms of cooperation at various levels beyond the nation-state that attempt to compensate for its declining competencies suggest the blurring of the distinction between foreign and domestic policy, thereby indicating the irreversible development of a genuinely global politics (Habermas, 2001: 70–1). These bodies range from the United Nations and its agencies to international regimes, some more tightly organized than others, such as NAFTA, ASEAN, and the European Union, as well as informal networks of NGOs. Finally, the increasing proliferation of human rights instruments indicates the emergence of a weak form of cosmopolitan solidarity, that of a quasi-legal community of world citizens.

Habermas's cosmopolitan vision consists of a dynamic complex of interconnected public spheres at both the national and transnational level rather than a world organization. He emphasizes the importance of global *Öffentlichkeit* for democratizing the processes of international negotiation that lead to agreements between states (Habermas, 2001: 110). Insofar as such processes connect internal nation-state politics to policies of world organization, global *Öffentlichkeit* exploits existing structures for the formation of solidarity in national public spheres to further develop cosmopolitan solidarity in individual citizens and foster a world domestic policy on the part of state actors. This is a significant update on Kant's idea of a global public sphere, which Habermas argues, is now more securely actualized through global communications. Examples of its emergence and development stretch from the polarized global public debates over the Vietnam War and the Gulf War (and we may now add the US invasion of Iraq) to the series of UN-organized conferences over important global issues such as poverty, population growth and the status of women. Although the global public attention and world opinion elicited by these global summits are channeled through national public sphere structures and are issue-specific and temporary, the ability of the international civil society of transnational NGOs to create and mobilize transnational public spheres through press and media coverage indicates the beginnings of more permanent communicative structures for genuine global debate. Such NGO participation gives greater legitimacy to the deliberations of international negotiating systems by making them transparent for national public spheres and reconnecting them to grass-roots decision-making.

Although it offers a thorough elaboration of the normative implications of globalization for the formation of a new cosmopolitanism for the contemporary world, Habermas's project is unfeasible for three reasons. First, because the key features of Habermas's cosmopolitan vision are projected from the Euro-American-centric prototype of the Northern constitutional welfare state, it relies on a utopian over-idealization of the cosmopolitan virtues of Northern states, something that must increasingly be doubted after the US invasion of Iraq. Second, the criteria that make the First World welfare state the ideal model depend on a high degree of economic development that cannot be attained in the postcolonial South because its capacities have been actively deformed by the structures of the global economy. Postcolonial states forced to undergo structural adjustment, especially those in Africa and Latin America, are too impoverished to provide social welfare to their citizens. Worse still, states adopting the neo-liberal path of export-oriented industrial development actively sacrifice the welfare of their people to provide conditions to attract transnational capital flows. This scenario is not exactly friendly to any of the three aspects of democratic will-formation (political participation, the expression of political will or the public use of reason) Habermas desires and celebrates. Finally, while a degree of mass-based cosmopolitan solidarity has arisen in the domestic domains of Northern countries in response to exceptionally violent events such as the Vietnam War, the Rwandan genocide, or the war in Iraq, it is unlikely that this solidarity will be directed in a concerted manner towards ending economic inequality between countries because Northern civil societies derive their prodigious strength from this inequality. Indeed, we can even say that global economic inequality is simultaneously the material condition of possibility of

democratic legitimation in the North Atlantic and that which hampers its achievement in the postcolonial South.

The impasses of Habermas's cosmopolitan project raise several broader questions: Is the international division of labor the unacknowledged condition and therefore also the non-transcendable limit of all new cosmopolitanisms? If national forms of solidarity remain important, especially for economically weak countries bearing the brunt of capitalist exploitation, does uneven development constitute a crippling impediment to the formation of cosmopolitan solidarity? Does it place such constraints on cosmopolitanism's efficacy that we may regard it as a constitutive condition of contemporary arguments for the transcendence of nationalism, the limit beyond which theories of cosmopolitanism lose their coherence and become unworkable? In this regard, it is important to note that although transnational advocacy networks at the grassroots level may be animated by principles that are global in scope, although they are unconnected to traditional political parties within the national system of electoral democracy or national unions, and are able to voice their interests at global fora such as the World Social Forum, members of these movements and the participants in such fora may not have transcended feelings of national solidarity or the desire to make their respective nation-states take better care of its people. For instance, the central concept of food sovereignty – the idea that 'every people, no matter how small, has the right to produce their own food' – articulated by the Sem Terra Movement, a movement of landless agrarian workers based in Brazil, indicates that although the movement's goals are global in scope, it begins from the principle of a people's national integrity (Stedile, 2004: 43). Moreover, the activities of these social movements have to connect with the nation-state at some point because it is the primary site for the effective implementation of equitable objectives for redistribution on a large scale.

The feasibility of institutionalizing a mass-based cosmopolitan political consciousness therefore very much remains an open question today. It is not enough to fold the pluralistic ethos of older cosmopolitanisms into the institutionalized tolerance of diversity in multicultural societies. This kind of cosmopolitanism is only efficacious within the necessarily limited frame of the (now multiculturalized) democratic state in the North Atlantic that is sustained by global exploitation of the South. This type of limited cosmopolitanism has a more insidious counterpart in the state-sponsored cosmopolitanism of developed countries in Asia. Here, cosmopolitanism degenerates into a set of strategies for the biopolitical improvement of human capital. It becomes an ideology used by a state to attract high-end expatriate workers in the high-tech, finance, and other high-end service sectors as well as to justify its exploitation of its own citizens and the lower-end migrant workers who bear the burden of the country's successful adaptation to flexible accumulation. Cosmopolitanism is here merely a symbolic marker of a country's success at climbing the competitive hierarchy of the international division of labor and maintaining its position there. The inscription of new cosmopolitanisms (and theories about them) within the force field of uneven globalization must be broached at every turn.

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Vernacular Cosmopolitanism

Pnina Werbner

Keywords local, migration, multicultural, non-elite, transnational

Vernacular cosmopolitanism, an oxymoron that joins contradictory notions of local specificity and universal enlightenment, is at the crux of current debates on cosmopolitanism. These pose the question whether the local, parochial, rooted, culturally specific and demotic may co-exist with the translocal, transnational, transcendent, elitist, enlightened, universalist and modernist – whether boundary-crossing demotic migrations may be compared to the globe trotting

travel, sophisticated cultural knowledge and moral world-view of deracinated intellectuals. Indeed, the question is often reversed to ask whether there can be an enlightened normative cosmopolitanism which is not rooted, in the final analysis, in patriotic and culturally committed loyalties and understandings.

Vernacular cosmopolitanism belongs to a family of concepts, all of which combine in similar fashion apparently contradictory opposites: cosmopolitan patriotism, rooted cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitan ethnicity, working-class cosmopolitanism, discrepant cosmopolitanism. Such conjunctions attempt to come to terms with the conjunctural elements of postcolonial and

precolonial forms of cosmopolitanism and travel, while probing the conceptual boundaries of cosmopolitanism and its usefulness as an analytic concept. Vernacular cosmopolitanism is perhaps the most ambiguous of these conjunctural terms: are we talking about *non-elite* forms of travel and trade in a postcolonial world, as in the case of the Senegalese Mourides described by Diouf (2000) and others, or of *non-European* but nevertheless *high* cultures produced and consumed by non-western elites, such as those of the Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian or Ottoman worlds? The Sanskrit cosmopolis spanned an area extending from Afghanistan to Java and from Sri Lanka to Nepal, a non-western but nevertheless cosmopolitan literary world that is contrasted by Pollock with the vernacular traditions that succeeded it. Are we to define, by analogy, contemporary Hindi/Urdu or Cantonese cultural worlds as cosmopolitan, or as vernacular? So too, how are we to place minority elites in new postcolonial nations who struggle to defend their vernacular cultures, and seek justice through multicultural citizenship, while being at the same time liberal, tolerant and highly educated world travellers (R. Werbner, 2002)? Werbner calls such cosmopolitan practice among Kalanga elites in Botswana ‘cosmopolitan ethnicity’.

The world-view of Kalanga ‘reasonable radicals’ highlights the conjunctural features of cosmopolitanism, the fact that vernacular ethnic rootedness does not negate openness to cultural difference or the fostering of a universalist civic consciousness and a sense of moral responsibility beyond the local. This is also the point made by Kwame Anthony Appiah (1998), who argues that cosmopolitanism is equally an argument *within* postcolonial states on citizenship, equal dignity, cultural rights and the rule of law. Appiah speaks of cosmopolitan ‘patriotism’, a ‘rooted’ cosmopolitanism, and proposes that cosmopolitans begin from membership in morally and emotionally significant communities (families, ethnic groups) while espousing notions of toleration and openness to the world, the transcendence of ethnic difference and the moral responsibility for and incorporation of the other. Postcolonial migrant elites may and do feel sentimentally attached to several homes in several different countries.

Postcolonial elites differ nevertheless in significant senses from international labour migrants and diasporics. The question raised by Ulf Hannerz is whether these may legitimately be labelled cosmopolitan at all. Hannerz proposes a set of useful distinctions between cosmopolitans ‘willing to engage with the Other’, locals, ‘representatives of more circumscribed territorial cultures’, and transnationals (1992: 252), frequent travellers

(usually occupational) who share ‘structures of meaning carried by social networks’ (1992: 248–9). In contrast to foreign correspondents or oil engineers, he lumps migrants’ and refugees’ transnational cultures, the demotic travellers of a global age, with ‘tourists’ because, he says, they regard involvement with other cultures as a ‘necessary cost’ (1992: 248). This has led to accusations of elitism and Eurocentrism (P. Werbner, 1999). In my own work I bring a counter-example of ‘working-class cosmopolitanism’ in the figure of the expanding cosmopolitan subjectivity of a Pakistani migrant worker working on a building site in the Gulf, a simple man who embraces different cultures and is a member of diverse ethnic groups, but who nevertheless retains his localized rooted identity as a Sufi.

The challenge to the idea that cosmopolitans are necessarily members of the elite was first posed by James Clifford who reflects on the status of companion servants, guides and migrant labourers, and reflects upon the grounds of equivalence between privileged and unprivileged travellers (1992: 106–7). Clifford proposes that ‘the project of comparing and translating different travelling cultures need not be class- or ethno-centric’ (1992: 107). The differential, often violent, displacements that impel locals to travel create, he says, ‘discrepant’ cosmopolitanisms (1992: 108). The notion that there are many, different, cosmopolitan practices co-existing in late modernity, with their own historicities and distinctive world-views, has led to an exploration of marginal cosmopolitanisms. Homi Bhabha, who possibly coined the term vernacular cosmopolitanism, is uneasy with Martha Nussbaum’s image of the self as at the centre of a series of concentric circles, with universal liberal values privileged above family, ethnic group or nation (Nussbaum, 1994). The notion of a borderless cosmopolitan community seems inadequate in relation to the millions of refugees and migrants fleeing violence and poverty. Drawing on Appiah’s vision, Bhabha proposes a ‘cosmopolitan community envisaged in *marginality*’, a border zone which he terms vernacular cosmopolitanism (1996: 195–6).

Despite the fact that Hannerz has revised his position, acknowledging that more people beyond the elite may now be identified as cosmopolitan, he notes that ‘bottom-up’ cosmopolitans are unlikely to be recognized as such in their own environment (2004: 77). This raises the critical question of cosmopolitan consciousness: in what sense does cosmopolitanism need to be grounded in an open, experimental, inclusive, normative consciousness of the cultural other? Such a consciousness would need to include elements of self-doubt and reflexive self-distanciation, an

awareness of the existence and equal validity of other cultures, other values, and other mores. Is travel without such an inclusive consciousness cosmopolitan? Does travel inevitably lead to such openness and reflexivity? Despite their global commercial acumen, Senegalese Mouride traders are said to engage in 'rites of social exclusiveness' so that 'Mouride diasporic culture is homogenised in a way that excludes foreign values' (Diouf, 2000: 694, 695). Similarly, members of the jet-setting wealthy Chinese overseas trading diaspora studied by Aihwa Ong, with their multiple passports and multiple homes in different countries, appear to lack the kind of cultural openness and sensitivity normally associated with cosmopolitanism. Diasporas, by definition, are heterogeneous, and not all their members are equally cosmopolitan (P. Werbner, 1999). Sometimes it is factory workers rather than wealthy merchants who display more openness to their non-diasporic compatriots. Diasporic intellectuals may be alienated from their working-class compatriots despite their celebration of cultural hybridity. But not all diasporic elites are so alienated. Similarly, not all Senegalese in Italy are inward-looking, even if Mourides regard Italy as a 'polluting' environment. Riccio reports that Senegalese in Italy are a multi-ethnic and multi-religious community who seek, as one migrant told him, not 'only to look for jobs. To emigrate is to know new things, to broaden one's horizons in such a way that one can bring back home what one discovered and learned.'

Much depends on context. Some environments are more cosmopolitan than others. Zubaida invokes the 'legendary cosmopolitan enclaves of Cairo, but especially Alexandria, the paradigm case of Middle Eastern cosmopolitanism' – a hub of ideas, religions, goods and people from East and West, protected by an imperial context. Thessalonica was, according to Kenneth Brown, 'a great Balkan cosmopolitan city for centuries, a veritable Babel of languages, religions, cultures and local traditions'. If we take vernacular cosmopolitanism to refer to a multi-centred world, beyond the West, in the sense proposed by Arjun Appadurai, it is perhaps among the elites of such cosmopolitan cities that distinctive vernacular cosmopolitanisms are created.

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Mutations in Citizenship

Aihwa Ong

Abstract Mutations in citizenship are crystallized in an ever-shifting landscape shaped by the flows of markets, technologies, and populations. We are moving beyond the citizenship-versus-statelessness model. First, the elements of citizenship (rights, entitlements, etc.) are becoming disarticulated from each other, and becoming re-articulated with universalizing criteria of neoliberalism and human rights. Such 'global assemblages' define zones of political entitlements and claims. Second, the space of the 'assemblage', rather than the national terrain, becomes the site for political mobilizations by diverse groups in motion. Three contrasting configurations are presented. In the EU zone, unregulated markets and migrant flows challenge liberal citizenship. In Asian zones, foreigners who display self-enterprising *savoir faire* gain rights and benefits of citizenship. In camps of the disenfranchised or displaced, sheer survival becomes the ground for political claims. Thus, particular constellations shape specific problems and resolutions to questions of contemporary living, further disarticulating and deterritorializing aspects of citizenship.

Keywords contemporary living, global assemblages, mutation in citizenship, political spaces

We can trace mutations in citizenship to global flows and their configuration of new spaces of entangled possibilities. An ever-shifting landscape shaped by the flows of markets, technologies, and populations challenges the notion of citizenship tied to the terrain and imagination of a nation-state (Anderson 1991[1983]). Mobile markets, technologies, and populations interact to shape social spaces in which mutations in citizenship are crystallized. The different elements of citizenship (rights, entitlements, etc.), once assumed to go together, are becoming disarticulated from one another, and re-articulated with universalizing forces and standards. So while in theory political rights depend on membership in a nation-state, in practice, new entitlements are being realized through situated mobilizations and claims in milieus of globalized contingency.

New connections among citizenship elements and mobile forms suggest that we have moved beyond the idea of citizenship as a protected status in a nation-state, and as a condition opposed to the condition of statelessness (Arendt 1998[1958]). Binary oppositions between citizenship and statelessness, and between national territoriality and its absence, are not useful for thinking about emergent spaces and novel combinations of globalizing and situated variables. For instance, market-driven state practices fragment the national terrain into zones of hyper-growth. These spaces are plugged into transnational networks of markets, technology, and expertise.

Meanwhile, strict discriminations between the citizens and foreigners are dropped in favor of the pursuit of human capital. Such modes of governing engender a checkerboard patterning of the national terrain, thus producing an effect of graduated or variegated sovereignty (Ong, 2000). Some sites and zones are invested with more political resources than others. Meanwhile, rights and entitlements once associated with all citizens are becoming linked to

neoliberal criteria, so that entrepreneurial expatriates come to share in the rights and benefits once exclusively claimed by citizens. The difference between having and not having citizenship is becoming blurred as the territorialization of entitlements is increasingly challenged by deterritorialized claims beyond the state.

Universalizing market interests, technologies, and NGOs become articulated with citizenship orders, creating new sites for the making of new claims for resources from state as well as non-state institutions.

We used to think of different dimensions of citizenship – rights, entitlements, a state, territoriality, etc. – as more or less tied together. Increasingly, some of these components are becoming disarticulated from each other, and articulated with diverse universalizing norms defined by markets, neoliberal values, or human rights. At the same time, diverse mobile populations (expatriates, refugees, migrant workers) can claim rights and benefits associated with citizenship, even as many citizens come to have limited or contingent protections within their own countries. Thus, the (re)combinations of globalizing forces and situated elements produce distinctive environments in which citizens, foreigners, and asylum-seekers make political claims through pre-existing political membership as well as on the grounds of universalizing criteria.

Given this scenario of shifting ‘global assemblages’ (Ong and Collier, 2005), the sites of citizenship mutations are not defined by conventional geography. The space of the assemblage, rather than the territory of the nation-state, is the site for new political mobilizations and claims. In sites of emergence, a spectrum of mobile and excluded populations articulates rights and claims in universalizing terms of neoliberal criteria or human rights. Specific problematizations and resolutions to diverse regimes of living cannot be predetermined in advance. For instance, in the EU zone, unregulated markets and migrant flows threaten protections associated with liberal traditions. In emerging Asian sites, the embrace of self-enterprising values has made citizenship rights and benefits contingent upon individual market performance. In camps of the disenfranchised or displaced, bare life becomes the ground for political claims, if not for citizenship, then for the right to survive. In short, instead of all citizens enjoying a unified bundle of citizenship rights, we have a shifting political landscape in which heterogeneous populations claim diverse rights and benefits associated with citizenship, as well as universalizing criteria of neoliberal norms or human rights.

Market Bloc and Political Liberalism

In the West, the European Union has been one of the most ambitious attempts to form a market zone by assembling various polities and cultures. With the rapid expansion of the bloc, the articulation of market interests with political rights has crystallized long-standing ambivalence over the erosion of cultural traditions and liberal norms associated with postwar European citizenship. In the region, global market forces and neoliberal criteria have come to articulate entrenched political norms and entitlements. For instance, opening markets to migrant labor – guest workers and illegal aliens – has ignited fierce debates about the integration of diverse foreign communities. On the one hand, there is talk about the need to balance diverse immigrant populations of non-European origins with an imaginary of European civilization. On the other, pro-human rights movements talk about ‘disaggregating’ citizenship into different bundles of rights and benefits, so that European states can differently incorporate migrants and non-citizens. Such bundles of limited benefits and civil rights thus constitute a form of partial citizenship, or ‘postnational’ political membership for migrant workers (Soysal, 1994). This political resolution, it is argued, can accommodate cultural diversity without undermining European liberal democracy and the universals of individual civil rights. But ambivalence remains, as a strong groundswell against the possible inclusion of Muslim Turkey in the bloc has fueled resistance to EU expansion.

Another dimension of the articulation between citizenship and deregulated markets is widely viewed as a threat to what Jürgen Habermas has called the ‘democratic achievements of European societies’ – inclusive systems of social security, social norms regarding class and gender, investment in public social services, rejection of the death penalty, and so on. To

counter the market-generated 'democratic deficit' in public life, Habermas calls for the creation of a Europe-wide public sphere and constitution that can give symbolic weight to the shared political culture underpinned by the cluster of European welfare features (Habermas, 2001). The spring 2005 French and Dutch votes against the ratification of the existing European constitution delivered powerful statements about the primacy of national interests over the unity to be wrought through neoliberal policies. The rejection of the constitution by major members reflects popular sentiments against the widespread adoption of market-based criteria, as well as a positive affirmation of national regimes that preserve elements of social citizenship and protection for their people. There is now profound doubt about the feasibility of a Europe-wide solidarity built primarily on principles of market efficiency and competitiveness.

Zones of Entitlement

In contrast to the Euro zone, emergent sites of growth in Asia currently display less ambivalence over the adoption of neoliberal values in policies shaping citizenship. These sites recognize that articulation with transnational networks and global professionals is crucial for their emergence as centers of global capitalism. Transnational itineraries and practices enhance the capacity of professionals and investors to negotiate national spaces, while the desire for talented actors has induced changes in immigration laws. Complex affiliations by elite mobile actors allow for temporary, multiple, and partial ascription, thus creating conditions for expatriate populations to claim citizenship-like entitlements.

The concept of 'flexible citizenship' describes maneuvers of mobile subjects who respond fluidly and opportunistically to dynamic borderless market conditions. Global markets induce such activities, so that 'flexibility, migration, and relocations, instead of being coerced or resisted, have become practices to strive for rather than stability' (Ong, 1999: 19). Furthermore, nation-states seeking wealth-bearing and talented foreigners adjust immigration laws to favor elite migrant subjects. Thus a new synergy between global capitalism and commercialized citizenship creates milieus where market-based norms articulate the norms of citizenship.

This premium on flexible, self-enterprising subjects originated in advanced democracies that had steadily adopted market-driven rationality in politics. Such neoliberal ideas stem from Frederic von Hayek's theory of the *homo economicus* as an instrumentalist figure forged in the effervescent conditions of market competition. The ideas of individual economic agency as the most efficient form for distributing public resources were embraced under the 'neo-conservative' policies of Thatcherism and Reaganomics.

This shift toward a neoliberal technology of governing holds that the security of citizens, their well-being and quality of life, are increasingly dependent on their own capacities as free individuals to confront globalized insecurities by making calculations and investments in their lives.

For instance, in Tony Blair's New Britannica, citizens are generally governed 'through freedom', or an inducement for formally free subjects to make calculative choices on their own behalf. Government is no longer interested in taking care of every citizen, but wants him/her to act as a free subject who self-actualizes and relies on autonomous action to confront globalized insecurities. There is thus a fundamental shift in the ethics of subject formation, or the ethics of citizenship, as governing becomes concerned less with the social management of the population (biopolitics) than with individual self-governing (ethicopolitics) (Rose, 1999). Such ethics are framed as an animation of various capacities of individual freedom, expressed both in the citizen's freedom from state protection and guidance, as well as freedom to make choices as a self-maximizing individual. In the USA, administrative practices that govern through the aspirations of subjects especially target the urban poor, immigrants, and refugees who are viewed as less capable of self-improvement. But as neoliberal values of flexibility, mobility, and entrepreneurialism become ideal qualities of citizenship, they also undermine the democratic achievements of American liberalism based on ideals of equal rights (Ong, 2003). Tensions between neoliberal values of citizens as economic agents, and

liberal ideals of citizens as defenders of political freedom continue to roil American political life.

Neoliberal ideas and practices migrate and are taken up in new zones of hyper-growth. In democratic, socialist, and authoritarian Asian settings, citizens are urged to be self-enterprising, not only to cope with uncertainties and risks, but also to raise the overall 'human quality' of their societies. Thus, in East and South Asian environments, neoliberal ethics of self-responsible citizenship are linked to social obligations to build the nation. In India and Malaysia, discourses about 'knowledge workers' and 'knowledge society' urge citizens to self-improve in order to develop high-tech industries. In Singapore, the accumulation of intellectual capital as an obligation of citizenship is most extreme. Ordinary citizens are expected to develop new mindsets and build digital capabilities, while professionals are urged to achieve norms of 'techno-preneurial citizenship' or lose out to more skilled and entrepreneurial foreigners and be reduced to a second-class citizenry.

In short, neoliberal values of self-management and self-enterprise have different implications for citizenship, depending on interactions with particular political environments. While the tendency in Britain and the USA is to focus on the self-governing and technologically savvy citizen as a participant in civil society, in Asian growth zones, the discourse of the self-improving and entrepreneurial citizen is linked to 'civic society', or the building of national solidarity. The common feature is that across these diverse milieus, the stakes of citizenship are raised for the majority. Especially in hyper-capitalist zones, those who cannot scale the skills ladder or measure up to the norms of self-governing are increasingly marginalized as deviant or subjects who threaten the security of the globalized milieu. Thus, the articulation of neoliberal criteria and situated citizenship regimes undercuts the protection of citizenship entitlements and blurs political distinctions between citizens and talented foreigners.

Arenas of Political Claims

But the mix of market-opportunism and citizenship has also engendered conditions for greater political activism. In non-democratic countries embracing market-driven policies, new arenas are opening up for ordinary people to claim justice, accountability, and democratic freedoms. The confluence of market forces and digital technologies have pried open cracks in the interstices of highly controlled societies, thus creating conditions for exciting outbursts of popular demands for democracy by ordinary people.

In the Streets

In Southeast Asia, the combined forces of the Asian financial crisis and political instability in the 1990s created an opportunity for the flowering of 'pro-reformasi' movements and nongovernmental organizations in shaping a space of civil society.

In Indonesia, a diversity of humanitarian, non-violent, and women's groups came together to protest state brutality and demand an end to corruption, nepotism, and autocratic rule. In particular, the army-instigated rapes of hundreds of ethnic Chinese women in Indonesia, and the prison beatings of the deputy prime minister in Malaysia, focused public attention on state violence against the human body. In street protests, the cries for reforms are couched less in the language of human rights than articulated in the ethics of culture and religion. Human rights discourses have not been directly useful in negotiations with the state because the human rights regime is viewed as originating in the West, and biased towards Asian countries. Women's groups and religious NGOs frame problems of state violence as violations of humanity, as understood in local religious terms of compassion, reciprocity, and forgiveness. In Malaysia, the NGO Sisters-in-Islam has gained international fame for their capacity to articulate women's rights in terms of Muslim precepts. Various NGOs and social movements in Southeast Asia not only enact in the streets and media the rights of free citizens to protest state action, but they also challenge entrenched habits of state authoritarianism through the discourse of situated ethics.

In Latin America and India, social movements in the streets have developed at the

confluence of urban development and migrant communities. Street demonstrations by the disenfranchised – poor migrants, shantytown dwellers, refugees – articulate an array of civil, political, and social rights. The streets form an arena for the political mobilization of the poor to claim public resources such as urban housing, water, and electricity as a kind of substantive citizenship (Holston, 1993). There is the perception that citizenship encoded in law is no guarantee of protection for the marginalized. In many cases, market intrusions and displacement have created arenas for the activation of citizenship in demanding state delivery of resources and justice. Democratic values are becoming performed in public spaces to challenge authoritarian rule, corruption, and the lack of access to rights and benefits for excluded populations.

In Cyber Space

Markets and electronic technology have also opened up other venues of political performance and claims. For a socialist market-economy society like China, the internet is emerging as a space of citizenship formation, but also as a space of government surveillance. Online commentaries, criticisms, and mockery of state policies have flourished in the relatively democratic and elusive cyberspace. A cyberpublic made up of millions of online Chinese uses the internet for accessing foreign news, spreading stories of injustice, and promoting alternative cultural forms. A college student called 'the Stainless Steel Mouse' has written articles spoofing the pomposity of the Chinese Communist Party. Other cyber rebels include 'Reporters without Borders' who seek to expose hidden abuses of peasants by local authorities and the new rich, protest against injustices and corruption, and demand accountability from the government. In response, state anti-cyber interventions have closed down certain dissident websites, blocked access to some foreign news websites, and tracked down and punished dissidents where possible. But the surveillance of the cyberpublic space is very chancy, and 'netizens' has become a term to index this new style of democracy in action.

The cyber space is a new site for mapping out a war of positions, and for playing a cat-and-mouse game over the freedom of information essential to democratic citizenship. The Chinese nexus between market reforms, web technology, and dissidents has enabled criticisms more focused on the lack of freedom of political expression under authoritarian rule than on attacking neoliberal values. In contrast to the assemblage of factors in Europe that induce ordinary citizens to resist unregulated market forces, in China, the confluence of markets, technology and activism is a space that enables people to perform the kind of democratic citizenship that is denied in society at large.

The cyber space, however, can also be the site for the articulation of overweening ethnic power that exceeds the nation-state. In diaspora, transnational groups such as overseas Chinese or ethnic Indians have increasingly turned to the internet to construct a web-based 'global citizenship'. One such internet-based group is 'Global Huaren' (Global Chinese), which acts as a cyber-watchdog, condemning government actions anywhere in the world that are construed to be against co-ethnics. There are, however, dangers when such ethnic networks seek to leverage their cyberpower vis-à-vis a specific state. The outcome is a kind of borderless citizenship based on claims of global ethnicity that is not answerable to any overarching authority.

Sheer Survival

Another arena of political mobilization is the space of endangerment and neglect. Here the question is whether political resolutions to the plight of imperiled or abject bodies are framed in terms of the binary opposition between citizenship and statelessness. Giorgio Agamben draws a stark distinction between citizens who enjoy juridical-legal rights and excluded groups who dwell in 'a zone of indistinction'. Only the erasure of the division between People (political body) and people (excluded bodies), he maintains, can restore humanity to the globally excluded who have been denied citizenship (Agamben 1998: 177, 180). Such views are reflected in claims that the human rights regime is capable of transforming millions of people

enduring a bare existence in Africa, Latin America, and Asia into citizens, thus actualizing their humanity. But the rhetoric of ethical globalization operates at too vast a scale to deal with specific milieus of exclusion and endangerment. Furthermore, the focus on citizenship and human rights gives short shrift to other modes of ethical reflection and argumentation. It is by no means clear that the right to survival will everywhere be translated into citizenship or merely legitimized on the grounds of common humanity, or relevance to labor markets. Let me briefly cite three situations of interventions on behalf of the injured or threatened body, and their different resolutions in relation to citizenship.

In recent decades, health-based claims have become an important part of citizenship rights in the West. In the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident in the Ukraine, sufferers claimed biomedical resources and social equity, thus giving rise to a notion of 'biological citizenship' (Petryna, 2002). In France, migrants have recently made health the ground for claiming asylum. Didier Fassin argues that the suffering body of the HIV-infected migrant reverses public perception of his biopolitical otherness rooted in race and alien status. Increasingly, some form of legal recognition is awarded in the name of humanity, i.e. the right to a healthy body, regardless of the citizenship of the patient (Fassin, 2001).

The explosive growth of NGOs is an index of the humanitarian industry that seeks to represent the varied interests of the politically dispossessed. Increasingly, such voluntary groups are shaped by specific interests, affiliations, and ethics, forming themselves into socio-political groups in order to make particular claims on states and corporations. Thus, the language of universal human rights is often superseded by more specific categories finely tuned to the criteria of state or philanthropic organizations. In the non-state administration of excluded humanity, groups and individuals are sorted into various categories, in relation to particular needs, prioritized interests, and potential affiliations with powers-that-be. These are 'counter-politics of sheer life' – a situated form of political mobilization that involves ethical claims to resources articulated in terms of needs as living beings (Collier and Lakoff, 2005: 29).

The politics of sheer life is emerging in Southeast Asia, where a vast female migrant population – working as maids, factory workers, or prostitutes – is regularly exposed to slave-like conditions. Feminist NGOs invoke not the human rights of female migrants but something more minimal and attainable, i.e. biological survival, or 'biowelfare'. The claims of a healthy and unharmed migrant body are articulated not in terms of a common humanity, but of the dependency of the host society on foreign workers to sustain a high standard of living. NGOs invoke the ethics of reciprocity or at least recognition of economic symbiosis between migrant workers and the affluent employers who feel entitled to their cheap foreign labor. Where citizenship does not provide protection for the migrant worker, the joining of a healthy body and dependency on foreign workers produces a kind of bio-legitimacy that is perhaps a first step toward the recognition of their moral status, but short of human rights.

A simple opposition between territorialized citizenship and deterritorialized human rights is not able to capture the varied assemblages that are the sites of contemporary political claims by a range of residential, expatriate, and migrant actors. The confluence of territorialized and deterritorialized forces forms milieus in which problems of the human are crystallized and problems posed and resolved. Diverse actors invoke not territorialized notions of citizenship, but new claims – postnational, flexible, technological, cyber-based, and biological – as grounds for resources, entitlements, and protection. These various sites and claims attest to the contingent nature of what is at stake in being human today. Such political mobilizations engage but also go beyond human rights in resolution to situated problems of contemporary life. In addition to the nation-state, entities such as corporations and NGOs have become practitioners of humanity, defining and representing varied categories of human beings according to degrees of economic, biopolitical, and moral worthiness. Diverse regimes of living are in play. In short, global assemblages crystallize specific problems and resolutions to questions of contemporary living, thus further disarticulating and deterritorializing aspects of citizenship.

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The Political

Jeremy Valentine

Abstract This article looks at the problems of the co-determination of the political within western metaphysics and political reflection, and considers solutions that are figured in terms of failure and incompleteness. The focus is on the relation of the political to political modernity, its defenders and attackers, and those who seek to overcome the opposition.

Keywords failure, incompleteness, political modernity, post-foundationalism

It is worth remarking that in the English language the notion of the political is an awkward grammatical formulation. The transformation of an adjective into a noun suggests that the notion is detached from its proper enunciation, as if to prompt the question 'the political what?' in order to complete it. The awkwardness has arisen from the translation of a distinction commonly found in Germanic and Romance languages for which precise equivalents are not available in English. Thus the distinctions between *die Politik* and *das*

Politische in German, between *la politique* and *le politique* in French, and between *la politica* and *il politico* in Italian are rendered in English as the distinction between politics and the political without any obvious referent for the latter term. The presence of the notion of the political in English can be explained, at least in part, as a consequence of the translation of, for example, Carl Schmitt's *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1996[1932]), or of Paul Ricoeur's 'Le paradoxe politique' (1965[1957]). In fact Ernst Vollrath suggests that the word 'polity' is the nearest English equivalent of the political insofar as it means the self-understanding of a concrete existing political system and its institutions and practices (Vollrath, 1987: 25). Even in this case problems of translation continue as Vollrath traces the origin of the word to a mistranslation from Latin in Sir John Fortescue's *The Governance of England* written in about 1471. These problems of translation are not incidental to the notion of the political and are indicative of a deeper characteristic which can be summarized as follows: the concept of the political is the name of a problem which traces the conceptual and empirical incompleteness of politics.

As an object of knowledge the political is determined by two constraints. First, the political has always been thought of and understood as a concept within the Western tradition of metaphysics. Thus, amongst other things, the political emerges from within the distinction between the conceptual and the empirical, which the tradition both establishes and attempts to overcome. We owe to Derrida the insight that Western metaphysics is hampered by the decision to conceptualize concepts in exactly the same way that empirical phenomena are conceptualized as fully present to sensation and consciousness. Consequently concepts will always fall short in two ways: first, with respect to their pure or Ideal existence as concepts, and second with respect to the concept of empirical phenomena as that through which the existence of concepts is established. Importantly this applies even in cases where concepts are supposed to somehow transcend empirical phenomena. In that respect Derrida's thought is significant because it points in directions away from the paradoxes that are tied up in the failures of the metaphysics of presence, and thus of the constraints through which the political is determined, chief amongst which is the exclusion of failure from the concept of the political. Derrida has attempted to give some sort of positive expression to failure as a necessary and irreducible incompleteness, or what he calls 'to come' (e.g. 1994).

The effects of such failures are visible within the second constraint which determines the political, namely, the traditions and genres of political reflection in which the political is distinguished from politics in the sense that the former has the status of a ground, foundation or cause of the latter which is at the same time present in it. In short, the specificity of the political as an object is that of something which establishes the space of a relation between politics and that which conditions it.

At a formal and empty level the distinction between politics and the political serves to designate a difference between on the one hand normal, ordinary and routine everyday activities which are occupied by the production and distribution of power, in both senses of 'power over' and 'power to', and including the contested and disputed nature of these activities, and, on the other, that which is supposed to ground, explain, or distinguish and locate these activities as a specific sphere of thought or action. Because the notion of politics is so descriptive and nominal there is little substantial dispute over its conceptual referents. The same cannot be said, however, with respect to the political as the purpose of the concept is to explain politics by designating that which is political *sui generis*, and thus distinct from the economic, the social, the psychological, the cultural, etc., and which can be specified essentially, substantively, topographically, temporally, stylistically, etc., in order to provide politics with a relation to a ground or foundation. But at the same time the political also raises the question of its relation to that which it is not, and thus of whether such a relation can be understood politically, as for example in terms of conflict, or as domination or subordination. Hence perhaps at a more fundamental level one would have to begin by posing the question as to why the issue of the political is raised at all. According to Vollrath the specificity of the political can be determined as an answer to the following question: 'what kind of rationality is adequate to

political phenomena and the sphere of the political in general and where does it reside so that it can be grasped from there?' (1987: 18).

In principle there are many ways in which politics is conceived and thus there are many ways of conceiving the political. For example, politics can be understood as the conflicts which follow from the individual pursuit of rational self-interest within a competitive context of finite resources. In that case the political could be understood as the conditions through which politics is maintained, such as the rules and conventions which ensure order and the manner of their application. In this case the political would be understood as the ground of the polity. What matters is the difference between the political and politics and the attempt to minimize it through demonstrating the coincidence of the two terms in phenomena that can be conceived as equally present to sensation and consciousness, and thus also the deconstruction of that attempt.

In the hypothetical example referred to, deconstruction might fall on the failure to differentiate the application of order from the plurality of interests, and might be evidenced by the failure of increased abstraction from a determinate terrain of empirical politics in order to establish a position from which it can, in principle, be ordered. In general that would be the case in Liberal genres of political reflection where, since Hobbes at least, the creation of agreement between competing interests over the existence of the polity requires that the polity already exists for agreement to take place. Hence the coincidence of the political and politics fails in a circle of pre-suppositions which are never finally present (Ricoeur, 1988).

What follows will begin with a discussion of the failures of some relatively contemporary attempts to establish the difference between the political and politics and its elimination in the coincidence of the two terms. From this, the discussion will proceed to some more recent attempts to turn the problem round by conceptualizing the political as the positive expression of its failure, and which can be categorized as deconstructive or post-foundational politics. Here the notion of the political is located in the difference between politics and a ground.

Finally we will conclude with a discussion of some of the ways that some contemporary empirical phenomena are understood in order to test post-foundational politics.

One approach to the emergence of the question of the political is provided by Heller (1990). On this account the political arises within the emergence of modernity through which the grounds of the polity are brought into question as an effect of the radicalization of thought and politics. Indeed, radicalization and ungrounding are synonymous terms for Heller, encapsulated by the claim that: 'The modern concept of the political – or, to avoid tautology, the concept of the political as such – is to be derived from the quintessence of the modern political dynamic' (Heller, 1990: 120). Taking Heller's problematic we can begin by considering how the failure of the political is a problem interior to modernity, not least with respect to the idea of modernity as a clean break with anything designated as non-modern from within it. That is to say, modernity is that which would be fully present to itself, self-sufficient and thus, in a manner of speaking, self-grounding. Thus what may be most significant about the concept of the political is that a requirement to establish a ground goes against the critical and radical thrust of the thought and politics through which modernity happens. In other words, the political is the attempt to establish a ground where the possibility of doing so has been subverted through ungrounded radicalization, insofar as these two terms can be distinguished.

Hobbes's notion of a 'state of nature', which arguably inaugurates political modernity in its radical conception of the absence of society, is perhaps the most striking metaphor for such a situation, and the solution in the social contract, itself centred on a voluntary transformation of ego-centred rationality, provides the clearest example of the circle of presuppositions mentioned above. For Hobbes, the political is established in a moment of deliberation which eliminates a state of nature and creates civil society, but which is not present in either term. In that respect the Hobbesian sovereign can be understood as the persistence of the question of the political by virtue of the fact that it is supposed to both order and transcend civil society. In which case, and in order to make things simpler, perhaps modernity is best understood as the emergence of the political as a question of a ground, rather than the establishment of one,

in Heller's sense of 'as such'. Moreover, the question of a ground would be a place-holder for its failure. By the same token, the failure of the question of the ground would be the failure of political modernity.

At this point it is perhaps best to pause and consider the methodological issues raised by an approach that places failure above success. These issues relate to the specificity and modality of posing the political as a question. Here one can consider the phenomenological approach that emphasizes those aspects that stress the historicity or 'coming-to-presence' of the political as an event, rather than the attempt to describe some 'originary' political experience. For example, Schürmann affirms the autonomy of the political with the proposition that 'the origin of the political does not lie outside the political, and political action is left without recourse for justification' (1981: 245). The political is an epochal matter, in both the phenomenological sense of *epoché* and the historical sense of epoch.

Yet at the same time the specificity of the political is not accessible from within the historical or conceptual formation of the political itself. That is because the self-grounding of the political is understood in the sense of *principium* (Schürmann, 1981: 246), which refers to the coincidence of the order of authority derived from a *prince* and the order of intelligibility derived from a principle, both of which are 'observed without question in a given epoch' (p. 247). For Schürmann, the political is only accessible as thinking between epochality, the 'fold' or crisis which reveals the difference between the political and its coming-to-presence and makes legible the coherence and cohesion through which all are implicated in its dispositions and trajectories. In which case, the specificity of the political is not an epochal matter but is a measure of its internal failure, which in this case would refer to the non-coincidence of *principium*, or what Schürmann refers to as the 'obverse' of the political.

Two sets of examples from the genres of political reflection can serve to illustrate the failure of the ground of political modernity, its 'obverse', not least because each is politically opposed to the other. First I examine the attempt to ground the political in a type of deliberation that secures the polity, as in the work of Habermas (e.g. 1995) and Rawls (e.g. 1995). Habermas grounds the political in its legitimacy, which is derived from legal norms established through non-instrumental communication in the public sphere in order to reach rational consensus on the authoritative distribution of resources. For Habermas the life-world is dominated by instrumental reason driven by the practices of market exchange. Somehow the situation can be remedied by the realization of the norms of sincere communication, although, as there is little in the argument by way of an account of how this has been prevented, one would be inclined to retain a degree of scepticism as to their existence. In essence, for Habermas the well-ordered polity is little more than the idea of a harmonious balance between all of its components, each in its proper place and identical with itself.

Similarly, Rawls emphasizes law as the source of justice for the legitimate distribution of resources although his account of public reason is a bit more clunky, entailing that deliberation takes place as if from behind a 'veil of ignorance' in order to guarantee impartiality. Rawls has taken a canny approach to the problem of the historicity of the political as a response to the criticism that his notion of deliberative justice is just an attempt to universalize the particular self-image of modern Western liberal democracies (e.g. Sandel, 1982). For Rawls the criticism is actually flattery as it confirms the practical relevance of the argument. Hence the famous claim that his account of justice is 'political, not metaphysical' (Rawls, 1985). That is to say the criticism supposes that his account of justice is actually present as the ground of existence of the modern liberal democratic polity, and Rawls is happy to agree. If modern liberal democracies are merely communities, then so be it.

Both Habermas and Rawls propose a version of Enlightenment without critique. In both cases the political does not take place. In other words, both Habermas and Rawls desire political ends without the use of political means by rendering a series of proposals as descriptions in which the referent, a well-ordered polity, is absent. The Enlightenment value of *critique* and the politics that goes with it are missing from their account of the political. In this respect Habermas and Rawls re-enact the 'circularity of the political' in which what is proposed as an

alteration of reality is pre-supposed as already existing, a structural feature of the modern liberal 'social contract' account of political legitimacy (Ricouer, 1988). In doing so the historicity of the polity is denied, excluded from reflection.

Yet in both cases the presence of the polity which would function as a ground of politics is undermined as a consequence of something non-political, but which nevertheless registers as a series of political effects. The political is always missing, corrupted, dominated by or subordinate to something else which is non-political but which appears to enjoy political effects in the form of the exercise of power by non-political means, as a kind of dishonesty and subterfuge. Thus from the point of view of rational deliberation the failure of the political is always the fault of something else: the market, the mass media, or whatever. The question of the existence of modern liberal democracy is never posed because it is assumed to be fully present already and simply requires rational agreement that this is the case. In that respect modern liberal democracy fails as a historical and phenomenological epoch.

The second set of examples concerns thinkers who, despite their differences, share what might be called a radical anti-modernism. Each proposes a concept of the political in response to what they take to be the denial of it within modernity. They thus subscribe to the epochality of modernity in order to affirm some authentic 'originary' moment of the political against it from a position external to it. In general, that is taken to be pre-modern or classical, although each provides examples from within modernity which are exceptional in that they could be put under these categories.

Thus for Schmitt the political is an exceptional moment of decision which simultaneously institutes both a violent friend–enemy distinction and the authority to decide what that is as the means by which the space of a polity is determined (1996). For Schmitt the political is defined against modern liberalism as the enemy of the political prior to the decision to institute any friend–enemy distinction – in which case Schmitt fails to account for the political within liberalism through the assumption that modernity exists. For Strauss the political is a style of discussion about human action codified as Socratic dialogue and targeted at the confidence of actual political leaders (1971), and which may even have had some posthumous real world success (Curtis, 2004). Here the political is denied through the success of relativism, which Strauss attributes to the influence of Weberian sociology. Again, Weber's attempt to capture the political dimension of modernity and the institutional response to it is reified as an empirical fact. Lastly, for Arendt the political is the courage to stand and speak honestly in public about matters of collective action exemplified by situations of immediate co-presence represented in Classical literature (1970). Although some exemplary representative moments can be discovered within modernity, mainly those which have occurred in revolutionary situations, on the whole modernity denies the political through the rise of the social and the elevation of questions of life itself. Again, the political dimensions of these phenomena are foreclosed by Arendt's commitment, shared by the others, to put the political on a ground internal to itself.

Hence within these radical anti-modernist thinkers the notion of the political is intimately bound up with the nostalgic hope for its return in the context of a process of social differentiation which denies it, which begs the question as to whether it has ever been, and which remains on principle blind to the political dimension of that which it opposes. As with Habermas and Rawls the question of the failure of political modernity is never posed. Which is not to say that political modernity and its failure does not take place. As Vollrath points out,

. . . in our time the *polis* does not exist anymore, and it would have disastrous consequences to put new life into the ancient *polis*. Under the conditions of modernity it becomes the more necessary to differentiate between 'the political' and 'politics'. (1987: 24)

The political is no longer a matter of the tribe gathering under an old tree to draw lots for combat, sacrifice and the exchange of women. It's more a matter of the elimination of such scenes and the ways in which that is resisted. Yet if the pre-modern nostalgia option is not satisfactory, is it possible to extract some sense of the political from within modernity itself?

Here we can return to the assumption of epochality and the methodological constraint that an account of political modernity can only be obtained from a relation to its failure. It would be easy to satisfy such a requirement by pointing to something like the decline of modernity as a vantage point from which to do so insofar as it remains within modernity. The straightforward affirmation of postmodern politics would do that.

However a difficulty remains insofar as such an approach preserves the assumption of presence which characterized political modernity within postmodernism. Work that can be characterized as post-foundational attempts to avoid such a possibility (see Marchart, forthcoming). First, working from within the deconstruction of Heidegger's notion of 'ontological difference', Nancy argues that contemporary political thought and practice takes place from within the dereliction and disintegration of the polity on an epochal and global scale which reveals the absence of a substantial ground (Nancy, 1991). That is to say, from within the existence of the 'obverse' in Schürmann's sense. Moreover, any attempt to reconstruct a foundation from a *principium* is futile. Hence the political becomes a matter of relations organized by the shared commonality of nothing. Although Nancy wishes to wire an ethic of openness and alterity into such relations, as Caygill points out there is no reason to exclude violence from them (Caygill, 1997). One might also point out that perhaps nothing is shared unevenly in that some have more of it than others who want to keep it that way, a situation which is brought into focus by research on 'risk society'.

Second, from within post-Marxism and its displacement of the necessity of the economic as a ground, Laclau and Mouffe deny the foundational dimension of any polity (1985). The polity is a contingent entity which is established artificially through a hegemonic process and is thus constitutively prone to disruption, although it remains a moot point as to whether this is a consequence of the social antagonisms which hegemony organizes, or of the effects of capitalist dislocation which remain absolutely exterior to the space of the social and thus non-political. Their argument is that the hegemonically structured polity exists insofar as it can represent the particular contingent moment of dislocation as necessary and universal. That this happens is itself a contingent matter, dependent on the invention of a negative other which provides the limits of a hegemonic space.

Third, the radical-democratic approach – here we can return to the trajectory of Wolin's thought which has recently proposed an 'episodic' notion of the political as 'moments of commonality when, through public deliberations, collective power is used to promote or protect the well-being of the collective' (Wolin, 1996: 31). These are essentially creative, heterogeneous and transgressive moments, temporary and occasional, which are equated with democracy and revolution; they are contrasted with business-as-usual politics in the polity in which, controversially, Wolin includes postmodern multiculturalism as the institutionalization of homogeneity through the disciplinary affirmation of cultural particularity. Hence the political is equated with unfixedness, and the latter is equated with democracy in the sense that the identity of the polity is in question, although Wolin concedes that the relation with democracy is contingent. Despite their differences, Wolin's approach is also similar to William Connolly's notion of 'agonistic pluralism' in the sense that pluralism is not simply a quantity of stable things which somehow have to manage to 'get along', but is a consequence of *pluralization* as the increased visibility of the contingent nature of everything (Connolly, 1995). As Connolly puts it, 'nothing is fundamental'.

Here one can call to mind a general abandonment of the principle that a well-ordered polity is predicated on stability and agreement. In other words, incompleteness has become a solution, failure has become an assumption. Evidence for this direction can be found, for example, in the turn within political science to notions of 'governance without government', which as an empirical development describing horizontal relations has left both democratic participation and philosophical reflection behind (e.g. Roseau and Czempiel, 1992), although arguably Hardt and Negri (2000) have managed to indicate some of the radical potential of this shift in the idea of the mobility of networks. Similarly one might say that today the political is re-scaled, encompassing the vastness of the globe and beyond, and the smallness of things down

to the paradoxes of the *nano* level, where what is very small is actually very big. Perhaps most important is the displacement of the human monopoly of agency, not only with respect to technology, but also with respect to organic life at the sub-human or post-human level. Within such scenarios it is no longer sufficient to speculate on their justifications. Instead it is more a matter of discovering how such scenarios come to be grounded, and of inventing languages in which their effects can be thought. Above all the political may have to be thought in terms of the radicalization of the ways in which failure and incompleteness is organized, which is at the same time a radicalization of the way what is 'to come' is thought.

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Global Sovereignty

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Abstract Taking globalization to be in large part a consequence of American domination, we follow Derrida's characterization of this domination as being a mode of sovereignty of world-scale institutions and force. Such sovereignty, which is also a roguery, is the primary actual condition for a global knowledge. Bataille's characterization of rogue sovereignty, however, proposes that knowledge is eclipsed under such a condition by an experience that is irreducibly an unknowing. Knowledge is thus corroded by – or, at best, in a critical relation to – the manifestation of a global experience generated by the actual conditions of globalization.

Keywords America, Bataille, Derrida, experience, political reason, rogue state, sovereignty

It is relatively uncontroversial to propose that 'global knowledge' – as a project, as a fact – is consequent to the process of globalization that has taken place under this name since the 1980s or thereabouts. But this obvious remark immediately indexes a question as to what knowledge could in fact be if it is subject to this process. There are two aspects to this question. The first, which we do not address here, concerns the very great difficulties that 'the global' as a name or modality of ultimate extension poses for a rational tradition in which knowledge is (or has) a universal or absolute foundation. The second is what the current actuality of the term global, its historical constitution, means for anything that could be called global knowledge. This will be our primary concern.

It is self-evident that the specifics or content of knowledge are extended and transformed by globalization, as a maximum world-limit of any knowledge-base, -distribution, or -contestation. The question is whether *what knowledge is* also transforms in this process. It is proposed here that it does since 'global knowledge' relies on the historical conditions of globalization for its realization and reconfiguration of knowledge, and these conditions are in turn primarily (which is not to say exclusively) occasioned and promulgated by America's global dominance which, in a complex manner, is sovereignly constituted. The following paragraphs attempt to schematize in the most rudimentary fashion this determination of what globalization *qua* America's sovereign domination means for the possibility of global knowledge. The brevity of this contribution permits only the signalling of several hypotheses regarding 'global knowledge' as it is thus occasioned. These hypotheses are consequent to the central issue that arises in the course of the following pages: whether in fact there can be knowledge at all in the condition of the global, or if the experience of that condition leads to the eclipse of knowledge.

Accepting for the sake of speed the commonplace that political-economic globalization has been and continues to be secured and mobilized enormously by and for American interests, sometimes under the name of neo-liberalism, the question remains as to what America's dominance is in this relatively new inter- and trans-national configuration of economic, political and cultural interests – in short, how does the USA globally dominate? There is of course an enormous literature on this, some of whose proposals can be signalled by terms such as Empire, hegemony, security, and, of course, globalization itself. However, in order to address the specific characterization of American sovereignty as primary condition for globalization, we take up the less familiar account of US dominance as a *voyoucracy* proposed by Jacques Derrida.

Derrida takes up the term on the basis of the French translation for the phrase ‘rogue state’ as *État voyou* and from the French mid-19th-century bourgeois use of the term in order to denounce ‘an illegal and outlaw power that brings together . . . all those who represent a principle of disorder – a principle not of anarchic chaos but of structured disorder, so to speak, of plotting and conspiracy, of primordial offensiveness and offences against public order’ (Derrida, 2005: 66). The phrase ‘rogue state’ is also used to denounce states that also represented a ‘principle of disorder’ or of terrorism in the eyes of the USA and other ‘supposedly legitimate states’, as Derrida calls them, whose own legitimacy is founded in

respect [of] an international law that they have the power to control – for example, in the modern and complex formation of a heterogeneous but oftentimes closely knit and tightly bound group like the United States, the United Nations, and the Security Council, even NATO (to which one might add for good measure alliances and coalitions like the G8, the IMF, and so on). (Derrida, 2005: 68)

The denunciation of rogue states is thus ‘structurally homologous’ to the bourgeois denunciation of a vocracy in order to secure their own legitimacy (to legitimate, if it can be put this way). What is critical here is that the phrase ‘rogue states’ came to have prominence exactly as the term and strategic policy of ‘globalization’ was being affirmed and instigated by the Clinton administration in its early years through national and international institutions. That is, rogue states are an indispensable designation for the securing of the claim to international legitimacy for globalization, by which is therefore meant a certain global order (for which terrorism is a central rhetorical and factual operation, as Derrida mentions, 2005: 66).

Of the many ramifications of this (de)legitimation strategy only two will be taken up here: first the characterization of a vocracy and second what purchase on legitimacy is retroactively granted by the term on the powers that mobilize it. First, then, it is to be noted that a vocracy is not an outright abandonment of order but is (presented as) the power or force (a *kratos*) of an illegitimate and quasi-criminal (*voyou*) counter-order. Vocracy signals a sovereignty exorbitant to the legitimate sovereignty of the State and law in the national or international domain. The denunciation of rogue states is thus a matter of one kind of sovereignty against another, of legitimate against so-designated illegitimate sovereignties. To this end Derrida remarks in passing that ‘if the vocracy represents a power, a challenge to the power of the State, a criminal and transgressive countersovereignty, we have here all the makings of a counterconcept of sovereignty such as we might find in Bataille’ (2005: 67–8). We will return in due course to this particular characterization of a vocracy since it will bring us directly to the problem of whether a global knowledge can be established.

Second, international and national legitimacy and illegitimacy as it is proclaimed and institutionalized by dominant powers relies on a discourse and politics of democracy and freedom or, in so-said contrary rogue political formation, their deprivation. This is evident in the charters and ambitions of international institutions such as the UN, NATO, the G8, the IMF, the EU and also, notably, for the USA too. Democracy is in this way a legitimation of international power, the democracy-globalization coupling serving to secure international political and economic dominance by already powerful states (which is why China’s economic might and limited democratic polity presents a more vexed problem for globalization under this aegis than, say, India or Brazil).

Drawing on the example of the UN, Derrida notes that the ordering authority over the international domain which promotes and acts as a supposed guarantor for democracy must in fact be the strongest power in that putatively democratic institution and polity. As such it ‘organises and implements for use by the United Nations – precisely so that it itself may then use the United Nations – all the concepts, ideas (constitutive or regulative), and requisite political theorems, beginning with *democracy* and *sovereignty*’ (Derrida, 2005: 100, emphasis in original). An immediate contradiction or aporia comes then to be demonstrated in the claim to legitimacy, to setting the terms of legitimacy in and of democracy, by the currently dominant state power(s): that ‘if the constitution of this force is, in principle, supposed to represent and

protect this world democracy, it in fact betrays and threatens it from the outset in an auto-immune fashion' (Derrida, 2005: 100). Put starkly, the contradiction is this: 'universal democracy, beyond the nation-state and beyond citizenship, in fact calls for a supersovereignty that cannot but betray it' (Derrida, 2005: 101).

The contradiction between democracy and sovereignty is rendered here at a supernational level but this is only a particular version of what takes place at all dimensions of democratic organization: that sovereignty is the condition of democracy even as it prohibits a fully operational democracy. And, as is well known from the protest of anti-globalization movements, this non-democratic, even anti-democratic, sovereignty that guarantees and legitimizes democracy is in democratic terms only ever an abuse of power; an abuse that is, as Derrida puts it, 'constitutive of sovereignty itself' and so constitutive of democracy. It follows that sovereignty is rogue in democracy – and democracy is therefore guaranteed and harnessed by a power that is itself 'rogue'. If there is to be global democracy, there must be global sovereignty and so a global voyoucracy, a rogue state that is beyond the terms of that democracy. The sovereign state that orders legitimacy, which is the *de facto* condition of order, is necessarily *voyou*, rogue, counter-ordering; an identity of opposing categories whose condensation can here be marked (beyond the terms Derrida sets up) by the terms *sovoyou* or *soverogue*, a power that establishes only a quasi-order.

Today, Derrida continues, such states are only the USA and whatever (always subsidiary) allies it picks up in the course of undertaking such actions in implementing its sovereignty. But the USA is exceptional in this quasi-order in that it is the primary rogue state – the only truly rogue state (as Chomsky also says for different reasons) – because of its outstanding international sovereign powers. US international domination – in the name of a common, global democracy – is that of a global sovereignty (though this is not to say world sovereignty); it is, as is often declared, a global abuse of power – necessarily so. This global sovereignty of the USA is sometimes exercised through the UN but must also take place in terms of other outstanding manifestations of power if it is to be 'supersovereign', including that of its military (*qua* force), its economics (*qua* consumption), its cultural production (*qua* entertainment) and its politics (*qua* democracy). Such *sovoyou* or *soverogue* power(s) are not occasioned across or outside of democratic organization or polities at whatever level: it happens through and in democracy, insistently so.

Soveroguary is the condition for the production of global knowledge and it is that by which knowledge in its globality has to be comprehended. But how is sovereignty to be understood in its identity with countersovereignty? We have seen that, for Derrida, Bataille's 'counterconcept' of sovereignty speaks to the counter-order of voyoucracy. We shall now take up this account in order to more exactly determine the sovereignty of American global dominance. Doing so will return us directly to the question of knowledge in the actual conditions of globalization. Bataille's interest in sovereignty is in a 'general aspect that is opposed to the servile and the subordinate' (1993: 197); it is general because it can belong to anyone. Such generality means that the determination of sovereignty cannot be restricted to its traditional identification with the power of either the State or law as it has been from Plato to Hobbes, Schmitt and, in a more complicated manner, Agamben. It can be the sovereignty of the voyou, for example. Bataille draws up an initial distinction between the general aspect of sovereignty and what the term means as regards a legally constituted and recognized state or individual (that is therefore subordinate to law). However, as Derrida proposes, in its *sovoyou* or *soveroguary*, it is today the USA alone that sidesteps this distinction: yes, the USA is of course a sovereign state in the legally constituted sense and so is subject to international law; yet it is in a position to countermand the obeisance to any such law or consensus of a general will, since it *alone* has the power to dominate and authorize non-legal actions in outright and blatant defiance of international convention and expectations. In this it exemplifies at a supernational level the general aspect of sovereignty beyond law of which Bataille speaks.

The problem of the constitution of global knowledge can now be taken up since, for Bataille,

sovereignty opposes and falls outside of servility, work and use, and knowledge is constituted in a temporal binding through just these actions. Sovereignty is external to knowledge for Bataille because, taking the stabilized modality of knowledge production known as science as example, ‘to do science is to disregard the present time with a view to subsequent results’ (1993: 201–2). Relatively uncontroversial as this characterization may be, several significant consequences follow from it: first, that the knowledge constituted in and by science, that is the present activity of science, is directed by a futural determination, a future organized in terms of use; second, knowledge unfolds in time; third, any knowledge that results from such an activity is itself subject to the same condition, that is, the knowledge that results from science is itself organized in terms of future results – which is to say, fourth, that through the prospect of its use knowledge is constituted by the *work* of its future determinations. Hence Bataille’s part conclusion: ‘to know is always to strive, to work; it is always a servile operation, indefinitely resumed, indefinitely repeated’ (1993: 202). Knowledge as it is constituted by science (as an exemplar) is organized with a view to use – whether that use is practical (technics) or theoretical (science) is a secondary concern. Knowledge, then, is not sovereign – at least, insofar as it is understood in terms of science or, more generally, a futural mobilization. Put the other way, as Bataille affirms again and again, sovereignty cannot be known. Accepting this characterization of sovereignty, the co-determination of American domination and global knowledge is not then just a historical and political concern but also a theoretical and conceptual one. More specifically, as much as the fate and problems of American *domination* (however it is characterized) is tied to the fate and problems of any attempt to construct a theoretical or practical case for a *global* knowledge, so the question of American *sovereign* domination of international and global politics in however complicated a sense is also a question as to the conditions and possibility of global *knowledge*.

With Bataille, sovereignty is an experience that cannot be comprehended in science, not even political science, and certainly not with regard to law in its primarily futural determination of the present. It cannot be regulated or experienced with view to any known future. Rather, sovereignty ‘would have to occur in a moment’ which ‘remains outside, short of or beyond, all knowledge’ (Bataille, 1993: 201). Such a moment cannot be known but is experienced; as Bataille puts it, ‘consciousness of the moment is not truly such, is not sovereign, except in unknowing. Only by cancelling, or at least neutralizing, every operation of knowledge within ourselves are we in the moment, without fleeing it’ (1993: 203). It is the *moment* that is sovereign in how it seizes the mind and abjures from its own futural determination, refuting any conversion into work or use.

The interruption or blocking of this futural aspect of experience is not a voluntaristic action or a programmable intervention but is for Bataille ‘possible in the grip of strong emotions that shut off, interrupt or override the flow of thought. This is the case if we weep, if we sob, if we laugh till we gasp’ (1993: 203). It is not the epiphenomena of ‘strong emotions’ such as ‘the burst of laughter or tears’ that stops thought; rather, the blocking of thought and knowledge are occasioned by the ‘object of the laughter, or the object of the tears’, that is, by the moments which occasion that laughter and those tears, ‘as if we were trying to arrest the moment and freeze it in the constantly renewed gasps of our laughter or our sobs’ (Bataille, 1993: 203). It is the absolute momentousness and momentariness of strong emotions, an experience that is always particular, that therefore apprehend what is involved in sovereignty, even as the latter defies knowledge or other attempts to determine it that can be futurally organized. This momentary experience without knowledge is risk.

Sovereignty is in this sense a moment-ous and moment-ary experience that is unknown. We return then to our primary concern: for, if the condition for globality in concrete sense is in fact American domination and its primary roguery, a kind of ex-ordinate sovereignty, then the global falls outside of knowledge. ‘Global knowledge’ is then an impossibility. With Bataille, globality under the aegis of American sovereign domination is instead occasioned in a temporal dimension counter to any knowable future, binding the mind to the present moment; it can only be experienced, is only in its present.

Evidence for this characterization of globality organized by sovereign domination is presented by two symmetrical media-constituted phenomena: first, the discourse of American(-style) politics and news, whose primary articulation tends towards a 'strong emotionality' attached to a supposed exposure to risk rather than deliberative reasoning and knowledge-based judgement. The primacy of conviction as a policy basis for George W. Bush's presidency as much as its partial though deliberate obliviousness to the demands of universal reason and knowledge are co-ordinated in terms of this sovereign affect. The second phenomenon is terrorist activity, which plays to the horizon of globality through the primacy of strong emotion. If it is banal to say that the terrorist act lies outside of political reason, that formulation also suggests that it is a sovereign unworking, a gripping of the individual and collective mind in the primacy of an experience that is in principle unknowable, an act without a future to which, as Bataille says of the general aspect of sovereignty, anyone can be subject. In the refutation of (prior or subsequent) knowledge by immediate experience and 'strong feelings' (shock, fear, concern), terrorism has no use but is a risk experience that shatters knowledge as universal political condition. As such, it is the object of a global-moment which contributes to the constitution of a global polity. Terrorism is in this sense in a symmetrical position to US public discourse in which it is right at home, each avowing the other (sometimes under the title of a 'politics of fear').

These sovereign unworkings of knowledge as condition of global polity suggest that it is today not knowledge that is significant to globality but rather a global experience which eclipses knowledge. The power and dynamic of action cinema and the dominant entertainment industries more generally are critical here, as is the prominence of the media celebrity as a key figure in global political concerns such as world poverty, climate control, and so on. In the condition of the sovereignty of the global-moment, authority over public globality lies with the celebrity pop star, sportsperson or film actor rather than the public intellectual or the NGO specialist since what the media celebrity foregrounds, situates and organizes is the primacy of the *experience* of these causes *qua* their emotionality. In this way these 'simple humanitarian' emotional appeals in fact promulgate the dominance of a sovereign unknowing, the evacuation of a futurity. Promoting globality under sovereign domination, they circuitously serve the American domination of globalizing processes they so often protest against.

If global knowledge seems to be heading towards its supercession by global experience, another fate for it is however suggested by its impossibility. For global knowledge is only impossible insofar as (i) globality is constituted by US sovereignty, and (ii) we follow Bataille's characterization of sovereignty as an unknowing. If the first condition is our historical situation, the very term global knowledge challenges the theoretical security of the second. That is, just as the consideration of the conditions of the global throws into question the meaning and possibility of knowledge, so the preservation of some sense of knowledge can in theory challenge the sovereign constitution of the global. For this, several questions would have to be addressed; questions which, since they cannot be taken up here, remain at best hypothetical and are instead presented only as a series of cautions:

- the global as it is constituted by American domination contends with traditional claims of knowledge in admitting of the momentary, experiential conditions of its making;
- knowledge that holds fast to a horizon of universalism and use will be unable to address, contest or effect the globality in which it nonetheless takes place, not least because it will only fail to apprehend the momentary and experiential, which is to say, the historical, production of the global;
- if there is to be global knowledge it must then abjure itself of universality (in order to be *global* knowledge) *and* sovereignty (in order to be *global knowledge*);
- the global of 'global knowledge' would then have to be determined in terms other than its historical constitution and regulation *qua* American domination and may in fact generate these counter-conditions through its fabrication.

Global knowledge subject to these cautions – which we suggest are the only terms available for it – is, in the terms presented by Bataille, a contradiction and an impossibility. That it is a

theoretical contradiction is however no impediment to its realization: global knowledge is no less contradictory and no less realizable than the sovereign. Not only because of the historical reason that any realization of global knowledge relies upon and is consequent to the quasi-ordering of globality by American domination, but also because of the theoretical reason that the opposition between the categories of the sovereign and the law-abiding is rendered obsolete by US sovereignty. The USA acts both legally and extra-legally, subject to international conventions and institutions (be they mobilized to ensure that the international order maintains enough authority and stability for the USA to be given the veneer of quasi-democratic sanction and legitimacy) *and* in flagrant defiance or domination of them. In this duality, which we have called the sovereignty of the USA, in the situation of the historical actuality of the supernational quasi-order called globalization, the opposition between the sovereign and the law-abiding is redundant. As then is the categorial and practical opposition between knowledge and sovereignty, that is, between knowledge and the global. Amongst many other determinations, what can then be realized *since* the global under the aegis of US sovereignty is: (i) a knowledge that opens a futurity for the moment-ary and moment-ous unworking of the global in its sovereign constitution, as global experience (in more politically recognizable terms, a future that extends beyond the American domination of the global); and (ii) that such a knowledge is an unworking of its future in use, which is to say, not subject to any known future other than that which could be determined through the global. Global knowledge would then be (to adopt a quasi-Derridean formula) an unknown future of knowledge, a future without universality. Somewhat sovereign, global knowledge would be a knowledge and a future that contends with yet contributes to an unknowledge of the global.

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Democracy to Come

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Keywords cosmopolitanism, 'democracy to come', friendship, hospitality, reject

In his discussion of the cosmopolitical and the debate about the 'end of history', Derrida (1997c: 41) points to the 'to-come' character of democracy as something that is intrinsic to the idea of democracy. The implication is that there can be no final state of democracy, no end to its history since openness to the event and to becoming are aspects of the openness to alterity, that is, an ethic of hospitality that underlies democracy. The history of democracy since Kant has become aligned with the history of an occiden-

talist cosmopolitanism. But should this be its final form?

Democracy today wants to give itself to anyone. This is testified to by its cosmopolitan dissemination since the 20th century, and its auto-deconstructive history as a multiplicity giving place to fictions of itself, as demonstrated by Jacques Derrida in *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (2005). One might say that democracy's giving itself to the world at large involves a certain hospitality, for that giving involves inviting and receiving (just about) anyone. Today, democracy's state of hospitality appears to be reaching perfectibility, as almost all states in the world have taken on a more or less democratic countenance. And yet there can be no doubt that, at the beginning of the 21st century,

there is a sense that democracy is in retreat. Instead of plural and heterogeneous democracies, we witness only states deferring to the singular hospitality of American democracy. One even ought not to be 'out of step' with the latter, as the rhetoric of contemporary geopolitics goes. In the face of this democracy, Derrida also maintains in *Rogues* that *there is still not yet democracy in the world*. For Derrida, it remains for one to reason with, or reject, present democracy. And one ought to remain open to the arrival of that which surprises any present form of thought or act of democracy. That is at least the dual task of Derrida's 'democracy to come', in duel with the cosmopolitan democracy that we experience and have come to know today. Here, I would like to suggest that for 'democracy to come' to continue to have a chance now and in the future, there needs also an exposition of a right to reject this cosmopolitan hospitality.

One could perhaps already sense the emergency of such a violent and supplementary force of the right to reject hospitality, notwithstanding the fact that Derrida's 'democracy to come' simultaneously calls for an 'unconditional hospitality'. For Derrida (2001), the right to hospitality, which is the unconditional duty of welcome to the stranger as well as the (Kantian) conditioned right exercised in any practical hospitality to expel anyone and/or anything that threatens the security or sovereignty of the host, is understandable. But the rejection of hospitality is almost unthinkable. 'Unconditional hospitality' speaks of a sense of letting anyone or anything arrive into one's space or care at any time, and without demand for or expectation of any kind of return. But if a *right to reject hospitality* were to become categorical today, as a supplement to 'democracy to come', it would only be because present 'American' cosmopolitan democracy seems to have appropriated for itself a semblance of 'unconditional hospitality'. Because it works via a ruse of 'unconditional hospitality', one ought to be vigilant against that. American democracy has assumed a posture of 'unconditional hospitality' because almost every democratic state in the world defers to it, as argued above; and it takes them in. If these states submit themselves to the hospitality of American democracy unconditionally, it is only by the seemingly irresistible reason of the incomparable politico-military force of American democracy, as that which alone can secure a cosmopolitan peace and security. American democracy after all has demonstrated its ability to saturate cosmic space with teletechnological imaging machines, seeing the world from above, and keeping watch that nothing deviates from it. With such a cosmo(s)-political technics, justified by the 'reason' of cosmopolitan

peace and security, almost nothing escapes being under the architecture, otherwise known as the hospitality, of American democracy. This is the terrifying simulacrum of 21st-century cosmo(s)-political democracy. We are not even citizens of this democracy as the 'invited hostage', which Derrida talks of in situations of hospitality ('hostage' because, as guest, one always assumes certain performatives demanded of the space of hospitality). We have not been 'invited'. We do not even desire to enter or even approach it. And yet we are already automatic citizens of it.

A democracy that would sidestep this present state and State, then, must reason with, if not contest, 21st-century (American) cosmo(s)-political democracy. And that is why the violent supplement of a right to reject hospitality becomes necessary within the thought of hospitality. I suggested that this supplement potentially also displaces Derrida's thought of 'unconditional hospitality'. But let it be said here that the right to reject hospitality is not at all an unthinkable inhospitality. Instead, it is the immanent freedom to choose *not* to enter into a given relation or hospitality. It is the right to just turn away. The recognition of this right or freedom is, however, somewhat unarticulated in Derrida's 'unconditional hospitality', which remains very much on the side of the potential giver of 'unconditional hospitality'. But to remain on that side in a thinking of 'democracy to come' would risk 'unconditional hospitality' becoming an end-game for the *other*, in which an enclosing hospitality, like that of cosmo(s)-political democracy, is given, such that one cannot find an exit. Again then, for a 'democracy to come' that will liberate itself from the totality of cosmo(s)politanism, the supplementary right to reject the perverse hospitality and the given citizenship of the state, and State, of cosmo(s)-political democracy is imperative today.

Finally, this supplementary right to reject (hospitality) here is just about giving it exposition. It does not call for an institutionalization of such a right. Neither does it seek to prescribe a method for enacting it. Like Blanchot's recognition of the force of 'refusal', the force of rejection is to be thought of as something that is within us, something that has always already been our potentiality in the face of an *as if* reasonable 'reason'. In the face of the latter, like that of American cosmo(s)politan democracy, for example, there will be some of us who will simply and immediately disagree and just reject it, without noise or without submitting this refusal to the performatives of a constitutional debate within the boundaries of institutions. Among this 'some', there is a sharing of a certain friendship, a friendship without relation, or an anonymous friendship among strangers just sharing the silent force of the

reject. One may regard this radical friendship as ‘non-canonical’, as Derrida would say. And that would place the right to reject (hospitality) back in the spirit of a ‘democracy to come’. For ‘democracy to come’ is also a question of friendship, according to Derrida, except that the friend there will not be one who is teleologically determined from the naturalized history of friendship. Democracy or ‘democracy to come’ is in search of that ‘non-canonical’ friendship that goes beyond all political, ideological, and ethical affinities. It is in search of that figure who maintains his or her right to reject or abandon whatever conditions or limits. The actualization of that right to reject, without reproach, would be the sovereign decision of a free (powerless) body within a space that promises the multiplicities of freedom that democracy promises. It would be the first step towards a freedom that allows anyone to choose freely, to choose outside the false choice of being with a cosmo(s)-political democracy or against it. For a ‘democracy to come’ tomorrow, one must let arrive this figure who affirms the *right to reject (hospitality)*, this friend who is somewhat a little roguish.

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Global Democracy

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Keywords concrete utopia, Kant, linear time, open-ended process, peace, territory, world state

International or planetary democracy was first discussed systematically in the 1940s when the United Nations was founded. The ideal of sovereign equality of all UN members is most clearly embodied in the General Assembly’s one country/one vote principle, standing for democracy between states. Originally, the UN was placed at the apex of the emerging system of international organizations – including the Bretton Woods insti-

tutions (International Monetary Fund, World Bank). The Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC, was designed to be the core of this system of international organizations. According to the UN Charter, decisions of ECOSOC are made by a majority of the members present and voting. Moreover, ECOSOC may make suitable arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with matters within its competence.

In the 1940s, democracy had become a universally accepted principle but there was no agreement as to the meaning of democracy. Thus the Cold War and political cleavages in the world appeared to make any of the more ambitious

proposals unrealistic. In his classic book *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, the first edition of which was published in 1948, Hans Morgenthau argued that a world state is eventually necessary as the only possible secure guarantee of world peace: 'The experience of two world wars within a quarter of a century and the prospects of a third one to be fought with nuclear weapons have imparted the idea of a world state an unprecedented urgency' (Morgenthau, 1961[1948]: 501). However, as evidence that there is as yet no world political community that could ground the would-be world state, Morgenthau (1961: 513) argued that a directly elected world parliament is not viable because 'none of its constituent groups [such as the Americans, the Chinese, the Indians, and the Russians] would willingly submit to the majority vote of a legislative assembly thus constituted.'

In the 1970s, sovereign statehood re-emerged as a key resource in the global emancipatory struggles over recognition of agency and autonomy. With the process of decolonization, the conventional UN ideal of international democracy had a revival. The institution of state sovereignty seemed, during and in the immediate aftermath of the process of decolonization, to provide a legitimate platform for fighting the imperial rule and capitalist exploitation that the majority of humanity experienced outside the core regions of the world economy. Hence, in the 1970s, world democratic aspirations were articulated in terms of inter-state relations. When the Third World had assumed a majority in the General Assembly and demanded a New International Economic Order, it was declared that:

all states are judicially equal and, as equal members of the international community, have the right to participate fully and effectively in the international decision-making process in the solution of world economic, financial and monetary problems. (United Nations, 1975: article 10)

The inherent ambiguities notwithstanding, this first global recognition of universal agency and autonomy can be seen as the beginning of world politics proper.

The topic of planetary democracy re-emerged in the 1980s with the rise of the globalization discourse and, a little later, the end of the Cold War. Preceded by Jürgen Habermas' abstract Kantian speculations about world citizenship and 'a fictive world society' as the highest stage of human learning, David Held's works on critical theory, democracy and state theory in the 1980s, and related early attempts to question the connection between democracy and the state, resulted in

the theory of cosmopolitan democracy. This theory was first outlined in Held's (1991) essay 'Democracy, the Nation-State and the Global System' and developed further in the book *Democracy and the Global Order* (Held, 1995).

The Kantian model of cosmopolitan democracy is based on a selected set of past experiences and reflections on them. Apart from the Kantian-Habermasian critical theory, it stems from the European experiences of overcoming the tragic dilemmas of inter-state relations by means of integration and development of the European Union. Jürgen Habermas' social and political theory can itself be seen, in part, as a reaction to Nazism and the Second World War. Since the end of the Cold War, Habermas (2001) has devoted his attention increasingly to post-national politics and conditions of cosmopolitan democracy. He has been arguing, also with Jacques Derrida (Habermas and Derrida, 2003), that a more democratic European Union, also as a counter-balance to the one-sided hegemony of the USA, is a step towards world domestic policy and democracy.

The post-structuralist suspicion is that the model of cosmopolitan democracy is just another modern political blueprint. As a straightforwardly universalist scheme, it may also be potentially dangerous. Post-structuralist political theorists (Connolly, 1991; Walker, 1993: ch. 7) have also criticized the territorial conception of space and linear time implicit in the models of both conventional and cosmopolitan accounts of democracy. A concern is that, as progress is measured in terms of movement towards becoming a full member of the community of cosmopolitan democracy, the ideal of cosmopolitan democracy might give rise to a definition of higher and lower beings – others – located territorially in different parts of the world. This implies moral and political distance from the different others. The others may then be treated as innocents to be converted, as amoralists to be excommunicated or simply as outsiders (the far away anti-democrats) who can impose a threat of violence on us, i.e. the potential enemies. There also arises the perceived need for coercive powers to 'protect' the territory of cosmopolitan democracy.

Pragmatist (Cochran, 2002) and critical realist (Patomäki, 2003) approaches to global democracy – understood as an open-ended process – are based on notions such as trans-cultural dialogue, bottom-up reforms and concrete utopias. Democracy is best conceived as a process of democratization. There is no model that would exhaust all democratic possibilities; and without any movement towards further democratization, strong tendencies to corruption and accumulation of power can easily take over – within a supposedly stable state of democracy, whatever the context. Moreover, in

terms of dialogue, we should allow for other, non-European experiences, aspirations and perspectives as well in assessing different global democracy initiatives. Finally, a concrete utopia is a model of practical and institutional arrangements that does not currently exist, but should be politically possible to achieve, and feasible as an alternative way of organizing social practices and relations

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Global Civil Society

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Keywords civil society, empire, global, peace, war

Why has 'globalization' emerged as a dominant new imaginary? What discourse does it crystallize, what fears does it carry, and what hopes does it represent? 'Globalization' appeared as a response to the trauma of the 20th century, in a moment of hope when it seemed, not for the first time, that the possibility for a world-wide civil society was finally at hand. Since before the Enlightenment, the idea of world peace has accompanied the expansion of organizational and cultural power. From the 17th century on, the political theory of high and organic intellectuals alike has articulated the idea of peaceful conflict resolution through the concept of civil power. The possibility for civil control, as opposed to military violence or political domination, can be traced back to the idea of the social contract, to the Lockean vision of consensual

agreement and persuasion in contrast with the Hobbesian resort to force and fraud. Sociologically, the idea of civil society points to the idea of a liberal discourse that is at once critical and tolerant, and to institutions, from factual and fictional mass media to voting and law, that allow collectivities to be guided by symbolic communication among independent and rational citizens who feel bound by ties of solidarity and mutual obligation (Alexander, 2006).

In what has been called the long 19th century, during the 'Age of Equipose' that followed upon the end of the Napoleonic wars, there was the sense, not only among Euro-American elites, that such cosmopolitan peace was close at hand. It seemed possible to believe that, alongside the expansion of organizational and cultural power, there was emerging an expanded international civil sphere. That this civil utopian vision of a peaceful world was shadowed by the expansion of colonial conquest outside Europe is a fearful symmetry only visible from our own time.

This dream of reason was shattered by the First

World War. For intellectuals and artists, and thoughtful men and women on every side, the war exposed the barbarism that contradicted modernity's promise to create a more civil society. If that first globalizing war exposed the ugly face of military nationalism that threatened cosmopolitan peace, so much more so did the totalitarisms that emerged during its wake. The Second World War marked a globalizing battle over the very possibility for modern societies to be organized in a civil way.

In the wake of these war traumas, the victors promised to renew the dream of cosmopolitan peace. The utopian discourse of world civil society was even embedded in formally democratic institutional regimes, the quasi-world governments of first the League of Nations and then the United Nations. The ideas for these repair efforts were provided by such high intellectuals as Bertrand Russell and implemented by such organic intellectuals as Ralph Bunche. Yet, the carrier groups for these efforts at renewing the cosmopolitan dream were the victorious national hegemon themselves. Such an infrastructure of national power belied the aspirations for a global civil order. When strains at the level of nation-states became too intense, the League of Nations was destroyed. It had been hobbled from its beginnings, of course, by America's refusal to join. The United Nations was undermined even more quickly, by the division of the postwar universalizing spirit into the fighting camps of the Cold War. The rhetoric on both sides of this great divide rang the bells of international peace, but in the background one could always hear the sound of war.

When the third world war of the short 20th century was finished, there were once again utopian hopes for the repair of civil society and the creation of world peace. The utopian representation 'globalization' first emerged in the late 1980s, as the Cold War wound down. As this new collective representation gained power, in the decade following, it looked like a world civil society was finally at hand. This time around, the high and organic intellectuals were former activists and peaceniks, post-Marxist and liberal leftists who had campaigned for peace against the Vietnam War in the USA, for 'Europe' and against national boundaries on the continent, and for nuclear disarmament on both sides (Kaldor, 2003). International law would be based, not on the rights of sovereign nations, but on individual and human rights. National force was pledged to multinational, not national interest, to a new world order in which peace and civil respect would reign. The Security Council of the United Nations was approached as if it were a global democratic forum in which rational discussion could affect the

distribution of wealth and the application of power.

Once again, however, this moment of equipoise was underpinned by a national infrastructure. It was the victors in the Cold War who were most excited about globalization; the losers were more interested in national reconstruction and restoring regional strength. It was the President of the USA, Bill Clinton, who gave commencement addresses on civil society as the key to world peace. It was NATO that intervened in Kosovo. It should not be surprising that this most recent dream for cosmopolitan peace reigned for scarcely more than a decade. The post-war collective effervescence in which globalization became such a powerful new representation came to an end with the election in America of George W. Bush. National interest was unabashedly reasserted, global agreements cancelled, and global conferences and institutions boycotted. As the President and neo-conservative politicians and intellectuals handled and channeled the national trauma of September 11, 2001, it highlighted anti-civil violence and global fragmentation and pointed to a Hobbesian struggle between civilizations. Collective violence once again came to be waged by nations and blocs, with divisive rather than unifying effects for the world scene.

These events were experienced by the intellectuals promoting globality, and by its organized carrier groups, not merely as disappointment but betrayal. For explanation, many turned to anti-Americanism, the long-standing culture structure which divides good and evil by polluting the United States and purifying any collectivity, ideology, or region that comes to represent the other side. No matter how culturally satisfying, however, this interpretation elides the systemic processes at play. The structures and the ideologies of the world are still primarily organized nationally, and hardly at all in a globally civil way. As long as this organizational structure is maintained, if and when other states amass extraordinarily asymmetrical power, they will undoubtedly act in a similar way.

To accept anti-Americanism as explanation rather than as interpretation, moreover, misses the ambiguous and often productive role that this cultural trope often has played. To pollute America as a hegemon is to make deviant anti-civil actions as such, not merely the United States. By creating a stark if simplifying contrast between 'American' action, on the one side, and a more civil sort of global power, this binary has the effect of allowing the purifying power of the globalization representation to be sustained. In February 2003, in the days just before the American invasion of Iraq, the meaning of this cultural confrontation, and the

stakes involved, were clearly displayed on the front page of the *New York Times*. Reporting the massive demonstrations that had unfolded throughout the world on the previous day, a *Times* correspondent wrote: 'The fracturing of the Western alliance over Iraq and the huge antiwar demonstrations around the world this weekend are reminders that there may still be two superpowers on the planet: the United States and world public opinion.' Apparently factual, this statement must be seen rather as interpretive reconstruction. It framed these empirical events in a globally civil way. They are presented as transpiring on the public stage of the world, and America is portrayed, not as an elect but as a particularistic nation, confronting not the evil of an Iraqi dictator but the world as a civil, rationally organized society: 'President Bush appears to be eyeball to eyeball with a tenacious new adversary: millions of people who flooded the streets of New York and dozens of world cities to say they are against war based on the evidence at hand' (Tyler, 2003).

There is not a world government to curb a hegemonic state bent on defending its interests as nationally conceived. The nascent global civil sphere has none of the institutions that, in a fully functioning democracy, allow public opinion to produce civil power and thus regulate the state, such as independent courts, party competition, and elections. Yet this nascent global civil sphere does have access to institutions of a more communicative kind. Despite different languages and separated ownership and organization, national news stories construct extra-national events in a manner that often reveals a high level of intertextuality, creating the common understandings and interpretations that allow there to be putatively global events. These 'factual' understandings are sustained by the intense circulation around the globe of 'fictional' mass media, which are far from being merely entertaining in their cultural effects. These fictional media are movies, television dramas, novels, music, and the international brands whose consumption is creating a more common material culture worldwide.

It is within this symbolic and institutionally constructed sea of global public opinion that there emerges the world stage, on which transpire polls, demonstrations, social movements, scandals, corruptions, terrorism, electoral triumphs, and tragedies, performances that palpably create the very sense that there is a supra-national life. It is within this febrile and often highly unstable membrane of global consciousness that international institutions and nongovernmental organizations create forms of governmentality, from agreements over labor conditions and world health

to regulations about the environment and land mines. The rules and resources that sustain governmentality, as opposed to government, rest on consensus and agreement rather than on the violence-backed power of a state (Held and McGrew, 2002).

The dream of cosmopolitan peace has not died. The forceful hope for creating a global civil sphere remains. It is embodied in the collective representation of globalization, which has organizational integuments and political and economic effects. There is a global stage in which local events are evaluated, not only nationally or ethnically, but according to the standards of the civil sphere. Before this stage sits an idealized audience of world citizens. Sometimes the performances projected to this audience are initiated by avowedly global actors. More often, they reflect local scripts and national actors, which are projected on the world stage and evaluated according to the principles of cosmopolitan peace and by the discourse and interactions of civil life.

Since the first national institutionalizations of civil societies, there has been imagined the possibility for a civil sphere on a supra-national scale. In the 17th century, the trope of 'oriental despotism' emerged, reconfiguring colonialism into a fight for civil power on a global scale. In the middle of the 18th century, the Lisbon earthquake became a trauma for Europe and offered a sentimental education for 'all mankind'. In the early 19th century, the moral movement against anti-slavery achieved political success by generating moral empathy, extending solidarity and psychological identification to nonwhite others for the first time. In the mid-20th century, the narration and memorialization of the Holocaust formed a powerful basis for expanding moral universalism, establishing genocide as a principle for evaluating national, ethnic, and religious power. At the end of the 20th century, globalization emerged as a new representation on the fragile public stage of world life. Tied to organizational processes that are enlarging the scope of institutional and cultural power, it promises to sustain the dream of cosmopolitan peace in a more compelling manner than has been possible up until this time. It will be a powerfully contested symbolic power in the new century.

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International Law

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Keywords human rights, international law, insurgents, terrorists

The law is a mysterious set of institutions and discourses. At its core it is simply a collection of words and statements and yet it both provides wise rules to live by and can result in us being fined, confined, and killed. However, just as we try to understand the mysteries of our universe by journeying ever deeper into space, so we can discover much about our present systems of domestic law through investigating the wilder, less developed corners of international law. For in these corners, and as far as state-to-state relations are concerned, there is no agreed sovereign and effectiveness and the control of territory are the prerequisites for legal standing, for the possession of rights. Thus groups who are the effective controllers of territory are called 'insurgents' (Cassese, 2001: 66–9) whereas those who have no such control are called 'terrorists'. In other words and in the end, the only difference between governments, insurgents, and terrorists is how much territory they control or how much power they have. In these wilder corners, international law is law in process of formation, red in tooth and claw, an instance of power/knowledge *par excellence*. As such its study reveals much about the inequalities and violence that are intrinsic to the law. Accordingly, it is not at all surprising that today international law is both the world's last great hope and a deeply suspect enterprise.

More specifically, international law is deeply suspect because it has long been characterized by the pre-emption of the possibility of a global consensus by the prior formation of a western one. Thus, although in theory the most venerable source of international law is 'international custom' or the ways in which states customarily relate to one another, in practice the states

concerned have been limited to western or western-like states. Thus, in the 19th century, the 'unequal treaties' between various western and non-colonized Asian states that, amongst other things, denied these states jurisdiction over their western residents even in the case of very serious crimes, were justified by reference to the customary 'law of nations', which prohibited any interference with trade and communication between nations. Indeed many western nations considered themselves to have been rather generous in drawing up such treaties since they harboured serious doubts about whether or not non-western nations were covered by international law because of their non-Christian character. Moreover, the issue was only 'settled' in 1874, when the Paris Institute of International Law decided that non-western nations could claim legal equality with their western equivalents under international law, provided they conformed to what the West defined as the 'universal principles of civilization' – hence the necessity of establishing a western-style constitution such as Japan's Meiji Constitution (1868) and set of legal codes before such 'unequal treaties' could be renegotiated.

Today international law is much more than a prejudiced commentary on the purportedly customary nature of international intercourse. It comprises two major bodies of law. The first is public international law, which primarily concerns state-to-state relations around issues such as the recognition of governments, the use of force, and the treatment of prisoners of war, but has more recently come to encompass certain aspects of states' relations to individuals through international human rights law. The second is private international law, which primarily concerns family and economic issues where they have an international dimension. It is, then, because international law embodies more than 100 years of effort on the part of the international community to distil the 'universal principles of civilization' as

they apply to these basic issues that it carries the hopes of the world, especially now that there is only one superpower. But how universal are these principles even today and even in relation to human rights? How effective were the ropes with which the Lilliputians sought to restrain Gulliver?

In the West domestic law is commonly understood to derive its power from its role as the symbol and indeed the major guarantee of fairness, stability and justice – to the degree that societies without law or within which the law plays a relatively small role in social life are generally considered to lack something very important, to be intrinsically unfair, unstable, unjust, and therefore to be inferior. When viewed historically and sociologically, however, domestic western law may be seen to have in fact initially derived its power from its role in ensuring fairness, stability and justice for a very small group of people. These were people who wished to: benefit personally from their possession of land and/or other factors of production; be excused both the payment of feudal tithes and any broader responsibility to their employees than the payment of wages; and appropriate for themselves any surplus produced through their cooperation with others. By the end of the 18th century these privileges had been broadened to include a second order of entitlements that allowed the beneficiaries of the first order to speak up for and organize themselves politically in defense of the same privileges.

The statements in which the courts defined both the first and second-order privileges eventually came to be known as civil and political rights. As the beneficiaries of these privileges prospered, multiplied, amassed fortunes, and gained control of states, their rights came to be seen as both sources and instruments of power. Moreover, these civil rights soon came to be regarded as universal not because everyone actually enjoyed them, but because they were available to all property owners and in time it became possible for anyone to be a property owner. Thus it was not surprising that when the Western European nations began their colonization of the rest of the world they took their law with them, thinking it to be beneficial to both themselves and the benighted peoples of other lands.

The reason why the few rather than the many actually enjoyed their rights was because, at the same time as the arrival of capitalism freed the few from economic subordination, it also deprived the many of economic security and therefore of any realistic possibility of owning their own productive

property. In other words, economic freedom came at a price – the right to own property required that the many sacrifice the results of their labour in the interests of the few. In time, of course, the propertyless won the rights to vote and stand for election and succeeded in achieving a certain amelioration of the sacrifices demanded of them. Thus tithes returned in the form of taxes and the State took responsibility for the general welfare by creating certain economic and social rights.

During the course of the Second World War and led by the United States, the Allied Powers achieved a consensus around this individual-centred complex of rights and subsequently succeeded in having it adopted by the newly formed United Nations in 1948 as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights are deeply embedded in the social routines of western societies and are therefore widely respected. Despite or because of the spread of capitalism, these rights are neither so deeply embedded nor so widely respected in the rest of the world. Is this really because the rest of the world is less civilized than the West? Or might this be yet another case of the pre-emption of the possibility of a global consensus by the prior formation of a western one? Is an unalloyed individualism in fact the only basis upon which a discourse of respect for the other may be constructed? Why is it so hard to see that most of the world's population still depends on the virtuous behaviour of superiors for any protection it enjoys? Why is it that evil can be prohibited but goodness cannot be required? Why not make virtue, duty, or benevolence legally enforceable? Frighteningly, the apparent ridiculousness of these questions may suggest that international law *was* indeed the world's last best hope. However, what seems ridiculous to one generation can become the commonsense of later generations, and remarkably quickly – *vide* neo-liberalism.

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The Globalization of American Law

David A. Westbrook

Keywords American, cultural imperialism, globalization, hegemony, law, modernization, state, United States

‘Global’, ‘legal’ and ‘American’, name important aspects of much contemporary life. One way (there are of course others) to organize these vague descriptions is to begin from three commonplace observations. These observations are suggestive (they mean more than they say), problematic (they are not simply true; their contradictions have merit), and somewhat incommensurate (the logical relations among the three are not completely clear). First, globalization is a process in which law plays large roles. The global is self-evidently legal in treaties, international institutions, and more deeply, the vast webs of property, contract, and finance through which global business takes place. More personally, acts on the global stage such as an assertion of a human right, or joining a nongovernmental organization, or using a credit card, all entail a great deal of law, even though such law ordinarily is not at issue, submerged. The second commonplace is that law is increasingly understood to be articulated at various levels of politics, above, below, and including the nation state. While law is not the same everywhere (there are numerous variations among jurisdictions) such differences increasingly exist within the same conceptual frame, a frame with global scope. And a third commonplace is that global culture, and particularly its law, feels somehow ‘American’. ‘American’ includes not only the law as it emerges from the many authorities within the United States, but also indicates a certain cultural stance. Taken together, these three common observations suggest the proposition that law is being used to make a global society that is somehow American.

One of the difficulties in thinking through this proposition is that ‘law’ has no stable referent. Sometimes, law is understood to refer to distinct social phenomena such as treaties, constitutions (often guaranteeing rights), institutions, and the web of legal relations that inform civil life, law *vis-à-vis* society. All this is true enough, but law is also ineluctably part of that which it constrains. Law constructs much of the objects within the realms of politics, morality, and so forth. Thus politics, morality and society writ large (indeed global

society) are always already legal in character, law within society. In any society, most matters tend to be so well settled as to be hardly discussed. Law, in this sense of the word, tends to be unquestioned, invisible, hegemonic. To ask ‘what is the role of (American) law?’ is, already, to have assumed a duality between law and its society that obscures much of importance.

As a result of the simultaneous opposition and interpenetration between ‘law’ and ‘society’, description of the relationship between law and a particular social phenomenon is difficult. And when the ‘phenomenon’ is that huge set of developments mystically discussed under the rubric of a ‘great transformation’, then the problem of delineating relationships between law and the phenomenon becomes difficult indeed. Consequently, thinking about law and globalization cannot aspire to more than understanding (sophistication). Demonstrable truth (certainty) is out of reach. In response to this situation, social critics may be expected to soften their approaches somewhat, to turn from ‘theory’ modeled on science to something akin to aesthetic appreciation, and an effort to think through the sources and implications of felt experience – the question requires not only rigor but critique, not only demonstration but sensibility.

Globalization could be understood from the end of the Second World War, when a number of treaties were signed that established a framework for the integration of non-communist states in Western Europe and elsewhere. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, which has been incorporated into the World Trade Organization, WTO) established an international, now global, trade and financial order designed to avoid the rivalries that led to both World Wars. Similarly, a series of treaties has created a Europe of interpenetrating politics, laws, economies, militaries, personal ties, and cultural identities – a project that was intended to make war among European states infeasible. In this story, law is a primary mechanism through which the great transformation was begun. And as the strongest power at the end of the Second World War, the United States played a major role in the construction of the new regime.

Such an instrumental view of law, however, is only half the story. While treaties provide a legal

context for economic integration and so cultural transformation, global society is woven from countless interchanges among actors in civil society. Such transactions require agreement on fundamental social conventions, most obviously property, contract, and currency, but also less obviously economic matters. As the planet's dominant national economy, the United States has been unsurprisingly influential in the creation of global standards, influence neatly symbolized by items like the US country dialing code (1), the language of air traffic control (American English), and the lack of a country identifier for US internet domains. But such systems, and by extension, the global, are not American property, and in many ways operate against American interests.

As mention of technology suggests, the Americanization of law also proceeds through efforts to modernize. Modernization is usually a spatial as well as a temporal concept. Especially from a country admitted to be 'developing', modernization is understood as the adoption of modalities found in a developed country. This is often presented in triumphal terms, as if no other modernity were imaginable. But more subtly, the experience and hence the practical authority of those who represent the modernity in place tend to be limited to their own history. The developed country has by definition been successful in becoming modern; the modern is understood in terms of what the developed country has become. Thus advice is given in terms that already presume and so promote the culture of the center. Asked about the establishment of core institutions of modernity, notably after the collapse of communism in the Soviet block, American lawyers and other experts have had great difficulty in doing anything other than recounting what they really know, the US situation. With regard to other possible modernities, such experts have no experience and hence little business giving advice.

In light of the vast power of the US government, the ubiquity and wealth of US civil institutions, especially corporations, and the sheer difficulty of thought, observed Americanization is often understood instrumentally, as the success of a policy. And oftentimes it is; Americanization is often intentional. Hence the globalization of American law may be thought to reflect nothing more than US interests and the power to realize such interests, a species of 'cultural imperialism'. Social thought should guard, however, against letting *Realpolitik* slide into reductionism. Deciding whether a particular instance of law or globalization on an American model should be understood instrumentally, as an expression of US power, or as socially constituted and perhaps constrained by the process of globalization itself

(or both, but in what proportion?) would require a situated analysis considerably beyond the scope of this supplement.

On a theoretical level, however, 'cultural imperialism', as a fancy word for the power of the United States, tends to negate the most fundamental premise of globalization, that politics is no longer understood through the conceptual apparatus of the nation state. Without denying either the power of the US government or the *frisson* of using imperial imagery as a provocation, 'cultural imperialism' does not help much in understanding what is *new*. (Power politics is important, endlessly fascinating, but not new.) More specifically, although the globalization of American law has its undeniably pedantic (or imperial or evangelical) aspects, such characterizations of the operations of law in global society are rather too simple. The charge of 'cultural imperialism' presumes that the basic unit of actual politics is a nation, the United States. If that is so, then presumably law too is intrinsically national. From this perspective, the globalization of American law is merely a euphemism for US hegemony, and globalization is an unnecessary analytic concept. Thus, to the conceptual difficulty of sorting out 'the legal' from 'global society', we must add another difficulty, that of determining whether contemporary phenomena are to be understood nationally (as an expression of American interests), or as a transformation of, *inter alia*, the meaning of 'the national', and thereby, the meaning of 'American'.

A related problem with the idea of understanding the Americanization of global law as a form of cultural imperialism is the tacit assumption of a nationalist definition of law. The idea that it is evil presumption for one nation (perhaps the United States) to influence the law of another nation reflects a deeply positivist understanding of what law is, namely, the formal commitments of a given polity, articulations of the will of a given people. This is hardly the only way to understand law. Law has generally been understood as a constraint on contemporary politics, not merely as a concrete and formal expression of political will. The commandments of God; the law of our fathers; the law of nature or of justice; the law of all nations – such law is understood to exist above national politics, and may be used to judge, even constrain, national politics. The most explicit expression of this impulse in the new global society is human rights law. Human rights are defined in terms of universal human entitlements, rather than local political circumstances. Thus, from the ideological perspective of the nascent global society, law cannot be defined simply as the formal expression of the will of any state, even a state as powerful as the United States (witness the

international outrage over torture conducted by US forces).

Indeed, at least in extreme circumstances such as genocide, national sovereignty is understood to be subordinate to global law, and hence armed interventions are justified. Consider, in this regard, the French use of force in Cote d'Ivoire, or the Australians in East Timor, and perhaps most importantly, the NATO intervention on behalf of Kosovo, which proceeded without Security Council authorization. Thus, although the state remains practically indispensable and undeniably present, if globalization is taken seriously, the state can no longer claim to be the foundational unit of international law and relations, as it has been throughout the modern period (for these purposes, usually dated from the Peace of Westphalia in 1648). And, as a corollary, if law is understood as the largely unarticulated yet foundational commitments of a global society that cannot be reduced to states, then law, too, cannot be defined as the formal expressions of states. Instead, law suffuses states. Therefore, the idea that states are sovereign, in any exclusive sense, over their laws, is no longer tenable.

We are thus left asking if anything, other than the influence of old-fashioned national politics (which remains important), explains the American 'feel' of global society? To close with a suggestion: global law is familiar in an American sort of way in part because many of the questions confronting global society have long been asked in the United States. Like global society, the United States was established as a polity that partially fused different cultures, while allowing for a fair degree of personal and communal difference. The visible institutions of law are especially important to such societies. Law resolves disputes among people who share little else and for whom community is difficult. More subtly, law enables also culture and commerce, the weaving of a thin but durable social fabric among people strange to one another. Law even structures the ways in which society, 'the public', is conceived, notably through the assertion of rights.

But people who assert rights against one another may not share enough; the law is a rather

thin basis for culture. As a huge and young nation, the United States has since its founding struggled, sometimes very violently, to forge a culture among peoples who share little. Unity (or even community or solidarity) is perpetually a problem for the United States. The lack of fellow-feeling is increasingly recognized as a problem for the European project, and is an even larger problem for global society. The problem is that very large modern societies are, by definition, formal and legal. In such societies, individuals are defined in legal terms rather than by place, tradition, community, status, and so forth. Nowhere has this been more true, or true for longer, than in the United States, founded by immigrants who did not know one another, shared little, and then moved about the country, first westward, and now within a huge internal labor market. But wherever the citizen moves within the United States, she carries with her a set of legal understandings, rights, that protect her, and that facilitate certain kinds of expression, foster personality in certain ways. On the global stage, and somewhat independently of her actual citizenship, our exemplar may claim human rights. But her rights, as either a citizen of the world, or of the United States, will not provide our exemplar the sorts of communal understandings – the sense of place, home – commonly found in more stable societies. Hence the American 'feel' of global law and society (one of the commonplaces with which we began) is not merely due to American origins or influence, but to a similarity in the situation of the individual *vis-à-vis* those overwhelmingly large, modern, and therefore deeply legal social matrices that are vaguely but inescapably denominated 'global' and 'American', where law on good days provides order, but little solace for alienation.

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Cyberlaw

Itsuko Yamaguchi

(Translated by David C. Buist)

Keywords cyberspace, information, Internet, Japan, ubiquitous network

Cyberlaw and the Japanese Concept of 'Information Law'

The terms 'cyberlaw', 'cyberspace law', 'Internet law' or 'information technology (IT) law' have gained considerable currency in recent years. To what extent do any of these terms denote a distinctive and consistent field of legal investigation? The concept of 'information law' has existed in Japan since the 1960s, but its definition depends greatly on the varied interpretations of the key concept of 'information'. Given the inevitable overlap between the concept of 'cyberlaw' and the existing category of 'information law', it would seem instructive to begin by considering how they might relate to each other. One characteristic of 'information law' is that it has been formed as a category largely according to practical criteria rather than having any clear foundation in legal theory. It came about in response to pressing social concerns about the legal implications of information technology. The development and adoption of new information technologies raised legal issues that crosscut the existing compartmentalization of legal theory. These issues fall outside the scope of the typical problems envisaged by existing legal institutions. Attempts to formally define 'information law' are thus inevitably broad and flexible in interpretation, as is illustrated by the following influential definition: 'law pertaining to the production, distribution and consumption of information' (Hamada, 2002: 473).

'Cyberlaw' inherits from 'information law' the characteristic of being practically oriented rather than being defined in terms of legal theory. The Internet and virtual sphere of 'cyberspace' does provide some basis for its overall conceptualization. Nevertheless, the legal problems raised by cyberspace still transect the traditional divisions drawn between different fields of law, such as libel law, obscenity regulations, privacy and personal data protection law, copyright law, and the laws governing electronic commercial transactions. All these areas are simultaneously brought into play when we consider the issues frequently raised by cyberspace communications, such as the inherent

tendency to cross international borders, the high degree of anonymity, and the uncertain liabilities of Internet Service Providers (ISPs). An additional complication is that the Internet is itself inherently changeable in character. The basic structure or 'architecture' of the Internet is subject to change through the way in which the technological 'means' of software and hardware are arranged in order to bring about the realization of specific desired 'ends' – whether these be values, ideals or functions. Broadcast media in the past had severe inherent technological and physical limitations arising from the finitude and scarcity of useable electro-magnetic frequencies. The existing legal and regulatory system of broadcast licensing and content regulation grew up in accordance with those conditions. However, the Internet is entirely different in this respect. It has no fixed, unchangeable or easily defined character. Cyberlaw will therefore be highly susceptible to periodic changes in technology, social norms, social consciousness, and socioeconomic conditions.

The Digital Impact on Free Speech Theory in Japan

In order to give a more concrete picture of the social changes brought about by cyberspace, I will now focus on the issue of freedom of speech and expression in Japan. During the early stages of rapidly expanding Internet usage in the mid-1990s, the Japanese government took a very cautious approach toward the enactment of legal measures to counteract emerging problems such as defamation on the Internet and cyberporn. This caution was particularly marked when issues of free speech and privacy were concerned. This is in contrast to the United States, which was among the first to adopt legislative measures with the Communications Decency Act of 1996. However, towards the end of the decade, Japan began to be more proactive on the legal front, even when this impinged upon rights of free expression and data privacy. This is seen, for example, in the 'Law for the Partial Amendment of the Law Relating to the Regulation of Amusement Businesses and the Improvement of Services' (Law No. 55 of 1998), which extended conventional administrative control over sex-related amusement businesses to cyberporn. In 2001, a further law was enacted as the 'Law on the Limitation of Specified

Telecommunications Service Provider's Liability for Damages and the Disclosure of Information about the Senders of Electronic Communications' (Law No. 137 of 2001). This law sets specific conditions for the indemnity of Internet Service Providers, and also provides for a legal right to demand and receive the disclosure of information on the senders of communications.

These recent changes in the institutional conditions relating to freedom of speech and expression are likely to have a major impact on how we study or 'theorize' this freedom (Yamaguchi, 2002). In postwar Japanese constitutional theory, the importance of free speech was so taken for granted that there seemed to be no need for any direct discussion about its intrinsic worth. The demand for tougher constitutional guarantees for the freedom of expression has always been backed up by an intense distrust of government power on issues relating to public expression, and any movement toward regulation in this area has been met by a profound mood of 'scepticism' and loud protests. There has also been lively proceduralist discussion over the finer points of legal interpretation and judicial criteria with the aim of counteracting any movement by courts to stretch the interpretation of existing laws or the constitution in such a way as to limit people's rights to free expression. However, attitudes have since begun to shift somewhat with public recognition of the inevitability of stringent regulatory measures to curb the harm that can arise from free expression in the new environment of almost instantaneous worldwide communications. Furthermore, in the context of present government policy to promote the further development and use of information technology, the need for regulation against illegal contents is also being argued from an economic point of view. With the move towards greater legislative interventionism in this field, the current prevailing view is that the existing *laissez-faire* policy with respect to public expression based on the mistrust of government control cannot function so well in the new technological and social environment. The challenge is now to find ways of balancing the competing interests of free expression on the Internet and people's rights to public honour and privacy, as well as providing for the wholesome rearing of children and youth, and fulfilling people's expectations that the Internet will be a secure and trustworthy medium for commerce. To this end, it is necessary to think more deeply about the 'theory', 'philosophy', 'rationale' or 'why-questions' of free speech. These are matters to which Japanese constitutional theory has given relatively scant attention in the past. The principle task now confronting us is to seek philo-

sophical justifications for the constitutional protection of free expression and explain its underlying virtues.

Cyberlaw in the 'Ubiquitous Network Society': What Lessons Might American Cyberlaw Have for Japan?

The most recent trends seem to indicate a gradual loss of the distinctive mood and spirit that surrounded cyber-'space' in the early days of Internet growth. The latest technological developments – such as the widening use of broadband and wireless Internet connections, the miniaturization of communications terminals, and ubiquitous computing – suggest a fundamental change in the way people relate to the Internet. Instead of people using computers to enter into cyberspace, it is now more the case that computers enter invisibly into people's lives. Computers are becoming a ubiquitous part of daily life. Therefore, the very concept of cyber-'space' on which existing cyberlaw is premised is itself changing.

Nevertheless, the cautious approach adopted in existing law toward the regulation of cyberspace, as exhibited especially in American cyberlaw since the 1990s (Lessig, 1995, 1999), remains of fundamental importance in Japan, even more so now as we seek to clarify the legal challenges facing us in the rapidly changing technological environment of the present day. In particular, we need to take a serious look at alternative types of regulatory measure, rather than relying solely, or even at all, on traditional legal instruments based on the 'command-and-control' model. This is necessary in consideration of the distinctively complex and changeable 'architecture' of digital networks. Such alternative means of regulation might include, for example, self-regulatory systems among private corporations, encrypting and identification technologies, control systems employing rating and filtering techniques, and educational measures aimed at promoting information literacy and awareness of information ethics. Furthermore, in view of the fact that controversies relating to the Internet cross-cut multiple fields of law, there is a necessity for widespread and constant monitoring to see whether the numerous measures in place are interacting in such a way as to maintain a proper balance between freedom and regulation.

These are certainly no easy tasks, which is precisely why we must first give some thought to the matter I raised at the beginning – how to theorize the concept of 'cyberlaw'. In light of our existing experience of trying to theorize the concept of 'information law' in Japan, there are two points that particularly need attention here. First, cyberlaw provides the occasion for reflection

on fundamental questions, such as which basic evaluative norms need to be observed when dealing with specific individual case issues, and why such principles have come to be enshrined in law in the first place. Making explicit the normative values and principles that law seeks to actualize is absolutely essential if we are not to be overtaken by the factual changes which are constantly occurring as a result of the intrinsically changeable nature of digital networks. In other words, attempting a theoretical analysis from the perspective of cyberlaw means returning to the fundamental values and norms underlying the various areas of law that pertain to digital communications. It means investigating at a more basic level what values free expression and the flow of information on the Internet fulfil for individuals and society. It also involves consideration of how the harmful effects of these activities can be controlled. The second point is closely related to the first. That is to say that cyberlaw can throw new light on the problems inherent in existing laws by providing us an opportunity to reexamine them in relation to contemporary issues. It allows us to think again about whether the present legal framework is 'optimal' from the point of view of realizing the basic principles that are supposed to

be its underlying goal. In other words, the new perspective provided by cyberlaw not only illuminates fundamental principles, but also reveals the deficiencies of existing law.

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Nation

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Abstract The essay traces the definitions of nation through various stages, outlining the consequences of each definition. It emphasizes that the movement to exclusivity has been genocidal and then hints at the possibility of re-reading the idea of nation.

Keywords electoral democracy, ethnicity, genocide, kitsch

The history of the debates on nationalism and the nation-state described in such classic texts as Gellner and Hobsbawm unravel the ambivalence of the idea of nation and its duck-rabbit status. In its early phases, nationalism was seen as primordial, something objective, a link between a community, a culture and a territorial map. But attempts to establish objective criteria for nation failed. Such a congruency between people, history and territory was easy at the level of definition but problematic at the level of reality. The taxonomic clarity of definitions confronted various kinds of hybridity, of monsters which made Eric Hobsbawm (1992: 5) wish that 'nation watching was as simple as bird watching'.

The ambivalence of the word nation begins at the etymological level. In Latin, the word *natio* referred to something born. It referred to a group of foreigners whose status, because they were foreigners, was below that of Romans. The word nation also referred to communities of students coming from a particular region to the great universities of the West. In fact, students had an identity only insofar as they were students (Greenfield, 1992). The structure of university life revolved around nations of students. As a result, the word nation came to mean more than a community of origins, it referred to a community of opinion and purpose. By the 16th century rather than referring to an *elite* group of students, the word nation expanded to include a people, a *population*. National identity now derived from membership in a people and finally nation referred to a '*unique* people' or a unique *sovereign* people. And it is the trajectory of definitions that became problematic.

The nation, instead of being an open category, threatened to become an exclusionary process. The seeds of ambivalence and violence are rooted here and it stems from:

- The idea of citizenship as a static entity.
- The problematic nature of identity.
- The positivism between territory and a people and the fixity of boundaries.
- The genocidal nature of the exclusionary process.

One gets the following kind of picture in terms of the literature.

The constructivist phase was a hard headed one. The logic of the nation-state is recognized as an invention but an invention with potent consequences. Nations became disciplinary myths. They are no longer romantic creations, awakening a long dormant culture. They constitute the logical requirement of an industrial system. As Gellner (1984) remarks, it is not nationalism that creates homogeneity; homogeneity is an 'inescapable imperative of a nationalist-industrial system'.

In fact, the problem of taxonomic clarity became not only a source of confusion but of violence. One wished to make communities and localities conform to a priori definitions. If

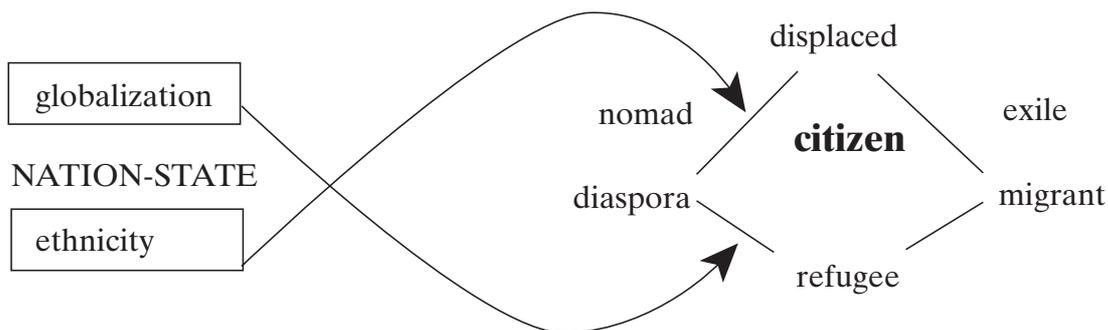
<i>Romantics-Positivists</i>	<i>Constructivists</i>	<i>Post-modern Politics</i>
H. Kohn (1967) <i>The Idea of Nationalism</i>	E. Gellner (1984) <i>Nations and Nationalism</i>	Z. Bauman (1993) (ambivalence) <i>Modernity and Ambivalence</i>
Carleton B. Hayes (1931) <i>The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism</i>	E. Hobsbawm (1992) <i>Nations and Nationalism since 1780</i>	Manuel Castells (1998) (shrinkage) <i>The Rise of the Network Society</i>
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reality did not conform to official definitions and theory, then reality should be cleansed until it conform. It is a small matter that 2-3 million people would be eliminated in 3-4 months. It is this fetishism of cleansing that led to a revisionist history embodied in the writings of Anderson, Hobsbawm and others. Now suddenly nationalism is no longer primordial. It appears recent; it is a project and, what is worse, it is an invention. In fact, nationalism, rather than embodying history, always got its facts wrong. This tempted Ernst Renan to make it a part of the definition. He claimed, 'getting history wrong is a part of being a nation' (quoted in Hobsbawm, 1992: 12).

The modern idea of the citizen portrayed him as a loyal creature who was located in an industrial way of life. In fact, the modern idea of the citizen has a perpetual problem with the other, an hostility to all those ways of life that do not qualify for its passport. The problem of citizenship and the ironic richness of political theory derives from this ambivalence to a set of mobile others. Figure 2 captures the problematic of citizenship between ethnicity and globalization.

If citizenship is the identity of those who fit official definitions, the sense of 'homelessness' marks those outside it – the exile, migrant, refugee, diasporic, nomad, displaced. Each of these categories is an embodiment of marginality which challenges the centrality of citizenship. One must emphasize that violence arises out of the normal logic of citizenship. Violence is only the unravelling of the relation between the fixity of the citizen, his normalcy and its interaction with the moveable, mobile, displaced margins of the nation. The 'stranger' the process of nation building encounters is someone who for classificatory reasons has not been 'officially' allowed into the world of citizenship (Bauman, 1993).

The oldest and most old-fashioned category is that of *exile*. The exile is the citizen who sits away from home writing and thinking about home. But the *migrant* is an individual who



has left home to create a new home. The discourse of sociology, of ethnicity, of citizenship, the dreams of the melting pot centre around how to make the migrant at home in the new world. But neither the *migrant nor exile* can quite capture the statelessness and despair of the *refugee* as a displaced person, a creature who is between homes and might be condemned to that perpetual state of liminality.

If exile, the refugee, the migrant reflect the travails of displacement, the diaspora reflects a coming home. But it is a coming home which carries its own form of violence. The diaspora is at home in the new world. It is home away from home. Its violence comes in relation to its old home. The diasporic as ideal citizen in home II is the prime feeder of terrorist and secessionist movements in home I. He is the exponent of long distance nationalism. Exile, migrant, refugee, diasporic are all citizens outside official territory. But there is also the dynamics of violence within territory.

The fixity of boundary that the nation-state requires and its definition of the 'normalcy' of citizenship cannot cope with nomads, tribals, gypsies, pastoral groups. The fixity of citizenship finds the nomad intolerable. The nomad is at home in the world but he carries his home across the world, thus violating the taxonomy of citizenship.

But there is a second group of mobile people whose homelessness comes from being perpetually uprooted by large development projects. These are marginals whose ways of life are destroyed because they cannot be accommodated into the official discourse on progress.

Ethnicity emerges out of the cusp between the relation between the citizen and those officially defined as 'outsider', 'stranger' or 'marginal'. But it emerges not purely from the logic of citizenship and development, but from the structure of electoral logic, from the normalcy of majority–minority politics. In fact, one has to recognize that – the logic of genocide partially stems from the logic of democratic politics within the nation-state paradigm. Mahmood Mamdani (1996) makes this argument succinctly in his study of the Rwandan massacre. The struggle began as a series of electoral contests which led to a polarization between the Batutsi and the Bahutu, which gradually set the stage for a pogrom. Mamdani observes that 'where majority–minority relations get fetishized into permanent artefacts, neither minority or majority can create stable regimes' (1996: 34).

Michael Mann (1999: 18) observes that while genocidal violence might be banal today, scholarship still sees it as a pathology, 'an unfortunate interruption of the real structural tendencies of the 20th century'. It took the work of scholars such as Leo Kuper (1981) to show that the monopoly of violence that the modern state commands over a territory 'created both the power and the desire for genocide' (Mann, 1999: 19). But Mann goes beyond these pioneering insights to argue the structural link between democracy and genocide. He observes that the standard shibboleths that the more authoritarian a state, the more likely it is to commit genocide is not true. If one looks at it empirically, democracies have a strange affinity for genocide.

Mann argues that democracies should be seen processually. Many of them appear stable and mono-ethnic today but this 'clarity' and stability was acquired over time. In fact, the homogeneity and stability of these democracies was a creation of violence – either of forced assimilation, forced migration or genocide (1999: 22). Mann claims that the idea of 'organic nationalism', in which a population is excluded to the point of murderous cleansing has been one of Europe's contributions to modernity. 'Of course, once the nation is cleansed, it requires little further violence. Impeccably liberal nation-states can bloom above the mass graves of the cleansed – in the US, in Australia, in Germany – and eventually perhaps Serbia' (1999: 26).

While the logic of the nation-state appears coercive in its normalcy, it has become even more problematic with the changing nature of war. For instance, Mary Kaldor (1999) has pointed out that the new wars have broken or blurred the distinctions between civilian–military, foreign–domestic, inside–outside so crucial to the conceptual politics of the nation-state.

Low intensity warfare combined the local and the global in interesting ways. A localized war whether in Burundi or Kosovo acquired a ganglion of international connections which

obscured the relation 'between external and internal, between aggression (attacks from outside) and repression (attacks from within)'. With it went a framework which discriminated between external barbarity and domestic civility, combatant and non-combatant, and soldier, policeman, mercenary and criminal and even war and peace (Kaldor, 1999: 29).

More critically, the nation-state lost its textbook marker of possessing the monopoly of the means of violence within a defined territory. It was a monopoly which was eroded from above and below. Global alliances limited a nation's ability to wage war unilaterally. The privatization of warfare with the presence of assorted groups undermined sovereignty from below.

Third, the old Gellnerian model of the nation-state as providing the framework for modernity was no longer operative. The old wars fed off national organization and the industrial system. Now warfare as a system has acquired its autonomy.

What marked these new wars was what Kaldor, following Thompson, dubs its 'exterminist character'. In the earlier wars, there was mass killing but a lot of it was an unintended consequence of war rather than an end in itself. The new wars, says Kaldor, are genocidal wars which seek the systematic extermination of populations and alter the nature of nationalism as an emancipatory project (Shaw, 2000: 175).

Mary Kaldor (1999) in her essay on the new nationalism observes that unlike early nationalisms which tended to be unifying and centralizing, the new nationalism is creating smaller and smaller economic and political units. Second, nationalism, rather than being an ideology, a worldview, is now a repertoire of instrumentalist tactics available to faceless politicians and bureaucrats to enter power games. Third, the new nationalism seems to be committed to a career of continuous war and violence. It is, as Kaldor observes, not the war economy of the statist military-industrial complexes but of a loose but lethal combination of mercenaries, ex-soldiers, petty criminals, and self-seeking politicians tied together in a shared web of 'complicity for war crimes and a shared interest in reproducing the sources of wealth and crime'.

There is also dispersal in the number of actors and an escalation in the nature of violence. Mamdani (1996: 19), commenting on Rwanda, observed:

unlike the Holocaust, this genocide was not carried out over years, but months – only three. The speed of violence was something that would make even Virillio blanche. The Nazis, mostly as professionals, eliminated Jews, Gypsies, Poles systematically over a period of five to six years. In Rwanda and Kampuchea over a million were eliminated in the span of three months.

The genocide that is emerging must be seen within the structural framework of the UN. Where does the UN stand in relation to violence? Leo Kuper in *Genocide* (1981) complains that it is the structure of the UN that allows this orgy of violence to continue, even validating it. Kuper adds that the UN as a system of nations appears to recognize this de facto right. Kuper examines the cases of genocide in Burundi, in Idi Amin's Uganda, in Cambodia and shows that in each case the UN watched the violence as a spectacle without intervening. Part of the reason, as U Thant and other UN officials point out, is that the UN reflects the hegemony of current nation-states and therefore frowns on secession.

Next I examine two writers who explore the difference between official life and actual life worlds of a nation.

Dubravka Ugresic (1998) is a Croatian writer whose *The Culture of Lies* is an examination of the everyday violence of nationalism. She quotes the Yugoslav writer Danielo Kis as stating 'nationalism is the ideology of the banal'. Central to nationalism is the seductiveness of kitsch. The nation today is not to be visualized as a salad bowl, a mosaic, a melting pot or a prison house. The only metaphor that captures its hysterical power and its hyperactivism is kitsch. At the core of kitsch is a populism that centres around what Kis calls 'the Gingerbread-heart culture', which pours the icing of sentimentality over the cold reality of war. The key relation is not master-slave but executioner-victim. Both sides are potentially executioners and both sides, for all their depredations, see themselves as victims.

One of the biggest casualties of nationalism and the nation-state becomes the idea of memory. Overnight a new system of values gets created by a reversal of signs. 'Bad suddenly becomes good, left becomes right. The old flag, the coat of arms, the names of streets have been removed and replaced by the new.' Words get revalorized. What were once good words – 'Partisan', 'left wing', 'communists' – now get negatively marked. Populism, cliché, kitsch combine with 'guns, grenades, murder, rape and ethnic cleansing to annihilate but one thing – memory'.

In *Object Lessons*, Eavan Boland (1996) pursues for Ireland what Ugresic does for Croatia. She discovers the Irish nation in Irish poetry was not available to her. Not only is Irish poetry male and bardic, but it uses women as its basic motif. She notes astutely that the power of nationhood tends to edit the reality of womanhood. 'Once the idea of nation influences the perception of a woman, then the idea of woman is suddenly and inevitably simplified. She becomes the passive projection of a national idea', a dehumanized ornament. For Boland, nationalism becomes a colonizer of the categories of the imagination. 'To those it recognized and approved, it offered major roles in history. To others, bit parts only.'

Political theory often heals itself not by acts of exorcism which create its own violence but by acts of re-reading. One needs narratives that create a competing weave to the logic of nationalism. Writers like Viroli, Schaar and Simone Weil have argued that such an alternative is available in the narratives of patriotism. Patriotism covers the same history but reads it differently. Simone Weil advocated the power of rootedness but insisted that rootedness need not be a blind identification with one's country. Thus a love for France did not demand a commitment to the French idea of empire (Viroli, 1995: 163). Love and critique blend together to create a more demanding idea of the community and of citizenship. Viroli suggests that patriotism is used to sustain the ideals of a republic while nationalism is employed to call for cultural, ethnic and religious homogeneity. Nationalism can lie harnessed for exclusivity but patriotism is harnessed for social justice in a multicultural society. Patriotism replays the drama of the particular, the concrete with the universal in a non-exclusive way. By reworking the mosaic, it attempts to use history to redeem the future. It is out of such creative readings that political theory can create a plastic and protean patriotism that is more supple than nationalism. It is an act of healing that creates more inventive and futuristic politics.

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Race

Pal Ahluwalia

Abstract The concept of race is traced to the quest for the origins of language and the manner in which that led to the idea that a separate language indicated a separate racial origin. The Orientalist desire to know and dominate the other and to regard him or her as sub-human necessitated the invention of race. The notion of race is further traced through the slave trade and its contemporary usage in 'race studies'.

Keywords Orientalism, race, slavery, translation

No race has a monopoly on beauty, or intelligence, or strength, and there will be a place for all at the rendezvous of victory. (Césaire, 1983: 72)

Introduction

In 1786, William Jones gave an address to the Bengal Asiatic Society in which he made a statement that was to change the face of European intellectual life:

The Sanskrit language, whatever its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philologist could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists. (*Asiatic Researches* [1788] cited in Poliakov, 1974: 190)

Jones' pronouncement initiated an 'Indomania' throughout Europe as scholars looked to Sanskrit for an origin to European languages that went even deeper than Latin and Greek. What remained in the aftermath of Indomania was the entrenchment of Orientalism and the vast expansion of philology. For the next century, European ethnologists, philologists and historians were to be obsessed with the Orient and the Indo-European group of languages because these seemed to offer an explanation of the roots of European civilization itself. This linguistic revolution was supported further by the philosophical arguments of Schlegel and Schelling who suggested that the Orient and the Occident had common roots. Jones' statement was revolutionary because existing conceptions of linguistic history supposed that

language development had taken place within the 6000 years since creation, with Hebrew as the source language and other languages emerging by a process of degeneration. Jones' declaration ushered in a new conception of linguistic history, but because language was so deeply implicated in concerns about national and cultural identity, 'the authentic and useful science of linguistics became absorbed in the crazy doctrine of "racial anthropology"' (Poliakov, 1974: 193). The link between language and identity, particularly the link between the diversity of languages and the diversity of racial identity, gave rise to the discipline of ethnology, the precursor of modern anthropology.

Orientalism is sometimes taken to be simply a way of defining and 'locating' Europe's others. But as a group of related disciplines, Orientalism was, in important ways, about Europe itself, and hinged on arguments that circulated around the issue of national distinctiveness as well as racial and linguistic origins. Thus, elaborate and detailed examinations of Oriental languages, histories and cultures were carried out in a context in which the supremacy and importance of European civilization was unquestioned. Such was the vigour of the discourse that myth, opinion, hearsay and prejudice generated by influential scholars quickly assumed the status of received truth (Said, 1978). For instance, the influential French philologist and historian Ernest Renan (1896: 85) could declare confidently that, 'Every person, however slightly he may be acquainted with the affairs of our time, sees clearly the actual inferiority of Mohammedan countries'. We can be in no doubt about Renan's audience, nor the nature of the cultural assumptions he and they shared: 'All those who have been in the East, or in Africa are struck by the way in which the mind of the true believer is fatally limited, by the species of iron circle that surrounds his head, rendering it absolutely closed to knowledge' (1896: 85).

The confidence of such assertions is partly an indication of the self-confidence engendered by the huge popularity of writers like Renan and Gobineau. But it is, at a deeper level, the product of the unquestioned cultural dominance of Europe, maintained economically and militarily over most of the rest of the world. Through such statements as Renan's, the 'production' of Orientalist knowledge became a continual and uncritical 'reproduction' of various assumptions and beliefs. Thus, Lord Cromer, who relied a great deal on writers like Renan, could write in 1908 that, while the European's 'trained intelligence works like a piece of mechanism', the mind of the Oriental, 'like his picturesque streets, is eminently wanting in symmetry' (Said, 1978: 38). The superior 'order', 'rationality' and 'symmetry' of Europe and the inferior 'disorder', 'irrationality' and 'primitivism' of non-Europe were the self-confirming parameters around which the various Orientalist disciplines circulated. But what gave these disciplines their dynamism and urgency, at least in the beginning, was the need to explain the apparent historical connections between Europe and its Oriental forebears.

The identification of the Indo-European group of languages was to have incalculable consequences in world history. Not only did it disrupt conventional notions of linguistic history, and give rise to a century of philological debate, but it quickly generated theories about racial origin and development, as language and race became conflated. The 'Indo-European' group of languages, at different times called the 'Japhetic' languages (after Noah's son Japheth, distinguished from the 'Semitic' and 'Hamitic' languages that derived from his other sons Shem and Ham), or 'Indo-German', began to be called 'Aryan' from their supposed origin around Lake Aries in Asia. The term *Aryan* gained widespread authority in 1819 from the efforts of Friedrich Schlegel (Poliakov, 1974: 193). This term came to symbolize an idea close to the hearts of European states – that a separate language indicated a separate racial/national origin. Schlegel's rhetoric in galvanizing German youth with the myth of an Aryan race early in the 19th century began a process that led eventually to the rationalization of the Holocaust in the Second World War. The concept which had the potential to unite peoples of wide cultural disparity – the Indo-European community of languages – peoples as diverse as Indian, Persian, Teutons and Anglo-Saxons, became the source of the most strident racial Manicheism as it fed deeply-ingrained European racial pretensions.

In short, Orientalist analysis almost universally proceeded to confirm the ‘primitive’, ‘originary’, ‘exotic’ and ‘mysterious’ nature of Oriental societies and, more often than not, the degeneration of the ‘non-European’ branches of the Indo-European family of languages. This quest for origins, however, created a desire to know the other, a desire that was most evident in translation studies.

Race and Translation

In *Colonising Egypt*, Timothy Mitchell (1988) writes about an Egyptian delegation on their way to the Eighth International Congress of Orientalists held in Stockholm in 1899. On their way to Sweden, the Egyptians stopped over in Paris and visited the World Exhibition where they were most disturbed to witness the Egyptian exhibit that was built by the French:

The Egyptian exhibit had also been made carefully chaotic. In contrast to the geometric lines of the rest of the exhibition, the imitation street was laid out in the haphazard manner of the bazaar. The way was crowded with shops and stalls, where Frenchmen dressed as Orientals sold perfumes, pastries, and tarbrushes. To complete the effect of the bazaar, the French organisers had imported from Cairo fifty Egyptian donkeys. (1988: 1)

What was remarkable about these exhibitions was that they ‘became so accurate and so extensive, no one ever realised that the “real world” they promised was not there’ (Mitchell, 1988: 10). No one, that is, except for the visiting Egyptians. In the age of colonialism, such was the confidence that the colonial world itself could be translated simply through exhibition. As Maria Tymoczko (1999: 17) has aptly put it, ‘translation is paradoxically the means by which difference is perceived, preserved, and proscribed. Translation stands as one of the most significant means by which one culture represents another’. Consider, for example, how British soldiers in India who encountered Muslims as they beat themselves chanting, ‘Ya Hasan! Ya Hosain’ during the Muhaarram procession translated this to Hobson-Jobson (Yule and Burnell, 1903). The translation of foreign words into English words of what was perceived to be similar sounds though with widely differing meanings was a common practice during colonial rule. It was a clear manifestation of the assumed right of translating another culture and giving it meaning within European culture, albeit that the translation was in no way true to the original.

This link between knowledge and power, the desire to know the ‘other’, has its roots clearly in the search for the origins of European languages. That desire, however, led to a quest to master the ‘other’ languages, a quest of how to translate – how to best capture the world of the ‘other’ through the ‘science’ of social translation. This process was one that Michel Bréal argued, ‘does not suffice at all, in order to give an account of a structure of a language, to analyze its grammar and to trace the words back to their etymological values. One must enter into the people’s way of thinking and feeling’ (cited in Mitchell, 1988: 141).

The project of social translation was manifested most clearly in the science of ethnography as a systematic mode of inquiry that was allied closely to colonialism. The marriage between anthropology and colonialism was most evident in the case of Bronislaw Malinowski (1930), the celebrated anthropologist, and Lord Lugard, the architect of Britain’s control of its African territories. Malinowski argued that, ‘an important task of anthropology was to provide scientific recipes for facilitating colonial control’. It is not surprising therefore that Edward Said (1989: 225) has observed that, ‘anthropology as we have known it can only continue on one side of the imperial divide, there to remain as a partner in domination and hegemony’.

It is precisely this link between professional ethnography and the colonial project that led Jacques Derrida to level the charge of ethnocentrism against structuralists such as Lévi-Strauss. In response to Lévi-Strauss’s claim in *Tristes Tropiques* that the Nambikwara of Brazil had no equivalent to writing except what they called ‘drawing lines’, Derrida (1976: 123) asks the question:

Is not ethnocentrism always betrayed by the haste with which it is satisfied by certain translations or certain domestic equivalents? To say that a people do not know how to write

because one can translate the word which they use to designate the act of inscribing as 'drawing lines', is that not as if one should refuse them 'speech' by translating the equivalent word by 'to cry', 'to sing', 'to sigh'? Indeed to 'stammer' . . . And ought one to conclude that the Chinese are a people without writing because the word *wen* designates many things besides writing in the narrow sense?

For Derrida, ethnology as a discipline could emerge and occupy a privileged place as a 'human science' because the West itself had undergone a process of 'decentering', when the 'history of metaphysics and of its concepts – had been *dislocated*, driven from its locus, and forced to stop considering itself as the culture of reference' (Derrida, 1978: 282). Consequently ethnology, Derrida points out, accepts the very premises of ethnocentrism that it seeks to denounce. In short, Derrida suggests that ethnography is bound by the very concepts it inherits.

Lévi-Strauss, in his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, argued that, above all, ethnology was an act of translation: 'when we consider some system of belief . . . the question which we ask ourselves is indeed, "what does all this mean or *signify*?", and to answer it we force ourselves to *translate* into our language rules originally stated in a different code' (1967: 80). This might appear, at one level, to absolve Lévi-Strauss from the attack mounted by Derrida, and yet it seems to confirm how such an encounter reaffirms Western superiority in precisely the same way as Orientalism. The desire to know the other, in one's own terms, is what led Valentine Mudimbe (1989) to declare that Africa is an 'invention' with little capacity to record its own contribution. It is in this context that Tejaswini Niranjana (1992: 82), in her study of translation and its colonial context, has argued that the methodology of ethnographic transcription entailed 'the complete effacement of the speaking or experiencing subject from the scientific texts of anthropology and its displacement into the genre of personal narrative'. Translation, she argues (1992: 2), 'as a practice shapes, and takes shape within, the asymmetrical relations of power that operate under colonialism'. When viewed from such a perspective, translation becomes part of the colonial strategy of domination. As Ronald Inden (1986: 408) points out, the knowledge acquired by the Orientalist appropriates 'the power to represent the Oriental, to translate and explain his (and her) thoughts and acts not only to Europeans and Americans but also to the Orientals themselves'.

This desire to translate the colonial subject in order to contain them is one that was particularly prevalent among the colonial missionaries who were at the forefront of encoding what were often perceived to be primitive Asian and African languages into a systematic grammar. They were often the first to prepare Western-style dictionaries 'participating thereby in the enormous project of collection and codification on which colonial power was based' (Niranjana, 1992: 34). This process often dovetailed with the missionary education that was forced upon colonial subjects who, more often than not, were forced to speak in English (wa Thiong'o, 1981). The creation of this colonized educated class, part of the strategy advocated by Macaulay, was so that the colonial subject would be manipulated through English education with 'ways of seeing, techniques of translation, or modes of representation that came to be accepted as "natural"' (Niranjana, 1992: 31).

Although European confidence was at its peak during the age of colonialism, this did not mean that there was no resistance to these modes of representation and power. In even the most extreme cases of collaboration, the Dubashis in India, native informants upon whom the very edifice of colonial rule was dependent, there was a clear sense of agency. The role of the Dubashis, who were confidential servants and interpreters to British Company officers, was to act as intermediaries who linked the colonizers with the colonized. In reality, however, the Dubashis were 'double agents'. Robert Frykenberg (1965: 35) writes about Venkata Rama Rao, the Dubash of Robert Hughes in Guntur district, who 'by taking over the detailed work of administration . . . was able to spread a net of cleverly fabricated records and of systematic embezzlement'. It was because of this lack of trust that William Jones had advocated that East India company officials learn Asian languages because, 'it was found highly dangerous . . . to employ the natives as interpreters, upon whose fidelity they could not depend' (1823: vii). It is precisely this desire to know and dominate the other and to regard him or her as sub-human that necessitated the invention of race

Slavery and Race

Slavery illustrates more than anything else the contradictions of the project of modernity. Hence, it represents an important point of departure in order to understand the complexities of race, at least from the time of the trans-Atlantic trade. Under the impetus of an explosion in European consumption in the 18th century, the slave trade burgeoned and a 'triangular trade' developed in which European goods were sold to Africa and African slaves were carried to the New World, whence tropical commodities were transported to Europe. In this sense, the extreme commodification and adoption of new business techniques meant that slavery also became the dark underside of the European passion for progress and scientism – the hallmarks of the project of modernity. It is estimated that, between 1500 and 1870, more than 12 million African captives were removed forcibly and taken to the New World in Christian-owned ships – with a further seven million taken in Muslim-owned ships (Chandler, 1994). More than one and a half million captives never reached their destination. They died under the most horrific conditions during the passage. The new business techniques that underpinned the commercialization of tropical goods necessitated that human labour itself was denigrated to the level of an essential but renewable resource.

The fact of slavery, the horrendous conditions which African slaves endured, as well as the modes of power which defined relations between slaves and their owners, necessitated some form of justificatory system in order to rationalize its contradictory position within the modern principles of political and human rights. In this way, the concept of race, already evident within Western epistemology, took on poignant significance. Central to such a system was the idea of 'white' superiority and 'black' inferiority. When the system was challenged, religious sanctions were often deployed to justify a racial hierarchy and hence slavery. The designation of black races as the 'sons of Ham' doomed by Noah to be 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' continued in South Africa into the 20th century. More commonly, during the 19th century as abolitionism grew in strength, ethnological and physiognomic myths were employed to justify European domination. As the plantation system developed, these justifications became important mechanisms of control 'which both protected fellow Europeans from the rigours of full slavery and designated Africans or blacks as its proper victims' (Blackburn, 1997: 12).

Slavery has been a persistently contradictory aspect of modernity. The most attractive aspect of the Enlightenment, with its confirmation of human individuality, was the promise of a greater personal freedom. In general terms, the rise of empire and the rise of race thinking were linked by the need to marginalize and denigrate those African peoples who were being enslaved. Modernity was always European modernity and it was exported through Empire. However, this advance and the forms of servitude deployed in the colonies were detested at home. Europeans 'saw in slavery a notion of intense and comprehensive domination that was the antithesis of citizenship and self respect' (Blackburn, 1997: 18). Its employment as a moral and economic technology of colonial subjection was all the more telling. Slavery exposed the duplicity at the heart of European modernity: 'the subscription to the ideals of universal humanity and democracy on the one hand, and the imperial and colonial subjugation of non-European peoples and racism on the other' (Eze, 1997: 12).

Rather than slavery being a contradiction between the ideals of the Enlightenment and the sordid reality, the establishment of European cultural and philosophical supremacy required the dialectical negation of Africa where slavery was a key feature. As Eze (1997: 13) points out, 'By dialectically negating Africa, Europe was able to posit and represent itself and its contingent historicity as the ideal culture, the ideal humanity, and ideal history'. More importantly, as Orlando Patterson has noted, 'we should not be surprised that the Enlightenment could accommodate slavery; we should be surprised if it had not' (cited in Morrison, 1993: 38).

Basil Davidson (1966) points out that the earliest recorded encounters between Europeans and African kingdoms at the beginning of the 15th century demonstrate a relationship between equals: the exchange of diplomatic counsels and glowing accounts of kingdoms whose organizational powers and influence rivalled that of the Roman Papacy. However, as the

plantations in the Americas developed and European trade demands shifted from raw material to human labour, there was also a shift in European literary, artistic and philosophical characterisations of Africans. ‘Specifically within philosophy’, Africans, says Eze (1997: 6), were identified as a subhuman race ‘and speculations about the “savage” and “inferior” nature of “the African” and “the African mind” became widespread and intertextually entrenched within the universal discourse of the French, British and German Enlightenment thinkers’.

Contemporary Race Studies

Although race has been studied in different contexts for a long time, the systematization and encoding of race into a distinct academic field is a relatively recent phenomenon. As the editors of a recent Routledge reader, *Theories of Race and Racism*, Les Back and John Solomos (2000: 4), point out, it is only since the 1960s that ‘we have witnessed a noticeable growth of interest in the theorisation of race and racism and more generally what is called the “sociology of race relations”’. This systematic study of race and racism has produced an explosion of literature and led to the establishment of disciplinary boundaries that are vigorously policed. In this respect, the emergence of what can be best described as ‘race studies’ mirrors the emergence of area studies.

During the 1950s in the USA, area studies rapidly emerged as the major site for the study of non-Western societies. The anthropologist Julian Steward (1950) noted that there was general agreement about the objectives of this new form of knowledge production. The key objectives were to ‘provide knowledge of practical value about important world areas; provide an understanding of social and cultural wholes as they exist in areas; give students and scholars an awareness of cultural relativity; [and] further the development of a universal social science’ (1950: 2).

The overarching purpose for pursuing such studies for Steward was to overcome ethnocentrism. Area studies emerged as a way of re-imagining space that not only sought to make intelligible the complexities of different regions, but also allowed for these areas to be systematically studied by the various disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. More importantly, area studies fostered the growth of these disciplines, led to the emergence of a plethora of so-called ‘specialists’ and increasingly became involved in policy-making.

The contribution of area studies needs to be evaluated against the backdrop of the Cold War and the West’s determination to prevent the new states from succumbing to communism. The establishment of the United States Social Science Research Council’s (SSRC) Committee on Comparative Politics in 1954, under the chairmanship of Gabriel Almond, can be seen as the formative period in which modernization theory became the prescriptive solution for Third World development strategies. This committee clearly was working in the spirit of Truman’s 1949 speech that described the nations of the southern hemisphere as ‘underdeveloped’:

Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and more prosperous areas. For the first time in history humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people . . . I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life . . . Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern and scientific knowledge. (cited in Escobar, 1995: 3)

It is precisely this obsession with the notion of applying modern and scientific knowledge that fuelled area studies and led to the adoption of a myopic view of rational methodologies that could be applied to all situations in order to achieve predetermined results. Hence, despite Steward’s noble intentions that area studies would overcome ethnocentrism, the very methodologies deployed meant that area studies albeit unintentionally contributed to that process. It led these disciplines to become hermetically sealed. The effect of this approach was to render area studies open to the very charges that Edward Said (1978) levelled against Orientalism.

The desire to know the 'other' on the terms dictated by area studies can be seen as analogous to the manner in which 'race studies' has increasingly emulated this methodological obsession. For example, only those writings on slavery that have a 'scientific' basis are seen to have legitimacy. The historiography of slavery from such a dispassionate and scientific perspective only recognizes written sources about the slave trade. Herbert Klein's (1999: xviii) argument about such a historiography grounded in facts is particularly pertinent because he places a great deal of emphasis on the British Parliament that 'initiated the systematic collection of statistical materials on the slave trade by British Government agencies'.

Klein's obsession with methodology and the belief that this is the only way to uncover some ultimate 'truth' can be seen in his suggestion that:

. . . almost all European slaving nations kept detailed statistical records on the trade for tax purposes. A good many private company records found their way into the national archives of Europe and America in the nineteenth century. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries commercial newspapers kept detailed records of African slave ship arrivals and departures. From all these published and documentary sources something like half or more of the slaving voyages ever undertaken have left a written record. (1999: xviii)

The idea that these historical sources of the slave trade are more important than a range of other sources about the slave trade reveals something fundamental about the very practice of history from such a perspective. As Masolo (1997: 284) has pointed out, 'definitions of history as meaningful and implicative episodes are partly appropriations of traditions and other practices by self and projections of self in time'.

Dipesh Chakrabarty (1992: 20) argues the need for 'provincializing Europe' entails provincializing the knowledge claims of 'the "Europe" that modern imperialism and nationalism have, by their collaborative venture and violence, made universal'. It is this kind of knowledge that opens up the possibility, for example, of rethinking area studies, making it possible to explore the range of complexities of difference, and to recognize the importance of detailed knowledge of the practice of everyday lives in particular locales.

It is precisely this kind of approach that needs to be inculcated within 'race studies'. There is a need to ground new knowledge in this area by indicating *how* the phenomenon of 'race' should be treated in contemporary social theory terms rather than by setting out to formulate new *theories* on the phenomenon. In this, it must be recognized that the concept of 'race' was in the past seen mainly through the perspective of the Westerner and the colonizer. Moreover, the concept of 'race' was inappropriately linked to language. This led to the rejection of the tools of discursive resistance and imprisoned resistance against racism in an ever inward-looking world.

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Ethnicity, Sexuality and Globalization

Joane Nagel

Keywords ethnicity, ethnosexual, ethnosexual frontiers, heteronormativity, nationalism, race, sexuality, sexualities

Differences of color, culture, country, ancestry, language and religion are the materials out of which ethnic, racial and national identities and boundaries are built. Ethnic boundaries are also sexual boundaries. Ethnicity and sexuality join together to form a barrier to hold some people in and to keep others out, to define who is pure and who is impure, to shape our views of ourselves and others, to fashion feelings of sexual desire and notions of sexual desirability, to provide us with seemingly natural sexual preferences for some partners and apparently intuitive aversions to

others, to leave us with a taste for some ethnic sexual encounters and a distaste for others. Ethnicity and sexuality blend together to form sexualized perimeters around ethnic, racial and national spaces. Sexual boundaries mark the edges of the race, the ethnic group, the nation.

There are both explicit and implicit sexual dimensions to race, ethnicity and nationality. The borderlands that lie at the edges of racial, ethnic and national boundaries are *ethnosexual frontiers*, erotic intersections that are heavily patrolled, policed and protected, yet regularly are penetrated by ethnosexual settlers, sojourners, adventurers and invaders. Normative heterosexuality reigns in ethnosexual spaces. Heteroconventionality disciplines ethnosexual practice. Heteronormativity rules racial, ethnic and nationalist identities.

Homophobia dominates racial, ethnic and nationalist ideologies. Socially and politically approved sexual identities and behaviors define membership in the race, ethnic group and nation. Adherence to and deviation from ethnosexual norms of conduct locate individuals inside or outside racial, ethnic, or national boundaries signifying Us and Them. Sexual respectability identifies and inoculates in-group members. Sexual disreputability defines and contaminates racial, ethnic and national Others. Our women are pure, virgins, virtuous; Their women are soiled, sluts, wanton. Our men are virile, strong, brave; Their men are impotent, weak, cowardly. Our women are mothers of the nation; Their women are breeders and seducers. Our men are defenders of the faith; Their men are rapists and degenerates.

Despite the visceral power of sexual matters in general, especially those involving race, ethnicity or the nation, the connection between ethnicity and sexuality often is hidden from view. Sex is the whispered subtext in spoken racial discourse. Sex is the ubiquitous innuendo in racial slurs, ethnic stereotypes, national imaginings and international relations. Although the sexual meanings associated with ethnicity may be understated, they should never be underestimated. An obscured ethnosexual connection, once revealed, can illuminate many of the taken-for-granted features of social life from the micro level (individual lives, friendships, families, communities) to the macro level (economic sectors, nations, international relations, the global system).

One aspect of the quickening pace of globalization is that growing numbers of people from diverse backgrounds residing in distant locales are coming into ever more frequent contact with one another in real or virtual space as a result of increasing international migration, the growing availability of and access to international communications systems, and the accelerated movement of workers and industries around the globe (Antonio and Bonnano, 2000; Hardt and Negri, 2000). Globalization connects populations that are distinct from one another in language, religion, appearance, culture, nationality. Since these are the traditional bases upon which ethnic boundaries are built, the world might get smaller as a result of globalization, but it may well be becoming more ethnically divided (Rajamoorthy, 1999; Tsuda, 2001). Globalization contributes to both the building of ethnic communities and the breaching of ethnic boundaries by providing increased opportunities for ethnosexual settling, sojourning, adventure and invasion. Thus, we can think of globalization as an important dimension of the process whereby race is sexed and sex is raced.

The sexual aspects of race, ethnicity and nationalism are constantly shaped and reshaped by the globalization process. Tensions between local and global rules, structures, and processes governing ethnicity and sexuality have heightened as the speed of globalization has increased. Global ethnosexuality resides in the sexual dimensions of the global migration of workers, the often hidden sexual aspects of the globalization of production, the emergence of a sexualized global consumer culture, the war making and peace keeping military-sexual complex, and the global human rights movement. Sexuality and ethnicity, race and nationality are not only visible in national and international sex trades or in global networks of sexual exploitation and trafficking (Malarek, 2004). There are links between economies and sexualities outside of the sex industry. Ethnosex can be located in the new denationalized economic spaces created by national governments trying to increase economic development, colonized by international businesses trying to decrease production costs, and populated by workers from rural and poor regions and countries trying to make ends meet (Tolentino, 1999; Parrenas, 2001, 2005).

Globalization contributes to a collision between local and global sexual standards and images through the global circulation of culture – fashion, style, music, film, ideas, identities. The global consumer culture involves the spread of a whole system of ideas about what it means to be female and male members of the modern global village, albeit as variously raced and nationalized women and men. Local consumer cultures and identities are shaped by, but also are different from, those in the global masterframe. They are both imperialized and indigenized, subject and sovereign. Global and local consumer cultures are ethnosexualized as East and West, South and North gaze toward one another through lenses colored by ‘modern’ consumerism. Western sexual commodification (e.g. the Marlboro man, disco and rock’n’roll, European and American fashion and fashion models) sells a racial, national and sexual style at home and abroad. Global marketers appropriate the coolness of color to market clothing, entertainment and desire back to Europeans and Americans (Root, 1996; Farrer, 2002).

Although it often goes unacknowledged, sexuality both underpins and undermines a variety of processes and institutions in both local and global systems. Sexuality supports gendered, classed, raced, and aged power relations and privileges, and lubricates their smooth operation and reproduction. Sexuality also subverts these same processes and institutions when sexual practices violate rules and assumptions about heteronormativity and

heteroconventionality. The international movement of bodies and business and the global spread of consumer culture extend beyond popular culture performance spaces or postindustrial production sites and reach into people's daily lives, interpersonal relationships and their images of themselves and Others. As globalization links populations in denser, faster and more complex ways, the political economy of desire will continue to complement and complicate the constantly unfolding global order.

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Race Science

Charis Thompson

Keywords race, re-biologization of race, science

From theories of polygeny and classificatory systems for human kinds used in the justification of colonialism, genocide and enslavement, through to grave-robbing craniometry, the display of 'primitive' humans, and surgical experimentation without anesthesia on the bodies of slaves, the violence done by the early putative sciences of race should disabuse us of prelapsarian origin stories about the objectivity or inherently progressive nature of modern science. Race science forged a trail with more or less devastating consequences around the world for a century and a half. At the beginning of the 21st century, there is a widely shared consensus that

there is no such thing as biological race, and yet there is also a pressing sense that the intersection between science and race, and especially between medicine and race, must not be ignored. To begin to extricate social scientific and scientific research from this seeming contradiction, it is necessary to pay attention to new and not so new ways in which science and race are co-imbriated. There are at least three strands that demand attention: racist ideologies continue to draw purported support from scientific sources; global science and technology markets dependent on processes of racialization are growing; and race-differentiated disease profiles require research into the interaction between biology and race.

As Korean American social theorist John Lie (2004: 90) explains in his book *Modern Peoplehood*, 'Race was reified as a biologically based descent group, or a permutation of modern

peoplehood in the nineteenth century . . . Philology laid the basis of racial science, stressing kinship and genealogy, and downplaying theology and Christian universalism . . . What had been explained by climate or culture came to be explained by innate differences.' By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, during the heyday of eugenics, theories eliding modern ways of classifying people with biological race categories reached their apogee. The sciences of race appeared to reveal in nature the very hierarchies that industrializing, colonizing, capitalist societies needed to justify the new status quo: success as evidenced through class competition (awkwardly, though, reproductive fitness as judged by high birth rates never coincided with capitalist elites), and intelligence (as judged primarily by one's position in various metropole-oriented pedagogical and knowledge circuits, such as the university). Even in this period, however, when hierarchies described by scientific race theories were widely considered factual and unbiased, and legitimate to use in political and social planning, scientific usages of race were many and contradictory. The enthusiasm with which Hitler's National Socialists embraced Old and New World eugenics and race science signaled not just the zenith but the beginning of the end of a general acceptance of the scientific naturalization of categories of peoplehood (Kuhl, 2002).

The demise or so-called 'retreat of scientific racism' is a core Western epistemic corollary of Allied victory in the Second World War, notwithstanding the fact that it began well before the 1930s, and did not receive widespread acceptance until the 1950s. As Elazar Barkan (1992: 1) wrote in his book of the same name, 'The Nazi regime has compelled us all to recognize the lethal potential of the concept of race and the horrendous consequences of its misuse. After World War II the painful recognition of what had been inflicted in the name of race led to the discrediting of racism in international politics and contributed to the decline and repudiation of scientific racism in intellectual discourse.' The famous series of UNESCO (1969) statements on race, the first of which were issued in the early 1950s, is commonly taken to bookend the period of the retreat of scientific racism. Group difference as measured in biology retreated into statistical rather than correspondence epistemology and away from appearance and social group membership and into the sub-phenotypic realm of population genetics. The 1950s also signaled the high point of environmental determinism. In understanding the re-biologization of race in the age of genetics, it is significant that the dialectic that defeated late 19th and early 20th century race

science was one of nature versus nurture. In contemporary biological and medical practice, race is primarily invoked in ways that find the distinction between nature and nurture harder than ever to make, let alone stabilize. In many of the new biologizations of race, it does not help to emphasize nurture over nature, because both are seen as in play together.

In recent times, the discovery that, in biological terms, within-group differences are greater than between-group differences has become a mainstay of the near consensus in the academy (if not elsewhere) that race is not biological. The failure of any single biological criterion to act as a necessary or sufficient condition for an individual to be classified as belonging to one group rather than another also signaled the wrong-headedness of the inquiry into biological race. The results of the Human Genome Project and other studies in population genetics have made their way into popular culture as alibis of the essential biological oneness of humankind, and of the single unified descent thesis known as 'Out of Africa' (Haraway, 1997). Nonetheless, the three kinds of re-imbrications of race and science listed above are signature aspects of global science and technology in the genomic era.

First, racist science, that is, scholarship involving scientific and social scientific methodologies that appears to lend support to racist ideologies or to racist governance, has a tendency to come back. This can be seen, for example, in the publication in the USA of *The Bell Curve* and racialized accounts of intelligence; in theories about group propensities to commit crime; in the potential for genetically based insurance discrimination and violations of privacy; and in the patenting of genetic and cellular processes and organisms without benefit to the population from which the biological materials were extracted (Reardon, 2005). A consensus that there is no scientific or biological race serves only to further mask the continuation of these kinds of claims.

Second, where science and technology are globalizing, as well as where they are failing to globalize, racialization is often part of the differentiation of epistemic pathways and of markets. This is evident, for example, in the transnational and domestic stratification of the organ donation and gamete and embryo markets (Ong and Collier, 2005; Thompson, 2005). In the case of gametes and embryos, the cells themselves are raced in ways that affect not just their availability and who can benefit from them, but the market value and the perceived kinship to recipients of the cells, even when detached from the donor. The transnational division of labor in the sciences and the technology sector throw up countless examples of

racialization occurring as part of the growth of science, technology and medicine, and vice versa.

Finally, the early 21st century is a period in which, in some rich liberal democracies, citizens have begun to make individual and group based claims on the direction of the development of scientific and medical knowledge. Citizen activism and biosociality make up well known aspects of the contemporary face of AIDS, certain orphan diseases, genetic prospecting, and pushes for human stem cell research, for example (Epstein, 2004). Increasingly, too, national and international professional, government and legislative bodies have come to see group based medical specificity as a means to counter health care disparities and rising health care costs (Winkler, 2004). This has generated its own kind of consensus: if we do not investigate race-differentiated disease profiles with race as a variable, how can we possibly hope to alleviate disproportionate and premature susceptibility to suffering and death of some groups over others? While each medical specialty in different cultural settings deals with different conundrums as to the scientific ontology of race, the necessity to address what race means and how it might be measured and taken into account is widely felt (Anand, 1999).

This brief sketch of the rise, fall, and return of race science suggests a need to refocus global vigilance in scholarly and political action. We know that there is no such thing as a scientific concept of race, and yet it is increasingly urgent to investigate the intersections between science and race. As a way of exiting from this political and epistemic dilemma, I suggest that we move the inquiry from this impasse – from asking whether biological race is real or not – to one where we ask how and when and for what purposes and whose gain race is biologized and biology is racialized?

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The Market

Karin Knorr Cetina

Abstract Markets have led a shadowy existence in economics. The ruling paradigm, neo-classical economics, for which markets are a central institution, has mainly been concerned with the determination of market prices. Until recently, sociological investigations of modern markets focused on production, as did anthropological work that ascertained how each culture made a living. The major debate among anthropologists to date has been about whether the economic rationality of the maximizing individual is to be found in all societies or whether substantive economies are always embedded in a cultural matrix that determines its logics and forms of transaction. A new feature of financial markets is that they are based upon scopic systems – electronic and informational mechanisms of observing and contextualizing market reality and of back-projecting this reality onto the computer screens of globally operating traders. When such a mechanism is in place, coordination and activities respond to the reflected, represented reality rather than to pre-reflexive occurrences. This form of coordination contrasts with network forms of coordination that are pre-reflexive in character. In network markets, participants rely on their relationships to determine ‘where the market is’. In a market based on scopic systems, the market is fully visible on screen – as a set of tradable, comprehensively contextualized, quickly moving prices for various trading instruments. In this situation, a level of global inter-subjectivity emerges that derives from the character of these markets as reflexively observed by participants on their computer screens in temporal continuity, synchronicity, and immediacy. As a consequence, these markets are communities of time. As temporalized systems, financial markets project a form of coordination adapted to a global world that leaves behind the patterns of traditional producer and exchange markets.

Keywords financial markets, financial technologies, global microstructures, microsociology, scopic systems

Markets of one kind or another are common in known Western and non-Western history, and they are central to capitalist economies. What differentiates the capitalist economy from the socialist economy, from gift giving, tribute, subsistence economies and kinship-based economic patterns, as Polanyi has argued ([1944] 1968; Swedberg, 2003: 104–5), is the way distribution is structured – as market exchange rather than as redistribution or reciprocity. Yet our knowledge of what types of markets there are, of the cultural dimensions of markets, and of how we are to understand them analytically remains oddly underdeveloped. Markets have led a shadowy existence in the discipline in charge of them, economics, as economists will freely admit (e.g. Coase, 1988: 7). The ruling paradigm, neo-classical economics, for which markets are a central institution, has mainly been concerned with the determination of market prices. Until recently, sociologists, following Marx and Weber, focused most of their attention on production, in an attempt to understand the rise of capitalism, modernity and industrialization. Anthropologists, meanwhile, took their domain to be ascertaining how each culture made a living, thus also privileging production. Their major

debate to date has been about whether the economic rationality of the maximizing individual is to be found in all societies or whether substantive economies are always embedded in a cultural matrix that determines its logics and forms of transaction (Wilk, 1996: 3–13). Markets have nonetheless awakened ever more interest in recent years – perhaps in response to the rise of financial markets and the increased ‘marketization’ of public services, social security and other welfare provisions that were previously the domain of nation-state policies and regulations. In many ways, capitalism appears to come into its own fully as a market society only at the turn of the 20th century. Not surprisingly, current concepts of the market originate from work in and on Western market societies.

What Are Markets?

At the root of our current notions of a market lie – arguably – two ideas. The first is the idea of a mechanism that solves the problem of *bringing together the diverse and dispersed interests of buyers and sellers*, of those who have goods to offer and those who need or want them. For centuries, this mechanism has been that of a specified place. Historians have shown that such marketplaces first materialized in early Greece at the periphery of settlements in the form of ‘silent trade’ between persons ‘who left and retrieved their goods at a sacred boundary stone or its analogues’ (Agnew, 1986: 20). With silent trade, exchange took place but buyers and sellers never needed to meet one another; in Sahlin’s words, silent trade maintained good relations ‘by preventing any relations’ (Agnew, 1986: 24). These anonymous, silent markets were followed by the ‘noisy’ central place markets that resulted from the movement of markets to the centres of settlements, a process accomplished fully in England only by the 17th century. Such central markets are still with us today in various forms. Examples range from periodic open-air farmers’ markets, which exist throughout the Western and non-Western world, to bazaar markets, such as the thousand-year-old market in Sefrou, an old caravan stop at the foot of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco famously described by Geertz (1978), and the Tsukiji market in Tokyo, the world’s largest seafood market (Bestor, 2004). The most economically complex version of the central place market today is the modern, non-electronic stock exchange. The New York Stock Exchange itself started out as a physical gathering place, which on the Wall Street of 1790 was the now famous buttonwood tree under which those interested in trading securities met (the Exchange moved indoors in 1817). Central place markets need to be distinguished from the kind of dealing that increased and spread during the 16th century in the expanded space of international trade and involved long chains of supply and circulation and a multiplication of intermediaries. This generalized and more private trade presumably passed through networks of physical connections and business relationships between merchants, financiers and commercial explorers. It illustrates the expansion of the specialized role of traders who are not producers, but merchants – who find, buy and stock particular goods in order to resell them later to other traders or consumers at the end of a supply chain. Internationally active trade diasporas, that is, networks of traders that operated as intermediaries between communities, have their own long history dating back to several centuries BC; such networks also controlled long-distance trade within specific regions, such as China or the Indian Ocean. In the 15th and 16th centuries, the emerging scientific revolution in Europe generated knowledge of navigation that, together with the colonialist impulse, helped European traders take over much of world trade – but not without resistance. For example, members of the Hadrami diaspora of Arabs from Hadramawt, Yemen, that operated in the arc of coasts across the Indian Ocean, played an important role as intermediaries and political leaders in the recurrent and persistent confrontations that emerged between the diaspora and various Western empires: first, the Portuguese, then the British, then the Dutch – and now the USA; Bin Laden is a member of the Hadrami diaspora (Ho, 2004). In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Industrial Revolution led to a further explosion of Western long-distance trading and the emergence of decentralized trade-based markets that illustrate the principle of travel as a way to physically connect producers and consumers in spatially dispersed situations. Generalized trade and the industrial revolution prepared the ground for

a third kind of market, the modern consumer market, and another mechanism by which buyers and sellers can become connected: the retail store. Stores date back to the emergent cities of the 11th century, but they became the distribution channel of choice of the newly emerging consumer markets whose beginnings have been traced to England in the second half of the 18th century (Swedberg, 2003: 147; McKendrick et al., 1982). Thus, besides buyers and sellers, trading corporations, stores and long, potentially global supply chains – as well as advertising and marketing agencies – are central elements of the enlarged concept of a mass consumer market. At the same time, the mass consumer market illustrates the idea of the market as an *interface* between producers and consumers that was also present in peripheral and central place markets.

Economists' Market: A Price Discovery Mechanism

The modern, decentred consumer market and the modern stock exchange as a place where buyers can find sellers (via intermediaries) also illustrate a second idea with which modern markets are associated. This is the idea of *price discovery and adjustment*. The idea is embodied in the economist's concept of the market – in particular, in the neo-classical model of general equilibrium theory, which presupposes that there are independent agents equipped with a set of preferences, technological opportunities and an endowment of wealth who maximize their utility by working out what they want to buy and sell relative to prevailing prices. Buyers' demand and sellers' supply are viewed as forces operating in the market. The relative prices of goods adjust themselves according to the laws of supply (all other things being equal, sellers will tend to supply more at a higher price) and demand (*ceteris paribus*, the quantity demanded of a commodity is inversely related to its price) until a mutually acceptable price emerges that represents the balance of these forces. When this happens, the market is said to 'clear' and a state of equilibrium is attained at which supply and demand are in balance and a mutually acceptable price has emerged. The equilibrium price is something to be discovered in this market, but the price also coordinates the interests of buyers and sellers: it allows them to satisfy their needs by pushing supply and demand in the right direction. The model hence conceives of markets as tending toward a state of rest, though this state may only be attained through complicated processes of adjustment and negotiation among players who react to the various signals. The equilibrium state will be disturbed by external shocks that lead to renewed adjustments.

Critics both within and outside economics have taken issue with many aspects of this model; in particular, they have asked exactly how the right set of prices might be discovered by participants, given the difficulties of identifying and comparing the respective goods and prices. Interestingly, as Earl points out, when early equilibrium theorists like Walras and Edgeworth attempted an answer to this question, they appear to have drawn their inspiration from auctions and the workings of the Paris commodity and stock markets (Earl, 1995: 299–300) – where expert traders shouted their way to the discovery of a 'fair' price – by making provisional buying or selling offers without deposit or fee, and which they could cancel once they found a better deal. In essence, this corresponds to the idea of a continuous auction, which the stock exchange indeed embodies while at the same time delivering a standardized, regulated and consistent version of the central trading places of the past. Economists tend to interpret these institutional provisions in functionalist terms, without considering further the internal differentiation and social construction of institutions, which social scientists see as social conventions. They assume that institutional provisions render the exchange process efficient by solving some of the information, comparability and consistency problems of decentralized, unregulated markets.

Social Scientists' Markets: Mostly Producer Markets

One interesting characteristic of the neo-classical economists' take on markets is that they focus on an abstract version of 'exchange' markets viewed as a price-making and resource-allocating mechanism for which the stock market provided the model. This was not always

the case. As Swedberg points out (2003: 105–9), classical economists such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo and John Stuart Mill saw the market as something more concrete, often synonymous with a place or geographical area, and they saw the prices of goods as being determined by the amount of work it took to produce the commodity. Social scientists will recognize here the origin of Marx's famous labour theory of value. Like Marx, economists before the neo-classical revolution thought in terms of producer markets, while Walras and later economists turned to the stock market for inspiration. This movement from producer markets to exchange markets was reversed when sociologists (re)turned to studying markets and the economy in the 1980s after decades of neglect; a time during which economic sociology had been equated with industrial sociology and the perspectives of Parsons, Smelser and Wilbert E. Moore, who shied away from addressing core economic activities. Besides economics itself, the new economic sociology is the field most actively involved in discussing and studying aspects of markets. It is generally traced back to Granovetter's (1985) ground-breaking article on economic embeddedness and his belief in the need for a fundamental attack on neo-classical arguments. When it comes to markets, one upshot of the rebirth of interest in economic matters since the early 1980s in the USA is a major line of research that focuses on producer markets. Thus, while economists turned to exchange markets, taking the stock exchange as their point of departure, sociologists have predominantly focused on producer markets, taking the firm as a point of departure. This corresponds to the emphasis early economic sociologists placed on the internal workings of organizations in line with their understanding of production as central to industrialization (e.g. Swedberg, 1991), and with their interest in social distribution as a facet of social inequality and social structure. Definitions of producer markets generally assume the stable role of the producer as a firm, encompassing a governance structure and internal production processes, and vary in accordance with how the sociologist conceives of the relationship between producers and consumers. For example, White's influential model (e.g. 2002) stresses the existence of 'tangible cliques of producers' that constitute networks of sellers, monitoring each other to find distinctive niches for their products. In conventional market theory, producers may be oriented toward consumers in monitoring demand; they may also be seen as driving prices down and homogenizing their products. Though some models of markets were concerned with securities markets (e.g. Baker, 1984; Smith, 1999), advances in recent research have not been in the area of market differentiation but have involved a shift in focus from what goes on within firms to what goes on between them; the dominant line of research specializes in the analysis of inter-organizational ties, in effect joining organizational analysis and market analysis through the use of network approaches that look at the nature of relationships and their effects as well as at 'upstream' and 'downstream' markets composed of such networks (e.g. DiMaggio and Louch, 1998; White, 2002; Uzzi and Lancaster, 2004).

Financial Markets

Historically, central markets and trade-based markets were not isolated economic institutions, but tended to involve civic institutions and activities. For example, the Greek agora, a public area at the centre of Greek city-states, where central markets appeared before the 6th century BC, was originally a political, military and religious assembly point. When trading and exchange by professional merchants for profit appeared on the scene, they were regarded as a threat to social norms and cohesion – a response to the perceived encroachment of middlemen within the household of the agora (Agnew, 1986: 21–2). The area of market studies where scholars have gone beyond the study of flows of resources, trust and power – pumped through inter-organizational ties – is that of financial markets. Financial markets do not sell commodities that have use value to consumers; as a consequence, they can no longer be viewed as an interface between producers and consumers. Instead they become a primary framework for self-contained economic transactions. Goods in the form of financial instruments (currencies, stocks, bonds, options, etc.) circulate in these markets; though these instruments may expire, lose value or decay in other ways, they do not get used up by market-external consumption.

Financial markets therefore pose the question of ‘what markets are’ in a new way. We cannot simply define them as being centred on matching buyers and sellers or on the price-finding mechanism, since such definitions fail to convey that these markets’ *raison d’être* is by and large endogenous to them. In other words, profit generation in these markets does not derive mainly or exclusively from intermediary services rendered to commodity users and providers. What has to be spelt out in these markets is the logic of investment and speculation, and this points away from a concept of markets as simply a means of distribution and exchange. Many economists hold that financial markets conform more directly to their assumptions because inbuilt mechanisms guarantee their efficiency (new information will quickly be incorporated in price changes) and transparency; and some social scientists (Callon, 1998) appear to support this claim by arguing that the performative character of economic knowledge transforms economic domains into closer approximations of economic models. But empirical studies by sociologists and new work by anthropologists (e.g. Dilley, 1992; Carrier, 1997) demonstrate, in contrast, that all markets are composite and ‘entangled’ in character (Miller, 2002). They show that financial markets in particular include a rich mixture of cultural and global interaction patterns that enable and shape the functioning of these markets and explain their breakdown (Abolafia, 1996; Knorr Cetina and Bruegger, 2002; MacKenzie, 2004). They also show the various roles knowledge, technology and information play in these markets. The knowledge systems in these markets not only deliver cognitive information for financial decision-making and help in developing financial instruments, but motivate the reproduction of these markets and enter the process of price formation (e.g. MacKenzie and Millo, 2003).

A final characteristic of some financial markets that is new compared to the markets discussed previously is that they are based upon scopic systems – electronic and informational mechanisms of observing and contextualizing market reality and of back-projecting this reality onto the computer screens of globally operating traders and financial units (Knorr Cetina, 2003). Like an array of crystals acting as lenses that collect light, focusing it on one point, such mechanisms collect and focus activities, interests, and events on one surface, from whence the result may then be projected again in different directions. When such a mechanism is in place, coordination and activities respond to the reflected, represented reality rather than to pre-reflexive occurrences. This form of coordination contrasts with network forms of coordination that are pre-reflexive in character – networks are embedded in territorial space, and they do not suggest the existence of reflexive mechanisms of projection that aggregate, re-contextualize, and augment the relational activities within new frameworks that are analytically relevant to understanding the continuation of activities. In network markets, participants rely on their relationships to determine ‘where the market is’ – who wants to deal and at what price. In a market based on scopic systems, the market is fully visible on screen – as a set of tradable, comprehensively contextualized, quickly moving prices for various trading instruments. In this situation, a level of global inter-subjectivity emerges that derives from the character of these markets as reflexively observed by participants on their computer screens in temporal continuity, synchronicity, and immediacy. As a consequence, these markets are communities of time, and they are also flow markets – the previously spatially dispersed trading interests are now integrated into one temporal stream of sequentially connected prices and transactions. As temporalized systems, financial markets of this kind (an example is the institutional currency market) project a form of coordination adapted to a global world that leaves behind the patterns of traditional producer and exchange markets.

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University

Andrew Wernick

Abstract The university is an archaic institution and can claim to have a more or less continuous history over more than two millennia and, at least in the forms that prevail today, could be regarded as a 'Western' institution. However, the combination of globalization and cybernation will set the parameters for the next round of the university's development. A trend will be the growth of global universities, both virtual and land-based. At the same time, the growth of professional life outside of and between institutions has lessened dependency on them, and the academic intelligentsia has become interconnected as never before.

Keywords autonomy, globalization, interdisciplinary, institution, multiversity, nation-state, scholarship

The University in General

Viewed abstractly, the university is a specialized institution for the production, reproduction and dissemination of intellectual capital ('knowledge'). What distinguishes it from a pure research institute is that this function is combined with an educational one. Academic knowledge takes the form of 'higher learning'. By virtue of this dual function the university serves as a capital sector within education as a whole. What distinguishes a university from a religious community (which may also have an educational component) is the range and openness of enquiry. This does not preclude confessional universities. However, the university is secular by nature, to the extent that higher learning exceeds religious education, in any church, both in the scope of what it covers and in the conceptual freedom required for its practices to operate.

In a class society the university is also a class institution. From the Lyceum to the University of Beijing, it has served to acculturate social elites and as a privileged gateway to prestigious occupations and posts. In classical Greece and Rome, it was exclusively aristocratic, as indicated by an extant letter from Cicero's son to his father asking that a slave be sent to him at Athens, where he was studying rhetoric and philosophy, to 'take notes'. The word scholarship, from the Greek *schole* meaning 'leisure', 'free time', carries a trace of the aristocratic culture, which clings to universities even in modern times with the persistent ideal of the gentleman-scholar. A similar fusion of social privilege with study and contemplation attaches to the traditions in India and China associated with Brahmins and Mandarins. The university as accumulated wealth and useless expenditure also serves as a prestige object for its sponsors. The implication of universities in social hierarchies and their maintenance extends, finally, to sex and gender. The university was an entirely male institution until the mid 19th century, even in 'advanced' regions, and its gender integration has lagged behind the entry of women into the work force.

The embeddedness of the university in structures of power and privilege undercuts its claims to universalism and renders those claims ideological. Conversely, the university's civilizational horizons, attunement to the long-term, and ideal commitments can be socially disturbing. Claims to autonomy or asylum in terms of 'academic freedom' are inconsistent

with the monopoly claims of nation-states to regulate everything in its jurisdiction. The same duality is evident at the intellectual level, where the will-to-knowledge comes up against the ideological or illusory aspects of received knowledge. Doubt, criticality and reflexivity militate against given truths, the search for *episteme* against *doxa*. If universities have been normally aligned with the economic and political powers on which their material existence depends, they have also been periodic incubators of heresy and oppositional thought and, at all times, subject to ideological controls. Overall, then, the university has a contradictory relationship with its surrounding society, just as ‘civilization’ is a two-edged sword. On one side, the university is a *charter* institution (Malinowski, 1954), claiming a transcending legitimacy, and autonomy, in terms of its axial values of truth, wisdom, science, and so on. On the other side, those who ‘control the means of material production control the means of mental production’; and the dominant ideas are the ideas of those who dominate (Marx, 1976).

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The university is an archaic institution and can claim to have a more or less continuous history over more than two millennia. To specify the moment at which the university emerges as a distinct institution is not, however, historically straightforward. Before Plato’s Academy there was a long pre-history associated with the rise of religious-cum-intellectual brotherhoods on the one hand and ‘scribal culture’ with its wisdom literature on the other. The basic matrix – higher education combined with advanced research – was established in the fourth and third centuries BCE with the foundation of schools at Athens, and of the museum and library at Alexandria. It was not, though, until the late Roman Empire that something like the system of higher education we know today came into being, with established professorial chairs, a settled curriculum (based on the seven liberal arts) and a licensing role with regard to secondary school teaching. And it was not until the 12th century, in Western Europe, that the formalization of university education into degree courses came about, when the university assumed the form of an independently incorporated institution.

The word ‘university’ (*universitas*) to designate this institution only came into use in the late Middle Ages. The new establishments of Paris, Bologna, Oxford, Salerno, and so on, were initially termed *studia generales*. According to Hastings Rashdall (1895), the requirements for being recognized as a *studium generale* were: a) being a place of study *generally* open to students (i.e. from whatever place); b) having a ‘large number of masters’; and c) offering advanced studies in at least one of the ‘higher’ disciplines, namely theology, law and medicine. Formal recognition of this status (in papal, imperial or monarchical charters) went along with the *ius ubique docendi* (right of teaching anywhere) conferred on graduated masters and doctors. The *universitas* (meaning a formal association that aggregated its members into a single body, as in a guild) referred at first only to the *universitas* of masters and doctors, or to that of the students. To be awarded a *Magister Artium* (MA) was to be accepted into the teaching guild, with the *Baccalaureus Artium* (BA) as a half-way house. Subsequently the *universitas* came to designate the aggregate of associations comprised by the *studium generale* as a whole. Used interchangeably with the latter, by the 15th century it had become the preferred term.

The distinction between *universitas* and *studium generale* cuts across the distinction between teaching and scholarship/research. The *universitas* (broadly the self-constituting academic intelligentsia) has its own life, traditions, and *envoi*, partially distinct from (if inter-related with) those of the university *qua* formal institution. The almost complete identification and coincidence of the *universitas* with the university as an institution in feudal-Christian Europe was exceptional. At other times there have been conflicts, periods of estrangement, and divergent developments. The relationship is constitutively problematic.

Also problematic is the relation between the university’s two core functions of teaching and scholarship/research. On the educational side, undergraduate education – regardless of the actual destination of students – has tended to assume the form of an apprenticeship in the

knowledge project as defined within the university. Both the curriculum and pedagogy have been over-determined by/as the process of reproducing the professoriat. Reciprocally, higher learning has tended towards formalization and scholasticism, with knowledge itself being organized along curricular lines. Thus, areas of knowledge have taken the form of *disciplinae*, and modern efforts to (re)schematize knowledge as a coherent totality took the form of an *encyclopaedia*, namely a circle of learning. The entrenchment of specialization in academic disciplines and departments has helped give the organizing framework for knowledge a conservative bias, as witnessed by the persistence of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic/logic) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, music) from Hellenistic times to the high Middle Ages. Other examples of academic conservatism are the resistance of Scholasticism in the 16th century to the ‘New Science’, the exclusion of psychoanalysis in the 20th century, as well as resistance (e.g. in the post-war UK) to sociology and, more recently, opposition to the rise of interdisciplinary studies including cultural studies.

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The history of the university and of the European intellectual tradition are intimately intertwined. To such an extent, indeed, that in the modern period the university itself became defined as a core element of Western cultural identity. The *mythos* surrounding the university in relation to the rise of Western civilization is ethnocentric. Advanced forms of higher learning developed in several regions of the ancient world, including India, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, and southeast Asia, and a full historical map of the university as a developing constellation of institutions would need to take these into account. Nevertheless, in two historical senses (which need to be disentangled) the university, at least in the forms that prevail today, may be regarded as a ‘Western’ institution.

First, whether through colonial transplant, emulation by modernizing regimes, or global diffusion of models and markets, a Western model, or constellation of models, has imposed itself everywhere. As a result the higher learning institutions of the *ancien regimes*, for example of India, China and Japan, were largely displaced or re-founded. The discontinuity in academic history outside the old industrial heartlands is notable, and has coincided with a modernization process that has been much more ruptural and top-down. The second sense is with regard to earliest provenance, though this must be put carefully. In the earliest Athenian schools there was already an ‘Eastern’ element, drawing on Indian mathematics (and Babylonian astronomy), Brahmanic philosophies of order and world-mind, plus the organizational example of meditative communities. In any case, with regard to the development of universities, ‘the West’ must be understood in a very wide sense. If the story begins on the Mediterranean edge of the ancient empires of the Middle East, then it includes these empires, both as its pre-history, and as conquests in turn. This wider ‘West’ includes both the Byzantine development out of the eastern Roman Empire, and the Arab/Islamic world which absorbed the cultural heritage of both Mesopotamia and the Hellenes.

The importance of Byzantine and Arab centres to the revival of learning in Medieval Europe has long been recognized. The university at Constantinople continued as a Greek institution until 1453, and the migration of its scholars to Italy was a factor in the Renaissance. Even more important were the Arab institutions, beginning with Baghdad where the Abassids commissioned Nestorian Greeks to translate the works of Galen and Aristotle into Arabic and Syriac. Mathematics, medicine and Aristotle came to Europe from Moorish centres like Toledo. Their reduced influence after the 12th century was partly an effect of the crusades and the cutting of traffic through the Mediterranean, and partly a result of the diminished interest of Arab universities in infidel sources following Koranic revival and controversies surrounding the work of Averroes. The inhibition of philosophical (but not scientific, medical and literary) enquiry became more complete in the Islamic world than in Medieval Europe. There too rationalism came under attack, but only radical forms were proscribed, and the restrictions came from above rather than as the expression of a revived religious purism.

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The modern re-shaping of European universities in line with the rise of nation-states, industry and capitalism was a drawn-out process. The Reformation split universities along denominational lines. Print replaced manuscript, and national vernaculars replaced Latin as the basis of a new public sphere. But in other ways, and for several centuries, universities retained their prior forms and functions. They continued to serve as talent pools for the state, training centres for higher clergy, doctors and lawyers, and finishing schools for the rich. They also continued to rely on royal and private patronage, though with merchant and bourgeois benefactors becoming increasingly prominent. At the same time, the spate of institution-building came to an end, with new universities being established primarily as an adjunct of colonization, beginning with the New World. Moreover, while mathematics, astronomy, physics and medicine maintained an honoured academic place (Copernicus taught at Jagellonian University in Kraków; Newton held a chair at Cambridge), much of the intellectual revival that culminated in the Enlightenment by-passed universities and flowed through other sites. Royal Societies and academies provided a home for the new learning, and satisfied the aspirations for professional associations outside the guild structures. The flowering of arts and letters also occurred outside universities, with salon society and coffeehouses providing support for the extra-academic formation of intellectual milieu.

It was not until the 19th century – in the context of bourgeois revolutions, bio-politics, the formation of centralized state bureaucracies, and capitalist industrialization – that the university was revamped so as to become a central institution of what Hegel and Marx called ‘modern society’. In part this occurred through the revitalization and meritocratic reform of older universities. In part it came through the state establishment of flagship new institutions like the University of Berlin (the prototype of the multi-faculty research university) and the French *grandes écoles* (prototype of professional schools and technical institutes). An array of more regional, specialized, or professional/vocational schools was also established, as well as aspiring rivals to ‘Ivy League’ schools, notably in the growth of private and public universities in the USA.

Overall, four changes occurred. First was an institutional diversification that responded to new needs for knowledge and expertise – for example, in civil administration, engineering and industrial design – that could not be accommodated in hidebound older schools. Second was the rising importance of the sciences, balanced by, however, a renewed emphasis on the humanities encouraged by culturally centred national projects. Third was a new emphasis on standards, written exams, and competitive admission, combined with the growing importance of the degree as a job ticket into the professions and higher civil service. Related to this was the professionalization of academia itself, with the development of journals, associations, and an emerging career structure of publish-or-perish. Altogether, the university was given a work-oriented complexion it had not had before. In a traditionalist reaction that softened these changes, finally, the academic tradition was re-invented with regard to an idealized Hellenic foundation. ‘Community of scholars’ rhetoric eventually decomposed into guild-type ideology and public relations, and was opposed by democrats and pragmatists who advanced rival visions of knowledge and its uses. But appeals to a long-term sense of mission stimulated projects of academic reform, and helped to preserve a measure of autonomy from pressures pulling knowledge in an instrumentalist direction.

The results were not without conflict. Issues arose from the bourgeois university’s characteristic dual function, on the one hand as provider of knowledge-for-production/use, on the other hand as keeper of national culture in the context of state formation, class struggle and rival universalistic civilizing missions. A related duality was apparent in methodological disputes in the human sciences, in the split between analytic and ‘continental’ philosophy, and in the ‘two cultures’ of science/research and humanities/scholarship identified by C.P. Snow (1998 [1959]). Nowhere were these contradictions more apparent than in Heidegger’s brief tour as rector of Freiburg, with his equation of the ‘self-assertion’ of the German university with

gleichschaltung and student involvement in physical labour. The tension, though, could be creative. It preserved a space for critique and meta-reflection. Aided by state and business interest in policy and management, it also facilitated development of the social sciences, beginning with economics, in the methodologically contested borderlands of political philosophy, linguistics and ethnography.

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The contemporary university is an outgrowth of the tendencies that came to the fore in the renovated institutions of the 19th century. But these tendencies were amplified and overtaken by the massive expansion of universities in the latter half of the 20th century and by the sweeping changes that ensued. In the course of this transformation, which is not yet over, the modernized university has been modernized (renovated/invigorated?) a second time.

Within the advanced capitalist heartlands, and not only, universities have grown dramatically in numbers and scale. The growth of credentialized occupations, mirrored by proliferating courses and programmes, has converted degrees into a necessary qualification for most non-menial work. Higher education participation rates have risen from 5 to 50 percent. Taken as a whole, and allowing for complex gradations and pecking orders, the academic institution has lost its elite and quasi-autonomous status to become, in its lower reaches, a continuation of mass secondary education, and in its higher reaches, the home of the expert culture in a post-industrial knowledge economy.

This repositioning was heralded in the 1960s by the rise of the ‘multiversity’ (Kerr, 1964) with its multiple undergraduate programmes, professional and graduate schools, ever more prominent medical and science research, and industrial parks. Within and without, lines have blurred between technical-vocational and liberal arts in relation to what qualifies as a degree programme. Universities, polytechnics, community and junior colleges and so on have developed course credit systems that permit transfers within a multi-faceted continuum of ‘post-secondary education’. The metamorphosis has not preserved much sense of loss. Universities have become corporate, oriented to performance, and detraditionalized. Under the aegis of professional managers they have become ‘post-historical’ – institutions without a memory.

It has been a two stage process. An expansion phase in the 1960s and 1970s – heavily state-subsidized – was followed by a phase of rationalization in which, benefiting from the youth shake-up of the 1960s, and in the wider context of post-Fordist restructuring, universities were remodelled. The expansion phase coincided with the demographic bulge associated with the baby boom, as well as with the Cold War and its tensions. The entanglement of universities in military-industrial research and counter-insurgency collided with their conversion into authority-hating zones of surplus consciousness. Contradictions also attended enrolment expansion because of the ambiguous position of universities as youth corrals, namely as absorbers of surplus labour, and also as places of competitively driven (social and self) investment in ‘human capital’.

In the rationalization phase enrolments continued to grow. But in the context of fiscal pressures and post-Fordist restructuring the whole sector was economically and ideologically brought to heel. With the Dawkins reforms in Australia an emulated model, there were three typical features of the new reality: (1) state intervention to rationalize the PSE sector through mergers and differentiation, together with targets, audits, and league tables; (2) allocation of public research funds more directly in line with centrally determined priorities; and (3) a shift to the privatization of costs through rising student fees (and debts), plus fiscal pressures to increase teaching productivity. The effect of this latter has been profound, not only with regard to access and hardship but also through a pervasive stress on performance and a withdrawal of free time. The squaring of fiscal limits with the conversion of universities into mass rather than elite education has implied, more generally, a shift towards a more business-oriented model. Universities, whether public or private, have been pushed to compete for students,

research funds and donations, and to market themselves through the build-up of their image as a brand.

Taking advantage of cost-saving communications technologies, there has also been a growth of distance learning and 'open universities'. An earlier reliance on television and telephones has been replaced by computers and the internet. This has paved the way not only for mammoth state ventures like Indira Ghandi National Open University, with currently more than seven million enrolled, but also for fully commercial ones, particularly in technically oriented and high demand areas like business management and financial accounting. The possibility has also been created of large-scale technological substitution in bricks-and-mortar institutions. On the teaching side, however, the value added by direct contact and tangible facilities has continued to command a premium, and the impact of the telecommunications revolution has been more directly profoundly felt in libraries and administration (at all levels), as well as in all the interactivity and information-gathering that computerization enables, disables and imposes.

Within the university, two further trends have been noteworthy. First, amidst endless hand-wringing about cultural literacy, and despite a renewed vitality across what used to be the liberal arts, the university has tilted away from the humanities. The decline has been relative rather than absolute, but the effects have been marginalizing, with culture, politics, philosophy and so on becoming simply another range of specialties, and a humanist education, or its simulacrum, becoming a luxury consumer good. The fact that 'liberal arts and science' undergraduates have become a shrinking proportion of the total enrolment reflects a growing instrumentalism among fee-paying students, combined with an increased choice of vocationally-oriented programmes. It also reflects the waning interest of states and business corporations in national culture, concomitant with the globalization of all manner of cross-border flows. Within the humanities and soft social sciences, population movements, mass mediatization and an equity-oriented radicalism have brought issues of diversity and multiculturalism to the fore, displacing national history, languages and literature from their once hegemonic curricular role.

A second trend has been the rise of 'interdisciplinary' studies. This has reflected the emergence of new nodes of enquiry (biochemistry, informatics, cultural studies) at fertile cross-over points, and has been linked to a diffuse, critical and post-positivist intellectual ferment. But the softening up of entrenched departmental lines has also facilitated programme closures and mergers (e.g. European studies), as well as – in an older sense of interdisciplinarity – the assembling of expert teams in problem-solving research. In a reverse trend, areas like communications, cultural studies and environmental studies have sought to professionalize or departmentalize themselves, which indicates a complexification of the knowledge map, rather than a dissolution of all disciplinary boundaries. Contentious epistemological and political debates, for example in relation to perspectivalism, cultural studies and the 'science wars', have not led even rationalists and realists to propose a return to the enlightenment dream of a coherent division of the intellectual terrain. Post-foundationalism rules.

Accompanying all this has been a managerial revolution, indicated by the rising power of boards, university presidents as CEOs, and a corporate style modelled on the private sector. The university has been repackaged, including to itself, as a corporate service provider, with students, research users and taxpayers as clients. From university webpages to curriculum vitae and course handouts, self-marketing has become pervasive, combined with a concern for efficiency in the processing of students and in revenue enhancement through research. On the governance side, not only students but also the professoriat has been dis-autonomized. There has been a decline of senates, bi-cameralism and the governance role of faculty. Through market forces on the one hand, and through mission statements, management plans, contracts and audits on the other, all relations in the university have become subtended by a functional (if complex and third order) economic logic.

All in all, the managerial, commodifying and technologized transformation of the university has altered the university with regard to its founding constitutive combination. The *universitas* and the *studium generale* are no longer a happy couple. The *universitas* within 'the

university’ is the site of intersecting alienations, and is alienated as a whole from the organization which bears that name. The detachment of the *universitas* from the university (as *studium generale*) has a positive effect in that the former is constituting itself across universities and countries, in the form of networks, journals, conferences and so on. This interactivity – still housed by universities, but implicated in career structures, inter-institutional competition, accountability mechanisms – sustains the *universitas*, and allows Readings (1996), for example, to speak in non-lamenting tones about the possibilities of maintaining academic life in some ‘real’ sense amidst ‘the ruins’. There are also possibilities of the *universitas* (re-)occupying parts of the university, through new or existing teaching programmes, research centres and colleges. Governance structures may provide a residual basis for re-autonomizing and revitalizing corporatized institutions. Some of these conflicts can flow into union/management conflict. In any case, the growing non-coincidence of the *universitas* with the ‘university’, and of both with what such terms might authentically connote, is fundamental to understanding the condition and dynamic of the contemporary university, and can be expected to remain so.

In that combination of globalization and cybernation that is setting the parameters for the next round of the university’s hypermodern development, a prominent trend will be the growth of global universities – both virtual and land-based – competing around the world. At the same time, the growth of professional life outside of and between institutions has lessened dependency on them, and the academic intelligentsia has become interconnected as never before. It remains to be seen whether and in what way a ‘community of scholars’ can reconstitute itself in this new configuration.

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The Global University

Ryan Bishop

Keywords global, knowledge, military, nation-state, research, university

The university operates and displays a common-sense assumption about its project. In an influential series of essays entitled *The Idea of a University*, John Henry Cardinal Newman wrote that universities are ‘a place of teaching universal knowledge’ (1996: 3). Although

the title of Cardinal Newman’s lectures uses the indefinite article ‘a’, many people cite it with the definite article ‘the’. This mistake in article usage reveals the existence of a generalized concept that coheres around the very universality of the university as invoked by Cardinal Newman. Producing and conveying universal knowledge constitutes the claim from which the institution has derived its authority and legitimacy. But, as many scholars have pointed out, universities around the globe in the late 20th and early 21st centuries display a complex

heterogeneity largely at odds with claims to the generation and teaching of universal knowledge. Therefore, can one speak of *the* university as a universal concept? If so, does it actually reflect the production and transmission of universal knowledge, or might it depend on other shared qualities? And if not, then what are some of the specific cultural–historical forces that cause them to be so widely divergent phenomena while still making claims in the name of universal knowledge?

Because of their current import in the shaping of global institutions in the post-Second World War era, North American universities might point toward some answers to these questions. Large, research-oriented universities in the USA exemplify a specific set of assumptions related to ‘the university’ as a concept and provide the model for the emergent global university in the post-Cold War era. Central to this concept is ‘research and development’ (R and D) as that which attaches the university to the nation-state and its goals, as well as to the (trans)national economy. The shift to R and D of a *specific* nature (one often at odds with ‘pure research’) indicates institutional variations from the University of Berlin model central to the large scale US expansion of public, tertiary education. The University of Berlin model explicitly grounded the university’s project in that of the nation-state. The university was charged with producing a well-rounded elite group of future leaders versed in the history of ideas and specific national culture. In the USA, this foundational purpose has been of import, but US institutions have taken, almost from the outset, a more instrumental approach: that is, although the university is meant to instill such knowledge, it should, at the same time, work for the economic benefit of the nation-state. The *use-function* of a university in the USA, therefore, has had both immaterial and material dimensions.

With the advent of the Second World War, the instrumental aspects of university-based R and D, especially in the sciences and social sciences, were mobilized in the ‘total war’ effort through the establishment of federally-supported research laboratories. These laboratories became precursors of massive research projects carried out after the end of the war, and led to a vastly different institutional makeup and project. Recent commentators, such as Bill Readings (1996), argue that the university now no longer serves primarily in the role as inculcator of national culture for the nation-state. In this manner, parts of the university act as repositories of knowledge ‘once-valued’ in an abstract sense but no longer valued in an economic, applied one. The university, through libraries and various disciplines, has long had this kind of archival function but, in the second half of the 20th

century, the US-global model contained clear demarcation within the institution: that portion which archives and that which produces, especially R and D that can be converted into patents and revenue for the university, for private companies, for hybrid academic-commercial entrepreneurial enterprises, and for the economy at large. The result is the ‘common-sense’ division within the global R and D university partially anticipated in the latter part of the 19th century and early part of the 20th century as the USA imported various aspects of German and French universities. Once in the USA, however, the models metamorphosed, largely driven by an ethos of pragmatism.

Although involved in university operations much earlier, the federal government’s role increased substantially in 1862 with the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act, which provided not only land and funds but also dictated the teaching of specific subjects (including those related to agriculture and technology). At the inaugural address on the founding of the University of California in 1872, Daniel C. Gilman asserted he had no need ‘to make a plea for the study of modern sciences’ in the newly established state institution, for ‘Science . . . was the mother of California’ (Gilman, 1872). Gilman’s paralipsis indicates the newness of, and controversy surrounding, the inclusion of the modern sciences as part of the general university curriculum. Gilman became president of Johns Hopkins University just three years later, and, at its founding, he explicitly argued the case there. Johns Hopkins University became the model of the research-oriented university within the USA, emphasizing professional schools, graduate programs and research. (Gilman’s argument for including the newer sciences countered those put forward earlier in the century by Hegel and Schleiermacher that sought to relegate the sciences to institutional formations different from the university.) Gilman’s reputation for incorporating the sciences and technology into the body of the university partially explained his presence at Johns Hopkins.

At the turn of the 21st century, the opposite relationship exists for the global R and D institution, with the humanities, arts and qualitative social sciences being the areas requiring arguments claiming legitimate inclusion. The increased role of R and D as a revenue generator, at the level of government grants or intellectual property patents, begins to form fully during the Second World War, though the trajectory actually began much earlier. The global R and D university, for which the US institutions serve as a global paradigm, results from a deep enmeshing of academic research of a staggering variety in the military-industrial-entertainment-academic complex. ‘The conversion of military research into

university science', Donald Kennedy, former President of Stanford University noted, 'added tremendous impetus to the domination of the research university by research' (Kennedy, 1995: 10). The military, as well as a related military logic and ethos related to technological research in relation to the uses of the university, have come to dominate the shape and nature of the global R and D university. That transnational corporations share this logic and ethos in relation to the university furthers their sway in the formation of the concept of the global R and D university.

There are many reasons for this increasingly intensified relationship between apparently disparate aspects of a nation-state: military, economy, university and technology. But the import of a standing army to the phenomenal growth of military technology over the last few centuries cannot be over-estimated. The larger, steadier concentration of military establishments allowed for military technology to flourish. With the Industrial Revolution, change in military technology became increasingly rapid, and the first arms race got under way. Armies and their weaponry, as a result, became outdated in a matter of decades. (Needless to say, this pace of change and window of technological advantage is measured now in a few years if not months.) By the late 19th century, as the demand for weaponry continued unabated, the complexity of weapons and weapons systems necessitated huge financial and engineering resources, often outside the sole control of individuals or the state, as well as a willingness to conduct long-term research that might never deliver profitable or deployable results. Thus corporations, with tangential university co-operation, became the major players in arms development and production. Some corporations even established colleges that would work with industry to address problems of industrial technology and mobilization, as Johns Hopkins University (1875) and the University of Chicago (1892) exemplify.

The firm belief that military victory directly correlated with military technology was long in coming, but the First World War finally secured it. Once it did so, the nation-state in the USA pursued military technological superiority intensely, and during the period between World Wars corporate and state coalitions increasingly began enlisting the aid of universities in the pursuit of grant sourcing and product generation related to military technology, a process accelerated by the Depression. For the most part, prior to the Second World War, universities played a rather minimal role in the nation's political economy, though they did so more directly at the individual state level. Afterward, they would become indispensable to it.

Universities that had feared the intervention of federal patronage in the 1930s came to see it as a necessity a mere three decades later. But the annual largesse of US\$1 billion for R and D specified for academic institutions was not evenly doled out, and great chasms of funding yawned between departments – between the heavily moneyed sciences and the anemically strapped humanities, between those fields deemed as being of 'national import' and those whose practicality was questioned and questionable. Or, as Clark Kerr, chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley in the 1950s and 60s, described the situation at that time, 'scientists affluent, humanists militant' (1963: 60). This 'common-sense' division between and within academic institutions, which still holds in the early part of the 21st century and which defines the global R and D university as such, emerged from a decades-long set of specific cultural/historical events and pressures.

The shift from undergraduate instruction to an emphasis on research and publication is another hallmark of the global R and D university. As the title of Clark Kerr's book *The Uses of the University* (1963) suggests, the triumph of instrumental reason had resulted in 'use value' supplanting 'knowledge for knowledge's sake'. To put it another way, Cardinal Newman's universal knowledge gave way to bottom-line accounting and accountability. The shift toward the dominance of research in the research university highlighted the ascendancy of external patronage, from either corporate or governmental sources. The university, starting in the early days of the Cold War, began to resemble the transnational corporations it aided with the substantial support of state and federal funds. The tension in this alliance, of course, rests in the paradox of liberal democratic, late capitalist states.

To return to the questions raised at the outset of this supplement, we can say that the global R and D universities, modeled on those in the USA, share a set of agendas similar enough that it might be accurately labeled a 'universal' endeavor (though 'global' is probably more accurate). But this agenda is not the one that is often commonly assumed, namely a teleology toward truth and knowledge aided and abetted by a powerful, centralized state. Rather it is a complex set of agendas predicated on R and D strategies set by a host of economic, technological, geopolitical, and military concerns, which at times might be central to state policy and other times antithetical to it. The global R and D university serves the military-industrial-entertainment complex and now adds itself as the integral fourth portion of the assemblage while simultaneously operating as an archive of 'knowledge-past' and cultural heritage, producer of corporate workers/citizens/consumers,

and essential node in national/global economic networks.

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Rebranding Harvard

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Keywords advertising, brand, corporatism, institution, marketing, privatization

A distinguishing feature of contemporary universities is the extent of the (self-)marketing practices in which they have come to be immersed. Universities, like other public institutions in the age of privatization, quasi-markets and private–public partnerships, have become increasingly *promotionalized*.

This appears not only in the opening up of the university to outside advertising through sponsorships, display adverts and the naming of buildings, and in all the impression management associated with student and professorial careers. It also appears in the competition of universities with each other. From websites to architecture, from fundraising to student recruitment, from mission statements to touted areas of excellence, from orientation week to convocation, from profiling star faculty to choosing a president/vice-chancellor, every dimension of the institution has come to be pressed into the service of cultivating a public image in line with its management's chosen competitive strategy. As in the corporate world, with its concern for niches and market share, this image cannot be left to chance. Competition for students, capital funds, research income and so on dictates ongoing attunement to changing markets and conditions. Maintaining the value of a university's brand, then – not just as a university but as *this* one – entails a whole labour of reproducing it, modifying it, and sometimes, as in oper-

ations of 'rebranding' and 'repositioning', giving it a complete overhaul.

What is new in this respect is neither the mere fact of rivalry and competition, nor the importance of reputation. These were part and parcel of the university from its classical and medieval origins. It is, rather, the self-consciousness with which a university's corporate image has come to be managed, the administrative prominence this task assumes, and the objectification, and indeed monetization, of academic reputation itself as brand.

In general, brand-consciousness heteronomizes. The choice of market strategy embodied in a projected brand-image feeds back into both product and its style of presentation. In universities this includes programme mix and research emphasis. Which is not to say that the convergence between academic and more direct commercial branding practices is complete. What sets university branding apart is that academia (like churches) has its own criteria in terms of which to evaluate worth – criteria that are themselves anchored in something presenting itself ultimately as universal. Through degrees and appointments, conversely, academic institutions are guarantors of the intellectual and professional culture that ensures maintenance of these standards as a cultural value. It is in that spirit that Harvard, for example, has *veritas* (truth) inscribed on its logo-ized coat of arms.

However, from the point of view of consumer or sponsor information, as well as from that of the meritocracy that democratized universities have come to approximate, objective comparisons

cannot be made on so nebulous a basis. The master value that has come to assert itself in practice, therefore, is performative excellence, wherein the same logic applying to inter-individual evaluation has come to apply to value comparisons between whole universities. Indicators like those related to teaching, research and student service are not a pure construct. They involve, nevertheless, some of the same circularity as results from promotion-alization on other levels. Tests, including self-tests, measure the ability and willingness to do them. Their reportage involves self-presentation. Overall, competition for brand value reinforces trends towards the conversion of universities into machines for the production of high scores in performance indicators and whatever else is needed to bolster the perceived differential value of what they have to offer. In addition, even in 'objective' data about teaching and research productivity there is an irreducible element of qualitative assessment by those qualified. But those qualified are drawn from a credentialized peer group that, through the self-reproduction of academia, has in a sense qualified itself.

What prevents performative excellence from succeeding truth, wisdom and so on to become itself a weightless currency is the acknowledged hierarchy not just within but between institutions. At the top are a handful of world-class universities whose credentials serve as a kind of guarantor and gold-standard for the whole currency of excellence. The imagistic and the value side of branding work differently, therefore, at different levels of the academic system. Regional and feeder universities, less able to draw on their own *mythos*, compete primarily through performance and specialization. They are liable to be rebranded to differentiate them within a state or sub-state system. As we ascend the scale, however, branding is a different proposition, both because it can draw on a reputation that gives added value to degrees beyond any measurable excellence, and because of an institution's credentializing weight within the wider system of evaluation. At the apex, the most prestigious and well-recognized universities have been able to convert a long-entrenched academic reputation into a fully capitalizable brand. This has enabled them, on the one hand, to generate income from the associative value of the (copy-righted) school name as a rentable property; and on the other, to use their accumulated brand-value to position themselves strongly for the coming big-league competition in the global academic market.

The case of Harvard's coming to brand-consciousness in the early years of the new century is paradigmatic. The change was signaled by three things. First was the appointment of a new president, a noted economist well known as an enthusiast for globalization and keen to reposition Harvard in light of the globalized academic market. The second change was a set of moves to coordinate and intensify what had already become a plethora of initiatives to capitalize on the Harvard name, including private sector spin-offs to exploit patents and other forms of intellectual property. The third was an effort to globalize Harvard's reach technologically, by loosening undergraduate residency requirements, making course materials comprehensively available online, and launching a large-scale distance education programme. Not surprisingly, the debate at Harvard – over and above controversies such as those surrounding affirmative action (a conflict one might say between brand-value and brand-image, given Harvard's liberal and *noblesse oblige* character) – has concerned the extent to which a focus on exploiting the Harvard brand has combined with a dilution of the actual student experience, and of Harvard as an elite bastion of intellectual culture, to undermine the brand's differential value.

The gamble of the new Harvard is that it might be possible to capitalize on the old form of ethos-and-nostalgia-driven reputation to acquire the excellence (e.g. via admission and SAT scores) needed not only to sustain the brand's value but also to replace the former with the latter as the basis of Harvard's claim to gold-standard status. The critics could well be right that this will also dissolve whatever was real in the elite and ivy-covered intellectual culture underlying Harvard's image, rendering that image hollow. The import, though, is unclear. For it will have capped a larger change in which, not only for Harvard but also for academia more generally, the intellectual and institutional traditions from which post-industrial universities have ceased to draw values even as an alibi are formally replaced with the coin of another currency.

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Transparency and Teaching

Graham Allen

Keywords administration, freedom, information, quality, teaching, transparency, university

One of the ironies of globalization is that it takes different forms in different parts of the world. However, for people working in institutions such as universities (institutions that, in their very name, place a priority on globalizing notions), globalization is perhaps most regularly registered in terms of a set of concepts with an ethical and practical performative power: quality, excellence, freedom of information and, I would suggest, transparency. An example of the last comes in the European experience of globalization – a strange experience of a demand to be rigorously national, rigorously European and rigorously global, or at least open to the world, all at the same time. To be an academic in a European university is to feel increasingly interpolated by the performative force of transparency, a force (an imperative, a demand) that requires everything that we do as academics to be comparable, measurable and calculable by others and, in particular, our European friends and neighbours. The Bologna Process is a good example of this globalizing force and trend. For academic readers not previously aware of the Bologna Process it might come as a surprise that this crucial European initiative has passed through many stages, including the Sorbonne Declaration (25 May 1998), the Bologna Declaration (19 June 1999), the European Commission's TUNING agreement (2000) and the Prague and Berlin Communiqués (May 2001, September 2003).

The process¹ involves a set of 10 action lines:

1. adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees;
2. adoption of a system of essentially two cycles (either three years BA plus two MA or four years BA plus one MA);
3. establishment of a system of credits (such as ECTS [European Credit Transfer System]);
4. promotion of mobility;
5. promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance;
6. promotion of the European dimension in higher education;
7. lifelong learning;
8. higher education institutions and students (that is, participation of staff and students in the creation of the EHEA (European Higher Education Area), the social dimension of the Bologna Process and quality within their own institutions);
9. promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA and the ERA (European Research Area); and
10. doctoral studies and synergy between the EHEA and the ERA.

Most academics will become aware of the Bologna Process when it begins to impact practically on their institution's decision making and especially their established degree structures. The first physical space in which an academic will confront Bologna, therefore, will probably be either in the department or faculty meeting or, perhaps, in a meeting of some committee responsible for academic and structural development. By the time academics meet Bologna in such spaces, however, it will be too late to enter into any dialogue with the process. The Bologna Process is a fact, a legal treaty, entered into by 29 European Ministers of State for Education when they signed The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999.

Bologna demonstrates a political reality, which we can use as an example of globalization: it is a treaty and a process that is and promises to make radical changes in the manner in which education is delivered, designed and thought about in the countries which make up the European Union. In this sense it is a sign of the transnational or globalized university, a university which is now shaped by forces and trends outside of and beyond those traditionally assigned as legitimate parties responsible for a university's direction, its educational and intellectual mission – the university faculties and the state. The Bologna Process can be used to authenticate claims that the modern idea of the university, exemplified for instance in Kant's *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1996), has been superseded by a university which, as Bill Readings argued in his *The University in Ruins* (1996), no longer directly serves and benefits the nation-state. Gregg Lambert, in his *Report to the Academy: (Re: The New Conflict of the Faculties)* (2001), attempts to update Lyotard's seminal report on the university (Lyotard, 1984), along with other works such as Readings' much-read book on the idea of the university. Lambert, among other things, argues that the modern,

Kantian model of the faculties has been superseded by the emergence of what we might call a fifth faculty, which is higher in its powers than Kant's 'higher' faculties. This new, administrative faculty speaks *of* and *to* the university, it treats the traditional faculties and disciplines within the university as so many troublingly diverse and 'resistant' *cultures* to be colonially ruled (silenced, brought into line) and it treats the outside world either as a further layer of the administrative arm of the nation and increasingly transnational structures or it treats it as a client requiring a transparent and quality product. Many will, no doubt, feel the strength of such a description of the new administrative or fifth faculty that today rules the university in the name not of reason but of market demand and market competitiveness: ethical, procedural, serviceable transparency being an indispensable part of a university's market viability. However, Bologna is not the invention of any university's administrative faculty. It is a process discussed and then ratified by ministers of state for education. The university's design and direction is, today, increasingly being shaped, at least in Europe, by governmental agents not directly attached to the university's *insides*, its *conflicts*, save for their ministerial prerogative. The situation is global at the same time as it is distinctly European. Phenomena such as Bologna do not come down, in a top-heavy manner, within the university's mutating internal structures, they arrive as a kind of climate change for all those working within such institutions, whether they be members of human resources departments, governing body or members of departments of dairy science, human geography or literary studies. Trying to come to an understanding of a process such as Bologna requires that one by-pass staff members of the university itself and move directly on to the internet, where the various stages of the process can all be read. This situation is not insignificant: European universities are now quite literally transparent, their *raison d'être*, their mission statements and the core values by which they operate, are now readable in a cyberspace sweeping through them in a digital form, which encounters no resistance save for the often antiquated machines upon which many staff and students still depend. The post-modern university's inside, the centre of its thinking, its 'principle of reason', lies in a place which is literally (physically) neither inside nor outside. The post-modern university's inside, its ground, is transparent (see Derrida, 1983).

Many of the ideals of Bologna are, of course, noble and just. It would be irresponsible to treat the whole process as if it were just another example of perniciously spreading economic and

cultural (colonial) globalization. The phenomenon of Europe is, it hardly requires me to say, extraordinarily complex. However, it is the responsibility of all those involved in higher education to submit the terms, the objectives and the language of the numerous Bologna declarations, communiqués and policy documents to rational scrutiny, and to vigorously resist the danger of the universities across Europe collapsing into an integrated, uncanny hall of mirrors capable of reproducing the same student, the same degree, and the same knowledge at previously unimaginable speeds. Transparency is a force against conflict: the question remains, however, whether conflict is as pernicious in intellectual spheres as it is in the sphere of international relations.

One of the points of most resistance as far as the Bologna Process is concerned, and one of the things which threatens to complicate the model of a unified, flexible (mobile), calculable, non-conflictual and transferable European Higher Education Area, comes in the form of teaching itself. What is teaching? Has it to do with knowledge or information, technical skills, vocational training or critical thinking? Is it calculable? Are its results guaranteeable or even visible? Is it teacher led or student led? Can it remain free of institutional, governmental and market pressures in an environment of transferability, calculability, mobility, consensus and transparency? Is the increasing demand to audit its representations, in the name of quality control, likely to transform (inform) its character and its reasons? Can teaching, that thing that, since philosophy began in the West, seems to have had to do with irony and subterfuge, doubles and deceit, power and betrayal, ever survive in a culture of consensus, perpetual peace and transparency? We will no doubt come to see the answers to at least some of these questions. But those of us who call ourselves teachers should not be silent in the interim.

Note

1. Information on the Bologna Process Berlin 2003, 'Realising the European Higher Education Area', can be found on the following websites: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/> and <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/>

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Research

Ryan Bishop

Keywords accountability, global education, knowledge, research, university

Aristotle writes in *The Metaphysics* that 'all men, by nature, have the desire to know'. Although a certain self-evident, common sense meaning adheres to this statement, a range of critical questions needs asking: is this true of all humanity? How do we ascertain the nature or essence of humanity? What is the relationship between desire and knowing? And, to cut the list, what does it mean to know? How do we know what we know and that we do indeed know something? To ask these questions is to venture into ontology, epistemology, metaphysics and a whole host of systematic inquiries into the nature of knowledge beyond the topic at hand. Needless to say, these questions remain in play, and from the advent of the Renaissance in the West to the present, an increasingly important strategy/activity for accessing answers to these questions can be said to reside in the notion of 'research', an idea central to the functioning of the modern and contemporary university.

The term 'research' in English in the 16th century involved the act of searching for or after a specific person or thing. In this sense, the object of inquiry was constituted ahead of time, leaving little desired room for accidental or unintentional discovery, and targeting a specific outcome. Later, as research began to be used for a range of investi-

gations, the goal of inquiry grew increasingly nebulous, manifesting a value in the process itself: the general questioning of nature and the world to understand it in terms not necessarily bestowed from the authority of the dogma as meted out by the church or head of state. Increasingly, research was undertaken by individuals, both 'specialists' and amateurs, in pursuit of the enlargement of knowledge outside institutional sites, leading to an astonishing number of discoveries and inventions, for instance about the nature of light or the study of plants or in the development of mathematics. In the 18th and 19th centuries, many new associations and learned societies, like the Lunar Society, were established to discuss and diffuse such knowledges. Clearly this Enlightenment ground meant that guiding principles needed to be established for research if it was to produce the knowledge that all humanity desired. The guiding principles became reason, objectivity, truth and empiricism, to name a few, and universities, as we know them today, proclaimed these as the core justification of their existence. These principles, by implication, stood in opposition to irrationalism, subjectivity, ignorance and faith in traditional dogma. This situation marked a shift within the institution of the university itself as it also had been a site for the distribution of the very sort of received knowledge (dogma) that research intended to question. Thus a tension between parts of the university, not necessarily confined to departments or fields of inquiry, arose between those whose purpose was to archive and store

texts, documents, data and knowledge past that would become the source of research and those who undertook research to test knowledge and challenge ideas. The university shifted from merely being a repository of knowledge used for the training of students to an institution that also produced new knowledge.

Along with research came a number of sites and apparatuses associated with it: the laboratory, technical equipment, methods of verification, the import of repeatability, external confirmation, private and government sponsorship among these. These processes, sites and modes of inquiry also allowed the university to establish firmer connections with the business world and the government, seeing research as a means to help the economy and governance. Research became implicated, therefore, in the very ways of thinking and material conditions that made it possible to exist. That is, questions emerged about the purpose of research. Was it merely for the pursuit of knowledge and truth in the abstract? Might it have applications? If so, how can it be applied? To what ends? And can we determine what those ends might be prior to the conduct of the research? Can research have targets, goals, and outcomes that can be presented to potential sponsors? When funding bodies, such as private corporations and government institutions, enter the picture, choices must be made about what sort of research receives sponsorship and what kind does not. In this manner, especially in the 20th century as the university was increasingly incorporated into the geopolitical demands of the First World War, the Second World War, and the Cold War, end-oriented research, or research that is programmed to have a specific set of outcomes that have instrumental value for the sponsor, began to outpace research for the sake of intellectual curiosity and the once noble, perhaps never actual, pursuit of truth for its own sake. The situation generated its momentum. As departments and institutions generated revenue from specific types of research, which, in the 20th century, often meant but was by no means limited to military application, increased demands to bring in research funds shaped research agendas,

disciplinary focus and professional markers. A type of 'audit culture' thus began to be combined with the endeavor of research. With the institution of promotion and tenure within North American universities, for example, as well as the United Kingdom's Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), decisions regarding who received these institutional rewards often rested on the generation of grants, revenue and research outcomes. The bureaucratic and institutional apparatus of research had moved it much closer to its earlier usage, with little value being placed on the endeavor itself and great value ascribed to a set of predetermined goals and agendas both within the university and outside of it.

In the current moment, the global standard of the university is determined by these various benchmarking exercises that center on research and its outcomes. The success of an institution largely rests on what is called its research and development (R and D). The outcomes are quantified in terms of number, impact and, increasingly, revenue generated by research (through patents and products, as well as entrepreneurial endeavors teaming a part of the university with a corporate research team). This is how the 'excellence' of a university is currently gauged within the marketplace of global education, and students choose to enroll at a given institution based on its status, largely determined by research. Research now serves multiple related, but some times self-contradictory, purposes within the institution that most relies on it. Research is method and measure, purpose and goal, consumer and producer (of funds). This has been the development of research, thus far. It remains to be seen if the development of 'development' in R and D can maintain some aspect of thinking that is relatively free from programmed, directed research that has become the logic of the university.

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Research – China

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Keywords China, evidential research, useful knowledge

The contemporary Chinese terms for research are *yanjiu* (研究 research in the general sense) and *keyan* (科研 research in areas of science and engineering); the formation of these terms, however, was relatively recent and owed a great deal to the influence of the notions of research in the Western tradition. Perhaps the traditional Chinese terms that most closely resemble the English word research are *kaoju* (考据) or *kaozheng* (考证) (evidential research), which refer to the tradition of philological scholarship that reached its height in the 18th century (Qing dynasty). It took the form of scrupulous textual analysis on a range of classics – the originals of which were lost over time – in terms of their internal inconsistencies and factual errors attributable to scribes and printers, and its credibility rested on the mastery of a vast amount of information; its purpose was to restore the classics to their ‘original’ and ‘authoritative’ forms in which they were to be understood and respected. In paying homage to classics as the substance of a tradition, this scholarship reaffirmed the classics with a profound respect for ‘timeless’ truthfulness coupled with a deep sense of filial piety. In this form, *kaoju* was central to Chinese scholarly tradition for many centuries. In the late 19th century, the philological rigor inherent in this tradition was allied with reform; through *kaoju*, Kang Youwei, founder of the so-called New Text School, pronounced Confucius a ‘reformer’, and Liang Qichao, in his ‘Outline of Qing Scholarship’, saw in this tradition a development comparable to that of philology and textual criticism centered on the Greek and Roman antiquity in Renaissance Europe.

The practice of *kaoju* emerged with very different intellectual assumptions from those found in the ontological inquiries of Plato and Aristotle. Instead of truth, form and idea, the primary goal in *kaoju* research was the establishment of authenticity, which served crucial functions in sustaining institutional, moral and aesthetic forms. Two types of theoretical formulations occupied the grounds of Platonic or Aristotelian metaphysical discourse: analogical abstractions that are capable of mapping the natural world with a certain degree of sophistica-

tion (such as *Book of Changes*), and ethical codes of conduct founded on the principles of ‘hierarchy’ and ‘moderation’ as paths to familial and social harmony (such as Confucian classics).

Quite separate from metaphysical inquiries, ‘useful knowledge’ in the Chinese context would also constitute what we mean today by ‘research’; in this regard, there was an astonishing range of discoveries, inventions and theoretical formulations in mathematics, medicine, ship-building, navigation, agriculture, art, techniques of construction and so on. During the European Renaissance, Chinese technologies, such as printing, navigation and gun-powder, played unacknowledged but critical roles in the formation of notions of modernity. One of the most notable recent publicizers of these achievements is Joseph Needham, whose monumental *Science and Civilization in China* contributed a great deal to the understanding and dissemination of traditional Chinese research in the English language. Despite these achievements, the divide between the discourse of metaphysics and that of useful knowledge – the union of which European empiricism has always insisted – cultivated distinct forms of research results in China. The divide between metaphysics and use was marked in the traditional Chinese culture by universal binary constructs based on the idea of ‘essence’ and ‘use’, such as *dao/qi* (道器), *ben/mo* (本末) and *ti/yong* (体用). The fundamental importance of essence (*dao*, *ben*, *ti*) was often cited at crucial moments when useful knowledge (and outside influences) threatened to destabilize established institutional and moral foundations. These notions of research, like many other aspects of the Chinese culture, have undergone tremendous changes since the late 19th century, but they continue to exert an important force in the Chinese reformulation of research under the new global influences.

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Hospital

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Abstract Hospitals are traditional sites, not only of care, but of knowledge production. The word ‘hospital’ is derived from ‘hospitality’, and is also associated with ‘spital’, ‘hotel’ and ‘hospice’. In medieval society, the hospice was a place of rest, security and entertainment. The Knights Hospitallers were an order of military monks that took its historical origin from a hospital founded in Jerusalem in 1048. Before the rise of the modern research hospital, these spitals had a more general function as charitable institutions for the care and maintenance of the aged, infirm and impoverished. Hospitals were important in the historical emergence of the university, but with the dominance of bio-medical sciences medical faculties have become increasingly separated geographically and administratively from other faculties. Medical research is dominated by private corporations and increasingly medical knowledge exists outside the conventional procedures and norms of scientific research.

Keywords Foucault, laboratory, medical faculty, medical knowledge, professions

Religious Institutions of Hospitality

Hospitals as religious foundations were closely associated with pilgrimages, and provided care and support for those who fell infirm while undertaking such religious activities. Most monasteries came to develop a hospitium at the abbey gate for travellers. In Britain between 1066 and 1550, approximately 700 of these institutions were established. More specialized services were developed by lazar houses for the care of leprosy. In the 11th century, two spitals for the care of lepers were created at Rochester and Canterbury, but in the next two centuries leprosy spread rapidly and many almshouses were transformed into lazar houses. It is sometimes argued that the Black Death (1346–1350) killed off leprosy, since lepers were already vulnerable. The plague was also responsible for a rapid decline in hospital foundations, because the rapid decline of the population meant that there was little demand for their services. These two conditions – leprosy and plague – provided the historical setting for Michel Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization* (1971) in which he examined the development of medical organizations as institutions of social surveillance, often based on principles of panoptic governance. Foucault noted that hospitals for the insane were aspects of the transformation of governmentality as a system of micro-regulation and normalization. However, the medieval hospital was primarily an ecclesiastical institution whose functions were liturgical rather than therapeutic. The prayers of the hospital inmates were to aid the spiritual progress of their benefactors through purgatory. Hospitals offered care for these inmates rather than their cure. Nevertheless, these religious foundations provided important welfare services in their local community. The Reformation and the dissolution of religious foundations for the sick and infirm closed every medieval hospital in England, and by 1600 London, with a population of 200,000, had only three small hospitals.

There were important changes in the funding and functioning of hospitals in the 18th century, when hospitals were constructed as charities, thanks to middle-class philanthropy. In 1719 Westminster Hospital was founded by a group of London merchants, and was quickly followed by Guy’s (1725), the London Infirmary (1734), the Middlesex Hospital (1746) and Bath Hospital (1742). These charity institutions provided shelter for the poor, elderly and infirm. These institutions reinforced deference and respect rather than providing medical

services. There were similar developments in North America where the Philadelphia General Hospital was founded in 1751 with support from Benjamin Franklin. These hospitals can be seen as physical manifestations of an urban culture of philanthropy and voluntarism in which care of the deserving poor was an expression of civic pride.

The French Revolution had significant consequences for the development of secular and scientific medicine in which the state and physicians were united behind nationalist objectives. French doctors abandoned traditional text-based principles of learning, and opened up cadavers to see pathologies in their specific settings. Enlightened empiricism was carried forward by figures such as Pierre Cabanis (1757–1808). The new empiricist trend of anatomico-pathology sought the lesions – tumours, inflammation, and gangrene – that were the real source of morbidity and mortality. The challenge of Marie-François Xavier's treatise on membranes of 1799 was to abandon bedside note taking in favour of cutting open bodies to see and feel the reality of pathological conditions. Looking at and listening to the body replaced the recording of symptoms through clinical consultation. The transformation of French medicine in response to the Revolution is the historical context of Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973). The Revolution's Committee of Medicine paved the way for the new empiricism in medical training. With the arrival of these new medical ideas, a theory of the classification of diseases in terms of space and the medical gaze became crucial.

There are three levels of this 'spatialization' of disease. There is the flat, one-dimensional space of the disease in which disease ontologies are differentiated by resemblance and analogy. Second, the disease is mapped onto the human body, where it can move from organ to organ, but also undergo metamorphosis. Within this corporeal space, diseases undergo a localization. The tertiary specialization involves 'all the gestures by which, in a given society, a disease is circumscribed, medically invested, isolated, divided up into closed, privileged regions, or distributed throughout cure centres, arranged in the most favourable way' (Foucault, 1973: 16). The new empiricism required a classification of disease that transformed the ways in which people thought about the relationships between the state and society. Because the French Revolution regarded the traditional hospital as a representation of the corruption of the *ancien régime*, the family was regarded as the natural place for the cure of the sick. The family offered a 'moral regime' that would complement the 'medical regime' (Donzelot, 1979). Although many of the ambitions of the Revolution for medical reform were not successful, Paris became the great centre of medical education, and it was in response to this French influence that London University and its teaching hospital were founded. As in Paris, anatomy dominated the new curriculum. The demand for bodies prompted 'resurrectionists' to steal bodies from new graves, and resulted in criminals such as the infamous Burke and Hare who murdered 16 people before they were apprehended (Porter, 1997).

Another important scientific development was the creation of the laboratory as an institution for training doctors through experimental science. In Germany, the microscope ushered in a new era of histology as the bridge between anatomy and physiology. Improvements in lenses and other instruments assisted the study of cell biology and pathology, and the microscope became a basic tool of medical education. In association with the Humboldt reform of higher education, medical research institutions began to flourish in German universities with state support. Britain lagged behind both France and Germany for a variety of reasons: Queen Victoria's support of anti-vivisectionism, the failure of Oxford and Cambridge universities to modernize, and the dominance of *laissez-faire* economics.

In North America, the age of scientific medicine was launched by Abraham Flexner in his 1910 report on *Medical Education in the United States and Canada* (Rothstein, 1987). He argued that medical education had to be based on experimental science and insisted that medical schools should be part of a university. He also made recommendations about entry requirements and the length of student education. The majority of existing medical schools failed to match his criteria and 46 colleges were closed, including those colleges that provided education for women and blacks. His scientific assumptions also resulted in the decline of homeopathy, and, partly through the decline in the supply of doctors, increased the status and

pay of those doctors who were accredited under the Flexner criteria. With Rockefeller funding, Johns Hopkins University was able to establish full-time chairs in specialist areas of medicine.

The Golden Age of Doctoring

From 1910 to 1973 scientific medicine enjoyed a golden age of increasing influence, status and wealth. The research hospitals were models of scientific application, acute diseases that had ravaged western societies were being eliminated, and the medical profession enjoyed the trust and respect of society. These conditions have changed for a variety of reasons. Chronic illness, which is related to life style and an ageing population, cannot easily be cured or effectively treated. The medical profession has changed under the impact of technical advances in medicine and economic transformations of medical practice. The growth of genetics research has also ushered in new approaches and opportunities that may further transform the practice of medicine. But there are also important contradictions in medical sciences that will have important consequences for medical education and medical settings. The pharmaceutical companies are withdrawing research investment in antibiotics because they are not profitable. Antibiotics are economically the worst pharmaceutical product because they actually cure the patient. The most profitable areas are drugs for chronic disease – diabetes and hyper-tension – because the patient will need the drug for life. There are major contradictions between the medical ethic of curing the patient and the medical economy, which derives profit from the life-long maintenance of illness.

The success of the medical profession rests not only on its political power, but also on the trust of the public. These two dimensions of professionalism are medical dominance and the consulting ethic; the former requires the support of the state, and the latter depends on public confidence and trust. These two dimensions have been transformed by the growth of corporate and global medical systems. This global corporate development of the commercial potential of health and illness constitutes the veritable emergence of a medical economy. These global changes are transforming the traditional doctor–patient relationship, but they are also opening up new possibilities, the future directions of which are unclear. Although the quality of general practice still depends in large measure on interpersonal skills that can only be fully acquired through experience rather than training, the status of medical institutions in society depends significantly on ‘hard’ science and technology. Medical technology presents simultaneously the promise of significant therapeutic improvements in the management of health and illness, and significant risks to human well-being and social stability.

To secure the full benefits of medical innovation, there must be some regulation of the risks associated with contemporary medical sciences (in relation to cloning, new reproductive technologies, organ transplants, and so forth). Who should exercise these regulatory constraints or governance? The professions and governments are no longer able to deliver effective oversight, because the globalization of markets makes legislative and political regulation problematic. The result is an endless cycle of risk, audit, regulation and deregulation. The cycle further inflames lay suspicion of expert opinion and erodes the relation of trust between patients and doctors. The British Medical Association has been criticized for its failure to effectively monitor doctors who have been charged with criminal offences or malpractice. A shortage of doctors and nurses in the National Health Service has reinforced the general sense of crisis and poor management. In addition, the apparent instability in the expert advice surrounding the foot and mouth epidemic of 2001 in Britain further illustrated the problem of the authority of scientific or expert opinion. The ambiguities and tensions between lay trust and distrust in expert systems have become a major issue of modern society.

Any sociological understanding of medicine will have to examine the economics of the corporate structure of medical practice and have to locate that corporate structure within a framework of global processes. The spread of the ‘old’ infectious diseases (TB, malaria, typhoid and cholera) will have significant negative consequences for the economies of the developing world, but they will also re-appear in the affluent West as a consequence of the globalization of transport, tourism and labour markets. The deregulation of global markets as a consequence

of the neo-liberal policies of Reagan and Thatcher will have the unintended consequence of bringing about the globalization of disease. It is unlikely that corporations will adopt policies of corporate citizenship sufficiently quickly for corporations to exercise constraint and to institutionalize environmental audits to regulate their impact on local communities. These global developments have created new opportunities for the exercise of consumer power as a mechanism whereby the negative impact of corporate enterprise on fragile communities and environments can be challenged. Future developments of health care need to be linked to existing debates about civil society and citizenship. We need to realize that health, more than employment, education and welfare, is the fundamental entitlement of citizenship. This health entitlement is often difficult to implement within a world economy where risks are global. The question of health as entitlement raises difficult political and policy questions, because there is an inevitable tension between citizenship as a bundle of national rights and obligations, and human rights as a system of entitlement that does not rest directly on the sovereignty of particular nation-states.

Globalization, the commercialization of medical care and the creation of free markets in body parts have also had an important set of consequences for the professional model of health care. The model of the independent professional doctor is now obsolete with the passing of the 'golden age of doctoring'. Between 1875 and 1920 the status of the general practitioner in the USA was transformed by a number of social developments. The expansion in the market for medical services was a consequence of economic growth, urbanization and the development of urban transport systems. The sovereignty and autonomy of the medical profession were reinforced by the development of licensing laws with the legal backing of the state. With the professional development of medicine, physicians opposed alternative forms of medical practice that departed from the fee-for-service model. Alternative medicines went into decline, or at least into retreat. The professional associations of medicine were generally critical of state control of health, which was seen to be a threat to professional autonomy. The professions claimed that collectivist innovations in the delivery of health care would undermine the principles of individualism, self-help and self-reliance, upon which Western medicine had been built.

The rise of corporate control over medical care has contributed to the decline of professional autonomy, initiative and social status. The neo-liberal emphasis on the free market and aggressive entrepreneurship has brought about a decline in the social status of the general practitioner by converting them into the hired employees of profit-making, private-sector health systems. The professional physician who is hired by a commercial enterprise has to make a profit in addition to providing an adequate system of health care. Furthermore, the contemporary development of health care in the USA has brought about a new emphasis on medical specialization that has undermined, or at least threatened, the occupational coherence and solidarity of medicine as a professional group. In addition to this internal division, with the growth of consumer groups, malpractice legislation and public alarm over technological medicine, there is renewed interest in more holistic forms of medical service through alternative and complementary systems. The commercialization of medicine and the dominance of free-market policies have had the paradoxical consequence of eroding the foundations of the traditional autonomous professional physician as an individual provider of care in a direct relationship to the client.

While neo-liberal policies may have changed the conditions under which the traditional autonomy of the medical profession was sustained, these policies have also had serious consequences for users and consumers. The consequences of these policies have become apparent in a variety of areas of welfare. For example, in the USA poverty has increased by 30 per cent among children since 1979. Between 1981 and 1982, 11 states in the USA showed increases in the infant mortality rate and also showed considerable differences between black and white mortality rates. In Michigan, for example, infant mortality rates rose for the first time in over 30 years to over 13 per 1000 live births. These increases in the infantile mortality rate are associated with the increase in poverty, unemployment, decline in nutrition and the loss of

health insurance coverage through the new limitations on Medicaid. The health-care crisis was manifest in the rising numbers of uninsured Americans, the increasing use of alternative medicine, the inability of the 'germ theory' to contribute to the treatment of chronic illness, and the growth of self-help movements. While there are significant indicators of increasing poverty, the private health sector has enjoyed buoyant profitability and expansion. The economic and political importance of the tax cuts under the Reagan administration was such that, by reducing revenue to the state, they curtailed the ability of future governments to introduce new social welfare programmes to remove hardship, stimulate employment schemes and restore welfare measures. As medicine has become increasingly specialized, the general practitioner has become the conduit into medical care through whom the patient is referred to specialists further down the chain of delivery. The traditional relations of trust that characterized medical practice have been eroded by the commercialization of services and the increasing anonymity of medical practitioners in relation to patients.

Globalization, Technology and Medical Science

Public concern about the pace of technology and its unintended pernicious consequences has been a feature of public inquiry into medicine for a considerable time. In the post-war period, doctors, especially in research hospitals, were criticized as 'priests of the machine', and within the doctor-patient relationship, it was feared that medical technology would create 'physician-centred medicine' rather than 'patient-centred medicine'. Scientific anxieties about 'medical harm' and adverse drug reactions began to appear in the medical literature in the 1950s and 1960s. With the expansion of legal rights of patients, trust between patients and their doctors has been tested by the emergence of a culture of litigation. Litigation against medical malpractice has become an important part of modern legal practice and lack of confidence in medical practice has become a contentious arena of public life. There has been an erosion of public confidence in the medical profession and institutions. At the same time, the technical and technological problems of medicine have become global, and the risks of medical failure or mismanagement have massive legal and economic consequences for the health-care system.

New reproductive technologies, genetic engineering and the enhancement of human traits are components of a 'second medical revolution' that combines micro-biology and informational knowledge systems. This revolution presents a major challenge to traditional institutions and religious cosmologies, but it may also pose a threat to the processes of political governance. The modern notion of the risk society provokes questions about the unintended consequences of medical change, whether the technological imperative can be regulated, and the relationships between pure research, commercialization and academic autonomy. For example, pharmaceutical companies have turned to contract research organizations (CROs) rather than universities and hospitals to undertake basic research on drugs. These CROs are economically cheaper, but they are also less independent than academic institutions. In the USA, around 60 per cent of industry-based pharmaceutical grants went to CROs rather than to universities. The scientific community has argued that such research is not systematically published and it is unlikely to be critical of the pharmaceutical products. In short, such 'private' forms of research are not compatible with the public norms of publication, debate and criticism that are assumed to be essential to scientific objectivity. Because the pharmaceutical industry is currently dominated by a limited number of corporations – ICI, Ciba and Hoechst – there are serious problems with respect to the regulation of the industry and the freedom of market relations.

Global economic changes have significant consequences for medical institutions and professions, especially from global competitive insurance and funding arrangements. To take one obvious illustration, the ownership and current development of the pharmaceutical industry are global. We are also on the verge of health-care systems that will depend on global electronic communications. One remarkable example is 'telesurgery' that involves the use of robot-assisted distance surgery. Such operations have to overcome a variety of problems including long-distance transmission delays. Contemporary telesurgery was pioneered by the US

military in order to provide expert medical services in the battlefield, but it could also make a valuable contribution to assist workers in developing societies and provide important training services for young surgeons. The first operation that overcame the problems of transmission was undertaken by a French team in New York involving a gall bladder removal of a woman in Strasbourg on 7 September 2001. Surgical movements on a robotic console in New York appeared within 155 milli-seconds on a computer screen in Strasbourg. The commercial use of such instrumentation is significant, because patients would in principle be able to buy the best surgery from anywhere in the world. It was alleged that the cost of the Strasbourg operation was \$1 million. Surgery has always evolved through its association with the military. The development of surgery has been driven historically by military conflict and the need to treat traumatic injuries sustained in combat. Telesurgery will make it possible to provide rapid surgical support in future global military campaigns.

Health-care systems have often been slow to adopt innovations in information technology, because the hardware and software are not sufficiently advanced to make a useful or specific contribution to health care. It is assumed that in the future patients and doctors will use broadband technologies that will begin to deliver health-care packages to homes and hospitals. The growth of 'e-health' will create virtual hospitals, transform health education and deliver health services to elderly or disabled patients who have limited mobility. It is assumed that e-health could also improve health delivery to remote rural communities. The technology and delivery systems for such innovations will necessarily be global, and will be organized and owned by global health corporations.

A great deal of social criticism of globalization and the rise of e-health has been with regard to these developments as further evidence of the commodification of medicine, but there are alternative arguments that indicate a growth in consumer autonomy, increased involvement of consumer or patient groups in decision-making and an erosion of medical dominance in favour of 'bottom-up' participation. Alongside the global dominance of large pharmaceutical companies, there is greater interest in and use of alternative medical systems and practices from homeopathy to aromatherapy. For a variety of specific conditions and diseases there has been increased use by patients of consumer websites for care, support and information. To some extent, the model of the consumer/patient lobby group has been provided by the HIV/AIDS epidemic where activists have successfully challenged medical control and shaped the nature of AIDS research and research funding. AIDS websites have played an important part in organizing such movements. A variety of social movements have exploited the opportunities provided by electronic network communication: human rights, women's movement, environmentalism, labour, peace and religious movements. The employment of electronic networks by lay health groups is increasingly significant. As life expectancy rates for AIDS sufferers have increased to 30 years of age, public health-care systems have had to rely increasingly on home help and lay care givers. There is now a range of CF websites that provide health information such as the use of intravenous injections for home care. The result is to side-line professional medical control and to transform the nature of medical authority. With the increase in chronic illness as a result of HIV/AIDS, ageing and changes in lifestyle, the management of care may pass more and more into lay hands with the support of e-health systems. Obviously this is a mixed blessing as more care is devolved to female heads of households, but it also does represent an increase in lay power. It also recognizes that corporate e-health will take a predatory interest in 'indigenous pharmacy', will seek to commercialize alternative health care and to monopolize medical knowledge and research. There is an endlessly circular struggle between centralized and localized e-health, a struggle that exactly complements the processes of glocalization.

Conclusion: Medical Sites

Hospitals became dominant sites of research and teaching as medical technology and medical sciences expanded in the post-war period. Medical faculty budgets came to dominate university funding, and medical faculties, because they enjoyed prestige and public support,

were able to dominate the curriculum of the university. Public concern, for example, about cancer meant that research in medicine could command very large budgets, both from government and the pharmaceutical industries. The medical faculty typically remained geographically separate from the university (because they were often housed inside hospitals), but they were also separate in terms of status and prestige.

Although this privileged status remains in place, there are important political, social and medical changes that are beginning to transform medical sites of research and practice. There has been an important shift in power between doctors and patients that has been brought about by successful consumer lobby groups (especially in the United States), and the growth of medical malpractice litigation has also transformed the traditional doctor–patient relationship. Perhaps the most interesting development, however, is the use of electronic information by patients to form patient groups that operate partly without reference to hospitals or consultants. The growth of e-health implies: (1) hospital services could be devolved and localized, and hence there may be less need for medical centralization of services in large hospitals; (2) patient groups could take responsibility for self-medication and self-care; and (3) the training of doctors could be achieved through e-education. The use of new media can transform the traditional doctor–patient relationship and open up a new medical conversation, thereby recasting medical knowledge.

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Library

Sean Cubitt

Abstract The modern library derives from a vision of public service developed in the 19th century. At various times in the past a commercial service, an educational resource, a religious domain and a political institution, the library today exists in various forms, including all these but in addition the professional libraries held by law firms and scientific or technological associations, multimedia lending libraries and certain areas of the world-wide web.

Keywords index, institution, key word, library, media, public, world-wide web

Concept

The modern library derives from a vision of public service developed in the 19th century. At various times in the past a commercial service, an educational resource, a religious domain and a political institution, the library today exists in various forms, including all these but in addition the professional libraries held by law firms and scientific or technological associations, multimedia lending libraries and certain areas of the world-wide web.

The library is a place where records are accessed. As a concept, the library is distinguished from the archive (q.v.) by its role in making its contents accessible. The archivist's task is to preserve, and the techniques most frequently developed by archivists derive from scientific and technological research into preserving time-sensitive materials and information. The librarian's task is to make available, and the techniques most frequently developed concern modes of searching collections to identify materials. While libraries have a preservation function, they are distinguished by their key function of indexing. The library is a machine for retrieving information. A good index is like a father. It constructs routes of access, it guides towards the results you didn't even know you were seeking. A good catalogue extends the value of a book outward to the community of books. The classed catalogue (which allows access by author, title and subject matter) orders holdings in a way that encourages browsing, the serendipitous discovery of related materials. The concept of searching by keyword has added both new precision and new possibilities for linking otherwise dispersed areas of library holdings.

The library can be understood as the unit of media. A book is incomplete because it presupposes the existence of a dictionary, and because it references other books by quotation, footnotes, indices and generic codes. These linkages are made concrete in libraries, where all books are anchored into networks of subject, author, publisher and date among other categories. In national libraries, the integrated catalogue includes the holdings of buildings dispersed throughout the territory, linked to continent-spanning inter-library institutions which can be conceived of as having ambitions to include all public holdings in print and, increasingly, multimedia and electronic forms. No single library can hope for universality, but the integration of networks across national and even public-private boundaries (for example the private libraries housed in universities and museums) provides for universality. In this sense there is now only one library. However, restricted access subscription databases pitch commercial property against universal public access. This forms the dialectic of the library in the 21st century.

History

Ancient, Mediaeval and Baroque Libraries

The Babylonian and Chaldean libraries from which the Hammurabic Code and Epic of Gilgamesh were retrieved coincide with the beginnings of recorded history. The ancient libraries of Ur were repositories, clearly ordered for sacred and legal purposes. The Egyptian dynasties amassed records as a religious function, and stored them in temples. The Greeks of the classical period collected and shared books: Aristotle's library of manuscripts was a keenly contested legacy after his death. But library history can conveniently begin with the great library of Alexandria (El-Abbadi, 1990), founded in all probability by Ptolemy I, no later than 295 BC. Alexandria was home to both the library and the Mouseion, a house of learning. This relation between writing and talking remains a vital element in library culture throughout its history, another feature distinguishing the library from the archive, linking libraries at least with civil society if not necessarily in all cases with the public sphere.

Hellenistic Alexandria had ambitions to universality, housing at the minimum a half million texts, many of them containing more than one work, from as far afield as Asoka's India. This generous embrace of learning regardless of origin was to permit the dispersal of Greek knowledge among the Arabs during the great biblioclasm of the Christian emperors, indicating a founding principle of librarianship: pluralism.

During the ensuing centuries, libraries continued to serve religious and dynastic purposes, and were to that extent collections rather than libraries. Few libraries were available to scholars before the emergence of the universities, first in North Africa, later in Europe. Modelled on the monastic chained libraries, shelving doubled as reading desks, from which books could not be removed. Library history reflects the diminishing rarity and cost of books, allowing them first to be read away from their storage areas, and later to be borrowed. With the rise of the mediaeval manuscript 'factories' (*scriptoria*) and later of the printing press, books became far cheaper and far more replicable, promoting a less archivist and collector-oriented culture.

It is during the baroque period that such lending and sharing begin to be established in library architecture. On the one hand, Michelangelo's design for the Biblioteca Laurenziana indicates an ascent from the physical towards a spiritual realm of learning; on the other the Escorial and Boulé's unrealized designs for the Bibliothèque du Roi suggest that open shelves promote a community of readers. In 1627 Cardinal Mazarin's librarian, Gabriel Naudé, proposed that 'a Library arranged for the use of the public must be universal' (Chartier, 1994: 64), with the caveat that this could never mean infinite (the paradox posed in Borges' fable of 'The Library of Babel'). Naudé's universality would be represented by only the most important books read, as Altick (1957: 41) makes clear, by the most important people.

A national library, it has been widely held since the 19th century, should hold all of the nation's literature, and a selection of works from overseas. In the most cases, copyright law demands the deposit of a copy of every publication in a copyright library. This function relates closely to the print capitalism which, Benedict Anderson (1983) argues, is an essential characteristic of nation-building in the modern and especially the postcolonial world, an argument extended in detail by Rama (1996) and Viswanathan (1991). At the same time, local libraries in the English-speaking world were exhorted, from the early 19th century, to be particularly devoted to collecting local literature, antiquities and natural history, suggesting that as the library service grew, the national library was increasingly seen as an aggregate of collections across many buildings. This is clear, for example, in the British system, in which newspapers, sound recordings, film and television, scientific reference works and other specialist holdings are kept by separate institutions. The growth of inter-library loans on a national scale, of integrated catalogues including the holdings of multiple libraries, and ultimately the Library of Congress MARC (MACHINE Readable Cataloguing) scheme, indicate that there are more than simply economies and efficiencies of scale and specialism, but that there are in addition conceptualizations of the global library services as forming a single agglomerate.

Such integration has also impacted on library design. Already by the 19th century the sheer numbers of books being published demanded handling systems which had not previously

existed. One impact was on the design of the larger library buildings, where receiving and cataloguing had of necessity to be separated from searching and advice to users, and both from areas set aside for study. In particular, the sheer numbers required a limitation on the open stack system, in which readers might browse along shelves at liberty. In the Bibliothèque Nationale of Ste Geneviève in Paris, the book stacks were for the first time removed from the reading area, a model repeated in university libraries and more recent national libraries like the José Martí in Habana. This reintroduces a professionalized mode of retrieval, and demands of the users high degrees of skill in using catalogues. It also puts the browser at the mercy of the catalogue, and therefore guides searches according to the principles on which it has been designed and maintained.

At the same time, however, the invention first of ftp (file transfer protocol), and from 1993 the popularization of hypertext transfer protocol (http) and the world-wide web opened up new ways of sharing information. Such sites as Project Gutenberg and the many Marxist and anarchist collections which began as volunteer projects typing out-of-copyright texts into web format, have grown to massive libraries in subsequent years. Google's 2004 commercialization of this type of project is if anything a diminution of what is available elsewhere online. The explosion of print media has been duplicated by the explosion of online media, now measurable in terabytes per annum. At the same time, leading archivists of film and television estimate that approximately 9 billion hours of moving image media are being produced annually across the world. The scale of publication now outstrips the ability of even whole communities of librarians to view everything. National libraries threaten to limit their cataloguing and storage of new printed publications other than those published in their own country. National archives have long since resigned themselves to sampling the huge volume of media in their respective fields. World-wide web search engines are self-cataloguing but not self-archiving: the efforts of archive-org to record the early state of the web demonstrates the scale of the issue. Insofar as the full extent of the archive is no longer humanly perceivable, the task of archiving has been delegated to machines, as have the tasks of sampling rates and catalogue design.

Lessig's (1999) disturbing maxim, 'Code is law', applies to such library-related issues as copy-protection, user-tracing and the sampling of datastreams. Attempts by national governments and corporations to restrict media flows are undertaken at the level of mechanical performativity. The meta-catalogue of the world-wide web has come closer to universality than any previous library, but at the cost of the principle of legislative autonomy. At the same time, large areas of the world-wide web, the so-called 'deep web', restrict access to subscribers, a trend especially noticeable in electronic journal subscription and in professional publishing, for example legal texts and pharmacopias.

Lending and Storing

Early debates on the merits of public libraries focused on the dangers of a literate and well-read population becoming like the French artisans who led the revolution in Paris in 1789 or the large number of print workers who signed the manifesto of the First International. But the demands of an increasingly bureaucratized society and an increasingly manufacturing-based industry required at the least a modicum of instruction, and at least some avenues of self-improvement, according to the influential political platform of Samuel Smiles, to avoid those social bottlenecks that would bring about revolution by neglect and repression. The early ideology of the public library was then one of instruction or, as Michel de Certeau (1984: 166) has it, of informing, that is of inculcating the values expressed in Enlightenment circles through the encouragement of reading. However, as de Certeau goes on to observe, informing also has the sense of making something more fit to itself: the opposite effect, in which readings become materials for a populist view of the world. The commercial imperative resulted in the rise of the popular press and of mass-circulation books (themselves often presented as 'libraries'). It also provided libraries with another rationale for their claim to public subsidy: that they offered an entertaining alternative to drinking. The entertainment value of libraries, decried throughout their existence, may be seen as integral to their subsidiary role as shelter for the

homeless and unemployed, and as one way they could guarantee readership among the working class. The balance of instruction and entertainment continues to make the multimedia library, actual or virtual, a constantly changing institution.

Among changes affecting library holdings and policies have been the shifting fortunes of vernacular literature. The rise of the popular novel could be countenanced as long as it was a genteel pastime. When it began to evolve into the gothic romance and the penny dreadful, libraries were blamed for its deleterious effects, especially on youth. The popular press was already regarded as politically suspect: it only became morally dangerous with the rise of the racing press, when libraries were characterized as betting shops. Surviving records indicate a gendered space: far more women than men removed books on loan from library premises in the second half of the 19th century (Altick, 1957). On the other hand, though Melville Dewey's pioneering school of librarianship at Columbia (Dewey, 1876) was closed down for being equally pioneering in training women librarians, librarianship has been a strongly feminized profession since the later 19th century on both sides of the Atlantic.

Early subscription libraries relied on effective common ownership of the books, the subscription going towards the purchase of new stocks. Previous foundations, such as the gifts of libraries to communities and schools in the 15th century, had not in general permitted borrowing. The commercial lending library was to have a long life, Jesse Boots' library, for example, functioned successfully into the 1950s in Britain. The free public library with universal access grew out of a bewildering range of social trends, political attitudes and philanthropic gestures, to become a central plank of modern democracy. With roots in the granting of access to manuscripts in ancient times, the library is more than a repository. It is instead a gift a society makes to itself, a recognition of the commonality of the knowledge stored in libraries.

Theoretical Logic

Indices and Catalogues

Umberto Eco (1999: 226) distinguishes between the dictionary, a rational structure of definitions operating as a closed system and organized in a hierarchy of classifications; and the encyclopaedia, which opens out onto knowledge about things derived from outside the system, and includes cross-referencing to other related fields of knowledge and received opinion. Not necessarily rational, the encyclopaedia is the project of a community.

Library classification has attempted both models. The Dewey decimal system, foundation of the majority of modern catalogue classifications, uses a hierarchical structure, so that, to use one of Eco's examples, dolphins will appear as a subcategory of mammals. Others, like Ranganathan's Colon classification, permit the dolphin to be retrieved from a search for fish. James Thompson argues that a library's holdings must not only be ordered, but that 'Practical convenience should dictate how subjects are to be grouped in a library' (1977: 224). These practical considerations are subject to historical change, far more so than the absolute categories of Linnaean or grammarian taxonomies. Despite some serendipitous scattering, classification systems are restricted in their ability to provide the rich interweave of cross-referencing because a book has to be located in a single physical space on the shelves. Keyword searching has thus become a rewarding substitute for the old open-shelf system of browsing. The logic of the library since the explosion of printing has been relentlessly spatializing. A search by accession or purchase date is unlikely to provide information that even professional users would find useful. Chronology and other temporal modes of organization are stored usually only to distinguish books of the same title or editions of the same book, that is, as adjuncts to the fundamentally spatial logic of the catalogue, itself a function of the necessity to make the books available, for which they must first be locatable.

In this the library catalogue follows the logic of filing and cartography, the other two great taxonomic achievements of the Baroque. Lying between the two, the library catalogue is at once a filing cabinet and a map (even though for years its typical form was the ledger: file cards only came into use in the late 19th century). Where some mosque libraries still catalogue in order of acquisition, on the principle that the more removed from the time of the

Prophet, the less valuable the text, the flattening out of historical depth in western libraries removes knowledge from time, save only in disciplines where the most recent text is always deemed the most relevant (for example, in the physical sciences).

Information Retrieval and Semantic Searching

Mechanical information retrieval systems developed during the 1970s and 1980s tended to be expert systems, replicating the professional taxonomies and hierarchies of specific professional domains like medical diagnostics and engineering. The applicability of such systems to public access was and remains limited. Many early adopters have had to replace their first systems with new ones capable of the multiple dimensions of searching which a non-professional is likely to employ. The use of authorship as the basis for ordering collections derives from the common encyclopaedia where the author's name precedes the work, as is the case with Shakespeare, as well as from the development of copyright law. In certain media, however, the author is relatively insignificant for a researcher. Slide librarians face an especially difficult task in the categorization of photographs. When a typical user wants an image of Hitler or the Rio Grande, the authorship of the image is unlikely to feature strongly. Computers are notoriously reluctant to learn visual lexicons, but users will in many instances have a particular image in mind (Hitler on a podium, seen from the side, giving the salute to the Nuremberg rally in daylight). There are few guidelines as to whether such an image should be stored under political history, biography or architecture. Similar problems may be encountered in art history collections: searching for a still life with lobster is notably difficult in libraries organized by artist. What Ranganathan calls the 'aspects' of the work become crucial when dealing with humans' visual memories rather than with hierarchical trees defining the semantic content of a work. If it is the case that the library catalogue is encyclopaedic, in the sense that it is not rational but is communal, the unit of organization is not the brain but the community of users, and its extent defined not by taxonomic categories but by common sense about the physical world. Library science here runs counter to cognitive science.

Substantive

Professional Libraries

The exception to the definition of libraries of universal ambition in terms of holdings and access is the professional library. Such libraries may be held by membership organizations (the Royal Society, for example). But the libraries which are of most concern for social theory are those belonging to commercial enterprises. A law firm of any scale will always have its own library. These libraries are a precious resource for the firm and will have their access severely restricted. In areas such as case law the holdings must be constantly updated, and in fields like tax law, archive holdings are swiftly redundant for professional purposes. These libraries are such only in name, because rather than developing their holdings over time, they replace archive holdings with newer documents. Many firms today subscribe to digital libraries for this reason. Not only is the mass of law increasing beyond the capacity of expensive downtown real estate, but the pace of change is such that digital storage and online updating is the only realistic solution to the problems of bulk and ephemerality. The subscription model, however, is in itself restrictive, and denies the principle of access. Such specialist professional libraries diminish the public stock of knowledge to the extent that their professionalization as well as their commercialization remove them from the encyclopaedic domain and restore them firmly to taxonomic hierarchy. Pharmacopias provide another example of a knowledge base whose architecture has been reorganized to accommodate rapid growth and change, for commercial gain and in order to retain the privilege of the professional. These developments move in the opposite direction to the public library. Contrast here the evidence of Antonio Panizzi's evidence to the Select Committee on the British Museum in 1836:

I want a poor student to have the same means of indulging his learned curiosity, of following his rational pursuits, of consulting the same authorities, of fathoming the most intricate

inquiry as the richest man in the kingdom, as far as books go, and I contend that the Government is bound to give him the most liberal and unlimited assistance in this respect. (cited in Thompson, 1977: 73)

Panizzi, usually regarded as the founder of the British Library, here gives the heart of patrician England a lesson in communicative rationality that removes the concept of the public sphere from the lost past and the de facto class-system of the coffee house and the salon, and delivers it to the hands of Chartists and working people at the public expense.

Many university libraries operate as if on the basis of a professional library. Where access is restricted to members of the university, and where access to materials (such as online journals) is restricted by password, the principle of open access is likewise denied or circumscribed. Where this is the case, the links between texts and talk are also likely to be broken in the interests of commercial confidentiality or professional ethics. To the extent that the open access library is dedicated to the community of readers and thus to the increase of communication, while the professional library restricts privileged access to its members, even though the former replicates professional holdings, it does so subject to delays and occasionally limitations on access which defer and restrict public communication.

Slide, Moving Image, Sound and Multimedia Libraries

Owing to the unstable nature of the media on which they are recorded, early film and perhaps even more so early videotape have become the preserve of archivists. Nitrate film is dangerously volatile as well as liable to radical degradation over time: transferring to celluloid is expensive, dangerous and slow. Magnetic media, tape and disc, lose their magnetism, and the plastics on which the iron oxides are bound lose their flexibility and integrity over a period of only a few years. Optical media (laserdisc, CD, DVD) are also prey to degradation over time. The sheer volume of production is now so great that no archive can store more than a fraction of annual output, and providing up-to-date catalogues, let alone viewer access, is prohibitively expensive. Yet audiovisual media provide not only access to popular tastes and pleasures of the past, but technical detail, and in many instances creative work of the highest value. Audio and slide archives share the same problems. One response is to manage the storage and retrieval of documents in digital form. Two drawbacks to this are the difficulties and costs of handling older, and to that extent more vulnerable materials, in order to digitize them, and the instability and rapid turnover of digital formats. Despite their ostensibly dematerializing effect, digital media are if anything more dependent on their material substrate than the original formats.

Digital and Virtual Libraries

Not only do storage media (floppy discs, laser discs, CD-ROM, DVD-ROM . . .) constantly change, but older technologies are themselves by now archivable, and the problem of retransferring from one storage system to another adds new dimensions to the Library of Babel scenario that archivists and librarians fear. Annual production of print, film, optical and magnetic content has been estimated at 1.5 billion gigabytes of storage (Lyman et al., 2000). The problem now becomes one not so much of access as of evaluation. Such evaluation has always been a necessary part of the archiving problem (Groys, 2003). But the principle of universality has not applied the same evaluative judgements to libraries. Nonetheless, users must have some sense of their whereabouts in the collection, either via a cataloguing system, or by a simple generic labelling of collections distinguishing Children's Books from Romance or Reference. Digital libraries have no walls, labels or rooms, and such sorting as is available is undertaken by 'portals', variously authoritative gateways run by physical libraries and other public service entities or commercial ventures, including some of the most lucrative and most frequently visited sites on the web. Among the latter, and especially among search engines like Yahoo, ranking in searches can be assured by payment to the operator.

Derived from document management, storage, retrieval and sharing systems developed at the Centre Européen de Recherche Nucléaire, the world-wide web as initially envisaged by Tim Berners-Lee (Berners-Lee with Fischetti, 1999) and his collaborators (Gillies and Cailliau,

2000) was to be an open library accessible on any computer with an Internet connection, but it was also to be an open forum for writing and rewriting documents. The latter function was lost early on, in the early 21st century, due to the commercialization of the web; the former function has begun to wane due to the effort to make the web conform to the televisual model of delivering audiences to advertisers adopted by, among others, the corporate interests who control browser and browser plug-in design, to such an extent that more radical voices are contending that the age of the web browser is already over.

This proposal implies limitations to free, open and universal access to the web. Panizzi's commitment to the free inquiry of any user is belied by the storm of automated preference setting and guided browsing that results from cookie technology. The digital library, unlike the digital archive, does not suffer from a politics of exclusion but from the proliferating technologies devoted to shaping – and to that extent restricting – free enquiry, turning it instead towards commercial services. To the extent that the library is dedicated to research and self-improvement, it is an instrument of individual and social change. To the extent that it is driven by the confirmation and feeding of a presumed profile, the world-wide web as mass medium is dedicated to stasis.

A further challenge posed to the ideal of the library by digitization arises from the problem of copyright, and from the increasing importance of intellectual property rights in the economy of the early 21st century. The deep web of subscription access is blocked from most search engines, and is restricted to users whose institutions pay often extremely high rates for the right to access electronic journals and other resources. At time of writing, many electronic publishers sell subscriptions not by individual title but in blocks, reminiscent of the practice of Hollywood studios' 'block booking' made illegal by the Paramount Decrees of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Major publishers sell subscriptions to lists of titles, all of which must be purchased in order to access the specific titles that an institution requires. As the scholarly and economic value of journals, for example, increases, and as the sheer scale of journal publishing advances, the restriction of access to such valuable resources suggests that, far from increasing the democracy of access, web technology has been employed instead to reconfirm the powers of ownership in intellectual property and to expand its economic significance.

Finally, the digital library has another unusual characteristic: it is its own index, but it is also automatically creating records of the patterns of use to which it is put. In this sense, the digital library is unable to refrain from automatic increase. To some extent, as an advertising and marketing medium, the web is less concerned with its content than it is with the activities of its users – in this again it is similar to television. The amassing of information about users is the purpose of web culture for many of its participants. This function of the library has been promoted to the head of the hierarchy, not in order to provide service, but in order to extract wealth, once again by restricting, blocking and rendering subject to exchange the communicational community that powers the library as concept.

Private Libraries

According to John Hale (1993: 397), private studies equipped with shelves and books began to be a feature of merchants' houses in Italy in the mid-15th century; Leland mentions with delight discovering such a private library in a castle belonging to the Earl of Northumberland in the mid-1530s. Ginzburg (1980) counts 11 books in the possession of the Italian miller Mennochio when he was arrested for heresy in 1584, mostly loaned but some purchased. Over these approximately 150 years, the possession and private study of books had passed from the aristocracy to the artisan, and from the South to the North of Europe. Mennochio's borrowed books indicate a network of readers, opening their private libraries to friends and acquaintances with a shared passion for reading, a theme celebrated by Charles Lamb (1935) in the 1820s, in an essay on Coleridge's habit not only of borrowing but heavily annotating borrowed titles.

In one of the warmest accounts of the personal library, Benjamin (1969) writes of the collector's association of memories with the copies of books in his possession, such that every book, in addition to its contents and aesthetic appeal, is a repository of a personal narrative. The

delights of scholarly retreat from the troubles of the world and immersion in one's library are shared in literary works from China, India, Islam and the West, and become significant to feminist thought in Virginia Woolfe's *A Room of One's Own*. A mode of memorializing one's own life, the personal library may also have the function of a toolbox for practising writers who, from Anatole France to Umberto Eco, occasionally offer anecdotes defending the eccentricity of the practice. The writer's library shares with the public library the task of producing new writing on the basis of previous publications. Its relationship with the emergence of a Habermasian public sphere in the 18th century rests on both the lending and borrowing of books between peers and the readiness to enter into conversation on the subject of books that characterizes the emergence of a critical social dialogue.

A tension must be observed between the private and public in the case of libraries and library study. In Dürer's *St Jerome* the scholar-saint is a hermit, but nonetheless surrounded by books. Holbein's portrait of Erasmus on the other hand depicts a scholar in the heart of the struggle for the future of Christendom, but again surrounded by the trappings of private study. This tension, perhaps intrinsic in literacy as such, is enacted specifically in the movement between reading and writing, including the art of translation. The scholar not only acquires but transmits meanings, in this sense reducing the accumulation of knowledge in a personal library to the necessarily smaller number of texts that a single author can produce, while at the same time turning private study to public service.

Ethics

With the exception of Lamb's encomium to Coleridge's annotations, library ethics rest on the premise that a shared book should be treated with respect. Annotations and underlinings are frowned upon; defacing and damaging despised; and stealing has the particular obloquy attached to an act which is not merely a crime against property but a sin against common ownership. In the legitimate second-hand trade, ex-library books are deemed all but worthless. Though there is an illegal trade in stolen library books, the books purchased by libraries are not bought with the intention of reselling. Thus use-value to the community is in inverse relation to exchange value. Interruptions to the quiet of a library, while less despised, are likewise treated as anti-social (though libraries have responded by setting aside specific areas for quiet study). The sociality of the library and of quiet study, the sharing of the resource as a common good, and readiness to enter into conversation on the basis of the book one has open or is carrying are indications of the orientation of libraries towards residual utopian community inherited from aspirations for universal literacy in early modernity. The transition to electronic access protects materials from damage, but tends towards intensified individuation in reading.

Extended Use of the Term 'Library'

Such major taxonomic endeavours as the Human Genome Project refer to their outputs as libraries. The analogy is partially with the use of the term in software design to denote collections of subroutines required to add functionality to a basic program. But the analogy is also partly with the public library, and the inference that the knowledge so gathered can be accessed by anyone with the requisite literacy. A true analogy would require not only a library of the genome, but of all known digressions from the model template, that is a library with as many entries as there are human beings. It would also require access not dependent on commercial transactions. Neither analogy holds good.

The knowledge bases of indigenous peoples are likewise frequently compared to libraries. Here the analogy is more closely with the property of storing ancestral wisdom in retrievable form. The analogy dissolves on the matter of library ethics: it may not be possible for outsiders to access items from an indigenous 'library' without damaging them. Where such knowledge is sacred or restricted to initiates, the principle of universality is also breached.

Publishers began to use the term 'library' to describe lists of books in the 19th century;

one of the best-known examples is Everyman's Library, a list containing a high proportion of classic literary and philosophical texts. The introduction of cheap editions and of paperback books in the first half of the 20th century democratized the process of book collecting: a sign reading 'Libraries Purchased' is now commonplace in second-hand bookstores. Such libraries often cross the divide between collection, toolbox and retreat from the world. The commercial use of the term by publishers tends to indicate completion – a basic account of the best that has been said and thought – rather than access or retrievability status (such libraries may index individual volumes but not the whole series). This sense of the word can, in looser usage, simply refer to 'many volumes', rather than to their systematic articulation with one another in a catalogue, their aspiration to universal coverage, or their availability to universal access.

An encyclopaedia may be considered as a digest of a library, and some multi-volume encyclopaedias pose as either the basis of or a replacement for a private library. This description is legitimate to the extent that the encyclopaedia permits both searching and browsing; that it encourages discussion concerning its contents; and that it makes itself available to Panizzi's poor student. However, the problems faced by copyright libraries are also faced by encyclopaedists: the sheer scale and increasingly rapid obsolescence of published knowledge. Technical responses are available: the world-wide web was precisely such an enterprise in its beginnings. But encyclopaedias have a duty not otherwise incumbent on libraries. A library merely stores and makes accessible. An encyclopaedia must also ensure that its contents are trustworthy. This adds two difficulties to the challenges facing libraries in the 21st century. First, to be trustworthy, the encyclopaedia requires a harvesting function which removes outdated or inaccurate materials. And, second, the claim to readers' trust must be balanced against the desire for completion. The lack of rationality and dependence on common sense that characterizes the encyclopaedia in Eco's definition raises an additional challenge. On the one hand, the 21st-century encyclopaedia may have to abandon the principle of universality in favour of a principle of selection. On the other, it needs to trust its readers to adapt and evolve its contents, emphasizing the public vocation of the library rather than its calling to completion.

Note

The author wishes to acknowledge the critical input of Tony Millett of the University of Waikato Library. Remaining errors and biases are the author's.

Family Resemblance

1. World-wide web, encyclopaedias, public domain
2. Archiving and data retrieval in bureaucratic organizations
3. Cartography, databases and spreadsheets – spatialization of knowledge
4. RAM – probabilistic searching and information theory
5. Museums, public access to historical cultural artefacts and knowledge

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Archive

Mike Featherstone

Abstract The archive is the place for the storage of documents and records. With the emergence of the modern state, it became the storehouse for the material from which national memories were constructed. Archives also housed the proliferation of files and case histories as populations were subjected to disciplinary power and surveillance. Behind all scholarly research stands the archive. The ultimate plausibility of a piece of research depends on the grounds, the sources, from which the account is extracted and compiled. An expanding and unstable globalizing archive presents particular problems for classifying and legitimating knowledge. Increasingly the boundaries between the archive and everyday life become blurred through digital recording and storage technologies. Not only does the volume of recordable archive material increase dramatically (e.g. the Internet), but the volume of material seen worthy of archiving increases too, as the criteria of what can, or should be, archived expands. Life increasingly becomes lived in the shadow of the archive.

Keywords digital, everyday life, *flâneur*, legitimation, nation-state, research, surveillance

The term archive refers to the place where government records are stored. It was initially conceived as the site where official records were guarded and kept in secrecy. The archive was part of the apparatus of social rule and regulation, it facilitated the governance of the territory and population through accumulated information. At the same time, alongside home territorial governance, there were also archives on foreign affairs to sustain the state in relation to other states and empires. State intelligence became more important and formalized in the intensifying and globalizing power struggles for hegemony. Information gathering on the part of the British Empire, for example, required something broader than an institution. It needed a whole epistemological complex to gather together not only statistical data generated by the central administration, but also the various sorts of local knowledge of the Empire and its borderlands, along with detailed knowledge of the structure of its rivals, which included material taken or pirated from Chinese, Indian and other archives (Hevia, 1999). From the perspective of the emerging European nation-states as they became drawn together and then locked into a globalized power struggle, the construction of archives can be seen as furthering governmentality and the regulation of internal and colonial populations, as well as providing foreign policy information about the strategies and globalizing ambitions of rivals.

The European state-formation process was accompanied by the quest to gather more systematic and measurable information on the population and territory. The growth of population in the 18th century was accompanied by the growth of disciplinary power, both in the sense of the emergence of new disciplines to record and analyse the characteristics of populations (statistics, demography, penology, criminology, etc.), along with the sites and institutional complexes in which this knowledge was applied to discipline and normalize bodies (in prisons, schools, clinics, hospitals, asylums, barracks, etc.) This process, while aiming at normalized, regimented and docile bodies, also individuated bodies (DeLanda, 2003). People's characteristics were observed, recorded and stored in the files. Each individual was distinguished from others by his or her case history. The individual was formed as a category of knowledge through the accumulated case records (the file) which documented individual life histories within a particular institutional nexus such as a school, prison, hospital or more

generally through governmental welfare or security agencies. Foucault's (1978) discussion of the notorious case of the multiple murders of Pierre Rivière in mid-19th century France and the ways in which this individual archive was constructed and investigated by a wide range of experts, can be seen as a significant step in this process of case history and archive formation. People's lives became seen as singularities. They were identified and individuated through their records or file, which were stored as part of a series in the archives. In effect, this was a new form of power, based not on the ideology of individualism, but the actuality of individuation, as whole populations, their bodies and life histories became documented, differentiated and recorded in the archive. In the 20th century, with the expansion of state power in the context of strong international rivalries and world wars, the state defined its situation as a permanent 'state of emergency'. States not only sought the greater mobilization of populations but also sought through surveillance and monitoring to amass archives and databases which could provide the information that would allegedly protect it against its enemies and subversive influences.

Yet while states possessed extensive archives, which were the accumulated records of monitoring its population, archives were also important for the other part of the nation-state couplet, the formation and legitimation of the nation. The archive, then, was also a crucial site for national memory. It was the building that acted as the sanctum, the place in which the sacred texts and objects were stored that were used to generate collective identity and social solidarity. Various European archives came into being in the 18th century in order to solidify and memorialize first monarchical and then state power. With the formation of the modern state we have the establishment of The National Archives in France in 1790 and the Public Record Office in England in 1838 (Steedman, 1998). In the 19th century, the archive became seen as the repository of the national history and national memory. The development of the discipline of history through figures such as Ranke in Germany and Michelet in France helped to generate the sense that it was possible to 'tell history as it was' through careful scrutiny of the treasure-house of material from the past, accumulated in the archive awaiting the historian's gaze to bring it to life (Ernst, 1999). The archives along with museums, libraries, public monuments and memorials became instruments for the forging of the nation into the people, into an 'imagined community'.

Yet for formerly subjected peoples, the post-colonial nation-states, constructing the national memory from the archive was often problematic as the archives had generally been shipped to the European imperial centres. For example, the Cuban archive is in Madrid, the Haitian archive in Nantes, France. This means that scholars from ex-colonial countries have to travel to the old imperial capitals to research information on their own national histories. As the tendency is to see the archive as a fixed located entity, the emphasis is generally given to how it changes over time. But the archive has a spatial history too. It can be destroyed, stolen, purchased and relocated. Archives of less powerful groups or nations can be moved and re-established within the territory of the powerful, who can also muster the archivists and scholars who operate with their own dominant classifications and value hierarchies to produce their own official history. Archives like antiquities and objects of art can become purchased and displaced. Shifting balances of global power may ensure that formerly powerful imperial nations such as Britain see some of their archives migrate to their successor, the USA. If one wishes to study archival material on the English poet Ted Hughes or the English novelist Alan Sillitoe, one must go to the USA and consult the Emory University Library and the Indiana University Library, respectively. Set against those who advocate archival storage in the home locality, there are the alternative arguments that important archival collections will be better housed and taken care of in their new surroundings and made available for future generations or 'humanity'. Yet such displacement means the ceding of control over access and cataloguing, which along with the financial constraints on research in a foreign country, can lead the archive to slip away from the originating collectivity. This may not be a bad thing in itself, but it has implications for national memory and habitus formation.

This sense that the archive is a key source of the nation, the basis for the construction of the national tradition, then, raises the question of who makes the history, and the extent to

which there should be wider access to those who seek to search out counter-histories. The custodians of the archive, the trustees, archivists, librarians and curators are pulled in a number of contradictory directions. There is the conflict between storing and access: the view that the archive should be as exhaustive as possible and should collect and house as wide a range of significant documents, which clashes with the view that archives should be more open to the public. With regard to storage, should the focus be on received traditions and the canon, or on local knowledge and diversity? How are decisions on what to collect, what to store, what to throw away and what to catalogue to be made? Today this is not just a question of which material to put on shelves in the stack and which to leave in unlabelled boxes in the back-rooms, but how to deal with potentially unstable electronic archives. This can be illustrated by the US Government National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, DC, which faced the problem of how to preserve, organize and catalogue the 16–24 million electronic messages accumulated by the Clinton Administration.

The accumulation of transnational information and the movement into the virtual realm of digital flows beyond the nation-state through the Internet offers further problems. Who should have the responsibility to produce an archive of the Internet? Although such a project has already been discussed and explored by a private institution, how are questions of selection, classification and access to be decided? If it is to be a global archive, would it not best function through some broad commitment to the people of the world along with a body of institutions dedicated to housing new forms of collective memory and records? Yet the current commercial domination of the Internet and the ‘click and purchase’ and *caveat emptor* principles would seem to pull in the opposite direction. The same problem occurs with the downsizing of the public sector within nation-states since the 1980s, which has led to commercial sponsorship of archives being sought to fill the funding gap. The problem here is that the commercial logic revolves around the need to get good returns on investment: high profile archives of the good and the great would then be preferred by sponsors to those of lesser known figures or local interest.

The capacity for the archives to yield up significant material to the researcher depends upon the modes of classification adopted by the archivists. While a simple method is to give new materials and data an accession number based upon date of arrival (Ernst, 1999), more complex cataloguing and indexing become necessary to facilitate more complex searching. Many of the classification systems in use in archives derive from the cataloguing systems that emerged with the development of the library in the 19th century. These are systems which favour disciplinary classifications and taxonomies derived from the divisions of the arts and sciences that emerged in early modern times and became refined in the 18th century European Enlightenment which had a preference for binary divisions and branching tree structures. Inter- and trans-disciplinarity and new subject areas do not fare well in such systems (Cubitt, 1998). Yet if many of these cataloguing systems are direct descendents of classification theories such as Linnaeus, and derive from a particular time, place and world view, how relevant are they in the 21st century in a world viewed through different tropes derived from flows, non-linearity and singularities with new meta-theories such as complexity theory and neo-vitalism etc.? Yet to re-classify existing material in terms of new taxonomies is always excessively time consuming. In comparison to libraries, archives usually have weaker classifications and greater amounts of material that is boxed or shelved under chronological or general headings. Hence the archive contents and relevance always contains potential surprises as the life history trajectories by which material travels backwards and forwards between the known and the unknown, between rubbish, junk and sacred priceless records and icons have a high degree of contingency.

Each classification system opens up new avenues in to the material, yet it also closes off others. It is impossible to approach the data in a way in which it can be ‘made to speak’ neutrally, objectively and once and for all. The archivist, librarian and professional researcher create the maps and record the journeys into the archive that produce the images we have of the possibilities of the material. Yet such classificatory schema and mapping devices can disintegrate under the volume of inchoate material which threatens to defy the impulse to order. This is the image which Borges (1999a) elaborates in his short story ‘The Library of Babel’, a library

in which all the books in the world in multiple translations are housed in an infinite number of galleries. A library in which it would be possible to destroy millions of volumes, yet the almost identical material would still be available in millions of others. This archivist's nightmare, in which the pattern of order is disorder, one in which scholars and archivists journey through the library in the search for some ultimate order or meaning, some mystical revelation.

This, then, is a powerful counter-image of the archive: the archive as the repository of material which has only been loosely classified, material whose status is as yet indeterminate and stands between rubbish, junk and significance; material which has not been read and researched. It has been claimed that 'archive reason is a form of reason that is devoted to the *detail*' (Osborne, 1999: 58). Yet it is clear that the archivist's gaze depends upon an aesthetics of perception, a discriminating gaze, through which an event can be isolated out of the mass of detail and accorded significance. A process of discovery, which can depend upon chance and be likened to divination. In short, the archive is the potential place of discovery, yet this discovery, the constitution of significant facts, or historical events, depends upon the contingent status of the fragments that found their way into the archive, while much of the fellow contemporary source material, the alleged key to the richness of lived culture and everyday life from which it arose as imperfect recordings, lies destroyed or at best undiscovered. Yet once in the archive, finding the right material which can be made to speak may itself be subject to a high degree of contingency – the process not of deliberate rational searching, but serendipity. In this context it is interesting to note the methods of innovatory historians such as Norbert Elias and Michel Foucault, who used the British and French national libraries in highly unorthodox ways by reading seemingly haphazardly 'on the diagonal', across the whole range of arts and sciences, centuries and civilizations, so that the unusual juxtapositions they arrived at summoned up new lines of thought and possibilities to radically re-think and re-classify received wisdom. Here we think of the *flâneur* who wanders the archival textual city in a half-dreamlike state in order to be open to the half-formed possibilities of the material and sensitive to unusual juxtapositions and novel perceptions.

In this sense 'the archive is also a place of dreams' (Steedman, 1998). It offers the delights of discovering records and truths that have been hidden or lost, of resurrecting the past. Here the archive is a place for the researcher both to be alone and at home. A place where the researcher can seek to find his or her identity through the process of historical identification, a place to search for images in the past which can summon up or confirm some sense of a lost self. A place where the strange and uncanny (Freud's *unheimlich*) can act as a substitute to lead us back to the homely (*heimlich*) and familiar. Hence the archive is a place for dreams and revelation, a place of longing where the world can turn on the discovery of an insignificant fragment: a place for creating and re-working memory.

This may not just be the activity of the solitary researcher wandering through the scholarly or official archives, but the activity of individuals in everyday life who seek to preserve documents, photographs, diaries and recordings to develop their own archives as memory devices. In short, the archive may become a project or an aspiration, a site for the production of anticipated memories by intentional 'post-national imagined communities' (Appadurai, 2003). The 'diasporic archive' or the 'migrant archive' can be seen as an attempt by migrant groups to engage in imaginative and creative work to form new collective memories, which are distinct from the official memories of the host and former home societies. Such an archive is seen as an active aspiration, a tool for reworking desires and memories, part of a project for sustaining cultural identities.

In addition to the sense that there will be attempts to construct archives as prosthetic memory devices for the re-constitution of identity, to invent a place to be at home, there is also the sense that this process will always escape us through the irruption of involuntary memories triggered off by the sedimented associational chains of the objects and images that occur as we move through the landscapes of the modern city. Hence Walter Benjamin (2000) focused on the fragments, the bric-a-brac and detritus of modern urban life which could all effectively be seen as recording devices for broken and incomplete memory traces. For

Benjamin the city was an archive, an archive already in ruins, in which the minutiae of everyday life (the decorations on buildings, ironwork, street signs, advertising bills, posters, window displays, etc.) all have the capacity to speak. Yet these fragments could only speak the language of broken, incomplete allegories, summoning up half-formed memories which appeared vividly as in a lightening flash and then were gone (Featherstone, 1998). Benjamin's method of montage and juxtaposition and the elaborate and original classification he devised for his collection of material in his unfinished *Passagen-Werk* (Arcades Project) were the results of his reflections on the architectonics of the archiving process.

Today, the will to archive is a powerful impulse in contemporary culture. This could be stimulated by the same impulse that encouraged the development of modern Western encyclopaedias: the sense that the modern world is generating new experiences, new tastes and new recording technologies, at a rate that defies organization. Encyclopaedias were both a symptom and an attempt to manage this flood, to impose some classification and ordering on potentially disturbing chaos. Yet the balance is by no means an easy one to achieve, as Borges (1999b) suggests in his short story 'Funes, his Memory'. Ireneo Funes, a Uruguayan youth, suffers a fall from his horse which alters his memory. He then experiences the opposite of memory loss, so that he now sees everything and remembers everything indelibly in full transparency. The detail of every leaf of every tree and the shape of every cloud in the sky at each moment in his life can now be subjected to recall. The richness of the difference of each particularity experienced at each moment suggests that every thing deserves to be granted a different name each time it is noticed. To simplify the resultant complexity Ireneo decides to develop a new particularistic numbering system to classify his various experiences in life. Yet he then calculates that if he started with his childhood, to make this numbering classification and retrieval system would take many times his life time to complete. This is the paradox of an imbalance between subjective and objective culture that Simmel (1997) referred to at the turn of the century. To record and archive a life becomes a theme in modernism as we find in the writings of Marcel Proust's *À la Recherche du temps perdu*. We also think of the French installation artist Christian Boltanski, who sought to collect and display all the documents pertaining to his life (Hobbs, 1998).

Archive reason with its thirst for detail sees everything as potentially significant and archivable (Featherstone, 2000). Today the new information technologies expand our capacity to record everything: to be is to record and to record in volume means to classify, index and archive. Yet the will to archive runs up against the speed and flexibility of the technologies which undermine stable classification and indexing and threatens to pile classificatory systems onto classificatory systems on the one hand, and provide immediate access to un-formed, or de-formed, life and information flow as against form, on the other. Knowledge distributed in information flows and networks differs in many ways from the ledger on the shelf in the archive. Meaning ceases to be contained in a bounded physical textual form, the page or document, but is able to flow through network nodes. With hypertexting the document ceases to be the archivable reference point and the searcher can jump rapidly across a whole range of documentary sources and produce novel inventive juxtapositions (Lynch, 1999). The archive ceases to be physical place, housed in grand buildings such as national libraries, and informational control and formation ceases to be in the form of the panopticon with its bureaucratic forms of control and surveillance. Rather the decentralized digital archive takes the form of a database in which, depending on the access coding, knowledge becomes freer to flow through decentred networks. The danger is that their knowledge will no longer be contained in a singular system in which all the elements are articulated into a unified corpus. The danger is of unperceived degradation – that what has been referred to as 'a cancer culture' will develop within the digital archive, as dissociated cellular elements are re-associated into linear distributions and one cell's identifying code is transcribed into others in a generative chain (Lynch, 1999).

With the digital archive we see a move away from the concept of the archive as a physical place to store records, so that culture depends upon storages (libraries, museums, etc.), to that of the archive as a virtual site facilitating immediate transfer. The notion of immediate data

access and feedback replaces the former data separation (the file in the box on the shelf) which created the differences out of which an archive order was constructed and reconstructed. The digital archive then should not be seen as just a part of the contemporary 'record and storage mania' facilitated by digital technologies, but as providing a fluid, processual, dynamic archive, in which the topology of documents can be reconfigured again and again. The digital archive then presents new conceptual problems about the identity, distinctiveness and boundaries of the datum and the document. Like the earlier shifts in the balance between life and form, the shifts in the digital archive between flows and classification take us to the heart of the questions about the constitution, formation and storage of knowledge in the current age.

The decentred digital archive parallels the development of theoretical writings on the archive by Foucault and Derrida. Here the emphasis is upon the radical instability and contingency of the archive, the archive as a decentred structure, which generates signification. Foucault (1972) reformulates the archive as archaeology and shifts the meaning of the archive away from the unifying structure we find in traditional humanist accounts to a system in which a multiplicity of discourses are created from a given set of data. The emphasis moves to fluid and complex archival traces, in which the archive cannot provide a direct access to the past, but only a textual refiguring of it. The archive fever is the attempt to return to the lived origin, to the everyday experience which are the sources of our distorted and refracted memories whose transience and forgetting makes us uneasy (Derrida, 1996). The notion of the archive is endorsed by theories of the centrality and knowability of the subject: here archives can be seen as 'encyclopaedic image repositories' (Kemp, 1998: 37). The archive can be regarded as a paradigmatic entity as well as a concrete institution.

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Museum

Kevin Hetherington

Abstract Through analysis of a critical engagement between Blanchot and Malraux on the *musée imaginaire*, it becomes apparent that both were seeking to understand the relationship between the museum and experience within modernity. This short article seeks to develop these ideas and to understand the museum as a key institutional space of modernity implicated in addressing the changing character of experience in the present. Following Benjamin's distinction between experience as *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*, the essay argues that the museum has always sought to offer a fabricated sense of *Erfahrung* through its narrative and display techniques and that this facilitates a distracted mode of reception that is now prominent within contemporary cultural life. Through this we can see that the idea of the *musée imaginaire* is still a prescient one, but it has moved from the virtual space of the photographic art book to the simulated culture of the museumified city in general.

Keywords experience, modernity, museum

When Andre Malraux (1978) first published his famous essay on the *musée imaginaire* (translated as museum without walls) in 1947 he was writing against a long tradition of criticism, notably developed in France but to spread elsewhere, opposed to the museum as an alienated, alienating and inauthentic institution that had come into being in Europe in the latter years of the 18th century. As early as 1815, Quatremere de Quincy, a leading cultural critic of his day, his sights largely set on the Louvre during the Napoleonic era, had attacked the relatively new idea of the museum for its re-appropriation of history for political ends, its removal of artefacts from a supposedly living, authentic cultural context and placement of them in an inauthentic and fabricated social space and its reduction of art works to things in need of preservation rather than the manifestation of ongoing, living, creative processes of creation (for an overview see Maleuvre, 1999: 13ff.). Yet Malraux, later to become Minister of Culture in France during the 1960s, was not simply defending the old idea of the national museum as a universal survey of civilization, he had set his sights much higher than that. The context might have been France but the issues were those more broadly of modernity, a concept developed in no small part among the Parisian artistic and intellectual elite in the period from the 1850s to the Second World War (Berman, 1982; Clark, 1984). Through Baudelaire to later impressionists, surrealists, vitalists and existentialists, a search had been undertaken to understand, through a reception of life on the streets of Paris, the development of a new mode of experience that had come to characterise modern life: *modernité* in French, *Erlebnis* in German (Benjamin, 1973c, 1999; Berman, 1982; Clark, 1984; Frisby, 1985), terms that captured something of the novelty of modern conditions: those uncertain, fragmented, disconnected and now-experienced moments that make up our existence in the urban and industrialized world. Instead of seeing the museum as a stuffy denial of the vitality of the street, the museum for Malraux was a space in which such challenging experiences could be addressed through an understanding of modern experience's modernist cultural expression in the present by placing it in the context of the artistic styles of the past. The key to this was photography.

For Malraux, the great works of civilizations across the world that the museum had served well in its limited, location-tied way for a century and a half could now be liberated from the space of the universally concerned yet location tied museum and be made accessible to all in

virtual form. Technological changes, notably photography, had made this possible. The ideal form of the *museé imaginaire*, an appropriate cultural response for museum to a modernist culture, Malraux believed, would be the photographic book. He could not have imagined the Internet and our culture of simulation and virtuality at that time but, no doubt, would have approved greatly. What Malraux defended in the idea of the museum in general and in the *museé imaginaire* in particular, contrary to the tradition of writers like Quatremere de Quincy, was the belief that bringing artefacts together in one space provided them with a single rather than dispersed context for interpretation that allowed for new insights about technique and style to emerge through comparison with works from other times and places (Crimp, 1997: 54ff.). Through an appreciation of art in such a context, new styles, new ways of seeing and also a new experience of the ideals and values of civilizations as a whole that were expressed in art could be revealed, deepening and enriching our cultural experiences in a modern society.

Malraux's humanist index provided him with the rationale for this argument. Museums, he believed, revealed truths about the human condition in general that leaving art in its original, specific and often sacred contexts, could not. Artists and art audiences alike could learn from the bringing together of artworks in the museum. They could see art in new ways and new developments could follow. Picasso's appreciation and use of stylistic references from the African art that he encountered in a museum in Paris and its importance to his development of the style of cubism was a case in point. If the museum with walls, like the Louvre, Metropolitan or British Museum, could do this for the receptive viewer, then the advent of photographic reproduction, initially black and white (useful for reproducing images of artworks in the plastic arts) and now colour (important for reproduction of painting), simply extended this effect of the museum to a broader set of artworks and a wider audience, providing access and availability in a democratic fashion to the interested public that could only be offered in more limited form by the museum contained within a building. Perhaps drawing on Benjamin's (1973a) recently translated essay on the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction, Malraux not only challenged the idea of the aura of the original by the copy and the possibilities of skilled reception brought about by mechanical reproduction but also suggested that new technologies and new forms of virtual and visual would facilitate new ways of seeing. For Malraux, the museum was above all a bulwark against the disorientating *modernité* of contemporary life; it provided a form of contact with a richer, more temporally situated form of experience through the reception of art that it afforded.

Malraux was not without his critics. While some simply defended, in a rather conservative manner, the traditional museum against this nascent virtual museum, others were more reflective in their criticisms. One of the most notable was Maurice Blanchot, who, in a long review essay of Malraux's essay first published in 1950 (1997a), and in a subsequent critique of the idea of the museum in general (1997b), sought to challenge some of Malraux's major claims for the museum idea and its significance in modernity.

Blanchot did not share the same faith in humanism as Malraux. Certainly he acknowledged that the space of the museum changed both the context of art and also its possible meanings. He also accepted that the *museé imaginaire* extended this practice to modern art in ways more fitting to its stylistic inventiveness and relationship to the modern than the traditional museum form. Yet, contrary to Malraux, he believed this had as many limitations to it as possibilities. What was at stake, for Blanchot, was how the museum in any form dealt with issues of time, space and the experience of art. Through Blanchot's treatment of Malraux's argument we begin to see a concern over the important and changing relationship between modern experience and the museum more clearly. Though they both expressed this concern through a discussion of fine art, a wider concern with the issue of modern experience in general becomes apparent.

For Blanchot, art was not a triumphant expression of a universal human nature and human creative powers as it was for Malraux but, above all, an engagement with the absent and the inexpressible that the artist had sought to capture and experience and thereby reveal to others. Yet in such a view, making things available does not make them accessible. The museum as the space in which this art is now found is a closed and self-referential space rather than an

open space in this regard. Blanchot believed the museum should be seen not as a space of access – where the art that is *at our disposal* (a trope he uses often) is nothing but a pretence of availability – but rather as a space of translation in which something of the art in question to be found there is irretrievably lost in its articulation with the space that surrounds it (on translation see Blanchot, 1997c; also Benjamin, 1973b). The museum creates a world unto itself, a self-reflective and contemplative space for art; not a museum without walls but rather a ‘monad without windows’ (Blanchot, 1997a: 22) in which the end of time and the possible ruin of art through decay and an aporial and challenging encounter with the absent and inexpressible are put in suspension by its demands to make all things available to experience. The other side of (artistic) experience, that which is inchoate and inexpressible, is lost to the museum for Blanchot.

Such an institution was, for Blanchot, founded on a betrayal of the true experience of art. It promises to make art something that is at our disposal yet in practice disposes with the possibility of our connecting with it in a meaningful way because of the artificial character and simplistic narrative conventions of the space in which such an experience is found. At its worst the museum creates not an encounter with art but a mere spectacle of its experience. For Blanchot, the imaginary museum simply extends this principle further beyond the confines of a specific space to the broader world of modern culture. The museum is, in this argument, a space of lack, a space where the negative in art is turned into a positive and its challenging effects devalued:

If, through an image, one were to make perceptible to oneself the dimension that the work acquires in its relation to absence, one can consider the Museum to be, in its imaginary totality, this absence realized, a realization that supposes a certain completion, that completion precisely which modern art would give it. At the heart of this absence, works of art are in perpetual dissolution and in perpetual motion, each one being but a marker of time, a moment of the whole, a moment that would like desperately to be this whole, in which absence alone rests without rest. (1997a: 38)

For Blanchot, the museum affirms our lack of experience of art in the true sense while pretending to do otherwise and the imaginary museum simply makes this lack of experience available to all.

At the heart of both Malraux’s and Blanchot’s very different interpretations of the modern institution of the museum that came into being in Europe in the latter part of the 18th century is a concern with the question of experience. From such reflections we can see that it is with the nature of experience (*Erfahrung*) in modernity that museums are principally engaged. While the many histories of the museum, whether Whiggish, Marxist or Foucauldian, often make reference to antecedents in classical times in the institutions of the Roman baths, the medieval reliquary and the cabinet of curiosities of the Baroque era (for various overviews on museum history see Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Bann, 1995; Bennett, 1995; Crimp, 1997; Hetherington, 1999; Maleuvre, 1999; Fyfe, 2000), it is the modernity of the museum and its direct engagement with issues of experience (whether that be the experience of art, history, civilizations, ethnographic encounter or locality expressed in material cultural form) that marks it out as something new. It might be described as an important surface of emergence (Foucault, 1974) in which the modern discourse of ‘the problem of experience’ is enunciated through the narrative orderings of material culture, most notably through discourses of civilization, progress, evolution and place. To understand the museum as an emergent modern creation and to address the differing responses it elicits we need to consider this issue of experience as an epistemological basis for understanding the museum as an idea rather than simply trace out lineages or ruptures with earlier institutionalized forms of collecting, displaying and interpreting artefacts of varying kinds.

Modernity alters the character of experience fundamentally. As Benjamin (1973c, 1973d, 1999) observes, we see with its de-traditionalizing forces a breakdown of experience as a totality (*Erfahrung*) grounded in the past of memory, custom and epic narrative and the

emergence of a more fractured and fragmentary set of experiences of the now as a series of events the lived character of which resists understanding and easy communication (*Erlebnis*). With this shift in the character of experience such things as custom and tradition are overturned, and a well documented shock of the new prevails in all areas of social life (Berman, 1982). The well worn sociological observations of a shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* (Tonnies), mechanical to organic solidarity (Durkheim), value rationality to instrumental rationality (Weber), *Erfahrung* to *Erlebnis* (Benjamin), mark out, in their different ways, the same issue of the effects of the modernizing, disembedding and de-traditionalizing forces of industrial capitalism on established patterns of social life. What alters fundamentally in such a shift brought about by the forces of modernization is the experience of time and space, and the museum is in large part a response to that.

Koselleck (2004) sums this up succinctly in his analysis of the emergence of the narrative of historical time, something that museums have played an important role in establishing, as a major element to the modern outlook. A pre-modern experience (*Erfahrung*) was characterized by the sense of a shared topos in which a community existed as a knowable whole to its members. Experiences in the present were felt to be the same as those in the past: changeless, iterable and reproducible in character. People dwelt in this shared topos in a time that was perceived to be continuous and natural and were able to experience the present as a present. There was no sense of emergence, trajectory or novelty in such experience. There was no worldly outside (2004: 9ff), any sense of an end only coming with the belief in God's intervention at the end of the world. With modernity comes disruption of the social relations that underpin such a form of experience and its cultural expression and with that the temporalization of history or the shift from natural to historical time as a response as cultural understanding seeks to reorientate itself to radically changed circumstances. Out of this emerge ideas of futurity and of progress and ideas about the past, notably the ordering of history into a knowable series of stages or periods, most famously in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, and alongside that the idea of modernity itself. Such a discourse, Koselleck (2004: 22) argues, 'abbreviates the space of experience' in a world now perceived to be ever-accelerating and ungraspable as a knowable totality:

This self-accelerating temporality robs the present of the possibility of being experienced as the present and escapes into a future within which the current unapprehendable present has to be captured by historical philosophy. (2004: 22)

The disorientation character of the advent of modernity described in such terms has been much explored by social scientists in recent years (Berman, 1982; Clark, 1984; Frisby, 1985). With it comes an experience that is principally felt as lack, something captured in the powerful tropes of alienation, loss of community, inauthenticity, fragmentation and so on that have developed largely through the idioms of Romanticism over the past two centuries. The centrality of the museum as an institution that seeks to articulate a response to this changing character of experience has been little commented upon (though see Huyssen, 1995, 2003) but it is crucial to the development of the museum in modernity. The museum is one of the key modern institutions in which this sense of experience as lack and disconnection from a natural topos is addressed; it might even be described as its foundation stone.

The museum seeks to provide modern society with a fabricated *Erfahrung*. It seeks through its display regimes, their narratives and ordering logics to provide people with a sense that they are living in a world where our uncertain and complex set of experiences make sense. It seeks to place us in an historical topos that appears natural. Of course, museums are not all the same. They range from the universal survey museums such as the Louvre, Metropolitan and British Museum that were the main concern of writers such as Malraux and Blanchot (Duncan and Wallach, 1980) through to art collections, specialist collections, collections associated with particular places, crafts, technologies or design fields and so on. But it is the question of the character of experience and the attempt to place it in a singular narrative space that informs their collecting and displaying epistemologies nonetheless. In the varied fields of art,

of historical narrative, in the placing of civilizations in context with one another, in addressing a sense of belonging to a shared space of locality or community through the display of artefacts, museums seek to articulate narratives of experience and identity and to make sense of the relationship between time and space in a modern world where they are thrown continually into doubt.

The varied responses to them reflect the responses to the question of modern experience. Conservative critics and defenders of leaving artefacts in their sacred pre-modern contexts like Quatremere de Quincy confused the conditions of the museum for those of modernity in general. They did not recognize the profound social changes they were living through for what they were but nonetheless astutely saw them reflected in museum displays of their time, only to then blame those institutions themselves for robbing people of a true experience. But their critiques remained at the level of the museum as if it had created the conditions that it simply reflected and sought to make sense of. For defenders and champions of the museum such as Malraux, a humanist belief in the universality of experience reflected in art was taken to be resistant to the modernizing erasure of experience in the here and now. What Malraux perhaps failed to recognize, but what is at the heart of Blanchot's criticisms of him, is that such a faith is itself a product of the museum and its fabrication of a narrative of experience (*Erfahrung*). Humanism, civilization and progress are just some of the more prominent forms that that narrative can take. In this sense the museum does indeed create little more than a fetishized spectacle of experience that Malraux treats as real.

And what of Blanchot's response? It retains a whiff of Quatremere de Quincy's disdain no doubt but does open up the whole question of experience nonetheless. Its conclusions are stark and bleak. We live in the world of *Erlebnis* that only art can comprehend. Yet art only comprehends in the negative through an encounter with lack, with absence, disaster and the inexpressible. For Blanchot, the museum is premised on making such things invisible by fabricating experience as a total, shared and comprehensible thing. Yet he offers us no answers as to how things might be otherwise.

Perhaps the person who does and who offers us a more nuanced critique of the museum is Walter Benjamin whose work influenced both Malraux and Blanchot. It is in his complex, subtle, even if sometimes confused analysis of modern culture under the sign of the commodity fetish that he explores the question of experience and suggestively points to the museum as one amongst a number of modern spaces in which to analyse it. For Benjamin (1999: 403), museums are 'dreamhouses of the collective', bourgeois interiors on the grand scale where the middle classes seek to escape from the uncertain capitalist world that they have so benefited from; they are fetish spaces that offer a phantasmagoria of experience (*Erfahrung*) in a world where it has been undermined. The museum, like the arcade, is a deeply ambiguous space of modernity for Benjamin. Yet people do not respond to such conditions in a wholly mechanistic and unreflective manner. Both Malraux and Blanchot in their different takes on the museum tend to assume of the audience an absorbed mode of reception – one that has positive effects (Malraux) or negative ones (Blanchot) on cultural understanding. Yet what Benjamin (1973d) recognizes is that the character of reception associated with modern experience is neither an engaged nor distracted form of absorbed reception but rather a somewhat disinterested and distracted one befitting the fragmented character of modern experience. This distracted mode of reception is as open to reflection and the shock of recognition of something that is fabricated as much as it is to a fetishized condition of false consciousness (Benjamin, 1973a). Museums may create a spectacle of experience that is false and imaginary but they produce the effects that can unsettle and challenge these effects just as much as critique from outside can. For example, as the times change museums often do not, or they change at a slower pace. This can unsettle their own narratives from within and thereby their own conditions of possibility. As their once optimistic narratives of progress and civilization come to be read as narratives of Empire and racism, we see the outmoded speak in unanticipated ways. For Benjamin the situation that 'dreamhouses', such as the museum or arcade, create is a both/and situation of positive and negative effects rather than one of either/or. It is, for Benjamin, this distracted

mode of reception, not fully taken in by aura, that is facilitated by the museum, that is capable of seeing this more clearly than an audience absorbed by the artefacts on display.

What has changed since the mid-20th century when the likes of Benjamin, Malraux and Blanchot were considering the museum is that they have indeed, as Malraux foresaw, spilled out beyond their galleries and neo-classical columned entrances into the world of the modern city beyond. Museums are no longer just defined in terms of their gallery spaces. In a world of simulation and consumerism, of global tourism and heritage preservation and of entrepreneurial public-private regeneration of urban space, the city itself has become museumified (Huyssen, 1995). Museums have adapted to the challenges of capitalism in ways that have challenged their former high art mission. Today a distracted mode of reception is often to be witnessed by observing visitors contemplating great works of art, which many merely glance at on their perambulations through the galleries. The same kind of reception can also be seen in the museum shop – a mode of reception attuned to browsing that shopping so facilitates; the poster, the postcard and the tee-shirt with the Picasso print on it can be appreciated by this distracted mode of reception just as much as seeing the painting itself that is to be found in the gallery within. The culinary experience in the restaurant can be as important to a visit as the artistic experience to be found in the gallery. And often a visit to a museum will be coupled with a touristic perambulation through a city centre looking at architecture, immersing oneself in the urban rhythms afforded by its brandscape (Cronin, forthcoming), taking in the sights of the new waterside development and buying some designer clothing in an upmarket department store. A distracted mode of reception prevails throughout. The museum has had to adapt and become a part of this bigger spectacle now to capture the experience (*Erlebnis*) of the modern and appeal to its diverse audience; the curator is no longer merely an interpreter of artefacts placed with tiny labels in wooden cabinets for the connoisseur to pour over on a wet Saturday afternoon but an auteur engaged in the manufacture of the spectacle of cultural experiences on a grand scale with corporate sponsorship.

In its engagement with such modern forms of experience, the museum is always already in a state of ruin (Crimp, 1997). It seeks to articulate a coherent cultural response to the fragmenting and challenging conditions of modernity by arranging objects so that they tell coherent stories about time and space. For Malraux the extension of this practice could become a democratic force for good; making art accessible to an increasingly widening audience; enriching their experience in the process. We might agree with Blanchot's criticism of such optimism and the way it champions the reduction of art in museums to a simple and formulaic form of storytelling about the achievements of humanity, but we cannot fully accept his rejection and negative assessment of the museum because it does not recognize the reality of experience in the modern world (*Erlebnis*) but seeks to bemoan the loss of a true experience (*Erfahrung*) that might have been able to respond to the absent and the ungraspable in art. Rather we can side with Benjamin's acknowledgment, if not outright celebration, of the distracted mode of reception – a mode of reception that is at the same time capable of being allured by the museum's fabricated stories and undoing or dismissing them with a disinterested glance. It is not just that this is how people respond to museums but that museums are an important space in the creation of this distracted form of experience, increasingly so as they continually embrace a consumer culture of shopping, theme parks, tourism, heritage regeneration and simulated world of narratives of time-space far larger than any book of photographs that has become the true space of the *musée imaginaire* in the 21st century.

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The New Museum

Kylie Message

Keywords globalization, interdisciplinary representational strategies, new museums, postmodernity

Many claims are made in relation to new museums and the stakes are high. They often charge an entry fee, and are expected to provide visitors with cultural capital equal to that associated with attending the opera – while participating competitively in the field of leisure industries against pastimes as diverse as cinema going, shopping, and attending sporting events. In seeking to transcend the distinctions between high culture and popular culture and in aspiring to remain financially viable businesses, a series of difficulties have emerged for new

museums, especially in relation to their 'core business' of artefact preservation and exhibition making. Often enjoying massive budgets, resources and a surge of public interest on opening, the claims to newness made by these museums are undoubtedly rich with the potential to offer exciting and illuminating ways of talking about museums and contemporary culture to visitors. However, this idealism is accompanied by a series of acute structural problems that are caused principally by the pressure to appear always and continuously new. This supplement is concerned with interrogating some of the complexities and contradictions that attend the new museum.

New museums are described as physically new institutions that are dedicated to the exhibition of cultural objects, artefacts and experiences. Emerging from about 1990, they exist globally, but

are most numerous in Western cities because of the interrelationship between these representational spaces and late capitalist systems of sponsorship (being funded generally as joint initiatives by governments, private donations and corporate interests). The term 'new museum' refers to museums that exhibit social history, natural history, ethnology, science and technology, and it is also used in relation to museums of art. Unlike museums of the past, which have been defined according to the categories of objects they collect, research and display, new museums aim to be defined primarily against a highly self-conscious image of 'newness'. They seek to blur disciplinary boundaries, and promote interpretation according to a wide and inclusive scope of reference. This image of newness refers to the style of architecture, the approaches toward installation, and the modes of publicity circulating around the museum, rather than to what is exhibited. Although they often borrow objects and representational approaches from museums that are more rigorous in regard to the protection of disciplinary boundaries, they often employ the effects of post-modernity to represent a break with more traditional museums and their methodologies. While the term 'new' refers thus to a particular style of museum that has emerged recently, it also, and more importantly, indicates a desire for museums to appear relevant and appealing to contemporary society.

The 'new museum' is a generic term or way of describing a set of components and characteristics shared by museums developed in the last 15-year period. A certain homogeneity exists amongst new museums; they appear visually similar and they share a common approach to representing material culture and storytelling. Although variations based on the particulars of exhibition, mission and geographical location do exist, for the most part, these museums all signify newness by reference to a global lexicon that tends, problematically, to transcend issues of local context or regional identity. The Museo Guggenheim Bilbao is most frequently cited as the archetypal new museum. Designed by celebrity architect Frank Gehry, and completed in 1997, the Guggenheim Bilbao attracted 1.36 million visitors within its first year of operation, paid for its building costs, and reinvigorated the city through providing new opportunities for economic development, employment and trade. Representing the initial step in the global expansion of the Guggenheim industry masterminded by Thomas Krens and strategically coordinated from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in New York, the Guggenheim Bilbao was closely followed by the construction of several other Guggenheim branded museums across

America and Europe. Although these subsequent museum developments have received vastly varying degrees of success and failure, the homogeneity of the term 'new museum' certainly increased the popularity – and funding possibilities – made available to Krens in the first instance. The Guggenheim Bilbao was also designed as part of a large-scale publicly funded capital works project that aimed to renew the urban environment and infrastructure programme of the previously struggling industrial region of Bilbao in the north of Spain. As any photograph of the area demonstrates, images of the rejuvenated city represent the franchised museum as larger than life, and as overshadowing other more ordinary or everyday urban spaces. In this instance, and at this time, the benefits associated with the Guggenheim's global branding and marketing of culture appeared astute and resilient to criticism.

As evident in this description, the new museum is primarily a conceptual and rhetorical model that has a tenuous relationship to local contexts and politics. It is useful and popular as a mode of speech, or as a shorthand way of referring to a particular style of museum. We know, for instance, that the museum is new because we are told this by publicity produced about the architectural competition in the first instance. We are then reminded about this by media generated to celebrate opening the new museum building. As visitors, we recognize these museums as new because of an architectural design that demonstrates an inter-textual similarity with other new museums, regardless of where they are located geographically. Controversy was enflamed, for example, by similarities perceived to exist between the Jewish Museum in Berlin, designed by Daniel Libeskind and opened in 2001, and Ashton Raggatt McDougall's National Museum of Australia which opened that same year, and which, some argued, had 'plagiarized' features from Libeskind's concept.

Given their privileging of visual culture, image and architecture, new museums usually employ a high profile architect, as in the case of the Centre Culturel Tjibaou in New Caledonia (1998) designed by Renzo Piano, or the Tate Modern in London (2000) designed by Herzog and De Meuron. As illustrated by Kiasma: Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (1998), they emphasize interactive and multimedia modes of display to further enhance this image of newness, and highlight the technological innovation (and 'expensive high-tech virtuosity') of their design. Moreover, they deploy features of postmodernity to achieve a clear differentiation from museums of the past, which not only privileged singular categories of disciplinarity, but which were

produced to glorify the private patron, monarch or state. Indeed, as demonstrated by the Jewish Museum–National Museum of Australia debate, new museums prefer to be understood as similar to each other and relevant to a present context, rather than drawing their significance from the past.

Yet, while the image of newness projected by new museums may reject both the princely ancestry of Renaissance collections and the education-driven public museums emerging in the 19th century, the architecture of new museums reveals the equally concrete existence of an alternative lineage. Not only do the architectural features of the new museum suggest a connection to the commercial architecture of shopping malls, and the contemporary commodity culture of mass media and popular culture, but it shows itself to be part of the chronology that emerged in the mid-19th century with the emergence of new technologies and strategies of spectacle, experience, conspicuous consumption and novelty that occurred at this time through the development of mechanized industry, cinema, transportation and tourism, and as illustrated throughout the international exhibitions and fairs of this era. This means that in offering a postmodern architectural facade, an interdisciplinary approach toward representation and diverse, multimedia strategies of address, new museums do offer strategies of representation that differ from more traditional museums and are, as such, new. However, despite aggregating these superficial components, they tend not to recognize that this preference for newness itself fits within a chronology of modernity and modernization.

Characteristically, as part of their attempts to be perceived as spectacular and engaging, new museums often combine cultural history exhibitions with contemporary arts, frequently inciting controversy on the basis of their apparently incongruous approaches to exhibition, or because of their perceived privileging of popular culture and entertainment over ‘high’ culture. They regularly function as a site for community festivals and other cultural activities. In 1998, opening celebrations for the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa were disrupted by protestors unimpressed by the display of *Virgin in a Condom* (1994), a contemporary artwork by British artist Tania Kovats. This situation had been worsened by the Museum’s promotion of Te Papa as a commercial brand which, it was feared, might undermine the symbolic function of the national museum. Others objected that Te Papa looked more like a theme park than a museum.

It is a common strategy for new museums to commission contemporary artists to complement

or re-work existing collections, and although this has in many cases – such as Fred Wilson’s *The Other Museum* (1991) – resulted in a successful re-imagining of the museum’s traditional spaces and authority, it can also work to further ostracize the visiting public. In most cases, the aestheticization of collections seeks to draw attention to the political imperatives that have guided the kinds of exhibitions museums have made in the past. It occurs primarily in relation to ethnographic and social history collections, and has developed as a way to challenge colonial practices and hierarchies of collecting and display, as well as more contemporary modes of representing politically sensitive material. Moreover, because new museums present an interest in the ways in which museums contribute to the production of meaning, they have the potential to demonstrate the interconnections between the pedagogical structures of traditional museums and the cultural and political agency of those individuals and groups who are (or are not) represented. This deployment of politically aware post-colonially informed modes of analysis does not, however, always or necessarily translate into actual or pragmatic changes to the ways that cultural difference or historical conflict is represented, or to changing attitudes toward the repatriation of material culture.

Through the invocation of newness and modes of speaking derived from postcolonial critical theory and postmodernity, the rhetorics surrounding new museums can be regarded as greater than the museums themselves. While they may aspire to the multitude of claims that are made on their behalf – that they are contemporary, relevant, exciting and politically engaged – success tends to be evasive. They exist, instead, as deeply compromised, complicated and complex institutions that balance a series of seemingly historical factors and contemporary bureaucracies, boundaries and constituencies at the same time as they project an image of newness to their visitors. And yet, perhaps it is precisely because of these complexities – and the museums’ extraordinary popularity – that the ‘new museum’ may still come to provide a valuable vehicle for the critique of contemporary culture.

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The Public Sphere

Klaus Eder

Abstract The article situates the issue of the public sphere as a phenomenon that is historically bound and culturally specific. According to this point of view, the Western practices and the Western way of thinking about the public sphere appear as a historically particular way of dealing with the more general phenomenon which is the creation of a social bond beyond the family. Looking at the self-contradictory effects of the 'modern' Western public sphere, the question is asked whether the public association of self-interested or self-governing individuals might have to be theorized as a partial and insufficient solution to the social bond. A comparative perspective shows that it is not individuals but cultural forms that link people in the public sphere. They do so by providing a narrative basis of discourses and/or markets that in the self-understanding of modernity shape social life.

Keywords cultural tradition, the Enlightenment, genealogy, social bond

The World We Have Lost: The Space of a Religious Community

Modern societies have succeeded in separating the public from the private space (Weintraub and Kumar, 1997). Those subject to this order no longer live in a world in which they were sometimes educating children, at other times trading, or making political moves, or praying. For three centuries a small portion of the world's population have had to reckon with a collective experience that divided their world into a private sphere of household existence and a public sphere of political and economic action. This separation had consequences in terms of accelerating the evolutionary change of these 'Western' societies. It gave them the advantage that reshuffled the global system, creating the sense of superiority over other human beings and realizing this sense through diverse colonial practices.

The separation of the public and the private sphere was contingent upon the decline of the symbolic unity of the space in which people lived: a symbolically constituted space which gave meaning to all, i.e. a religious space. The religious space was omnipresent, overarching the political and the private space, thus guaranteeing the reproduction of symbolic power inherent in the symbolic order of this religiously defined space. This is the world that was lost in the West. In the non-West, the symbolic unity of such universal religious orders followed different paths of historical change. Why this sharp separation happened in the West is still to be explained. It was a series of accidents that promoted the distance between the religious and the political world through increasing competition between these worlds, delegitimizing the political order and opening the opportunity for heterodox movements that tried to recreate the religious space against the rising force of defining the space of people in merely political terms. But even this is not the main reason for what made the public space the particular space of 'modernity'. This would overlook the long period of public staging of absolutist power which no longer needed religious grounding. It found the grounding in itself, radicalized in the figure of Louis XIII. Yet this homogeneous space that united a mass of subjects as equal subjects of an emperor did not succeed in keeping the distance between the holder of political power and the people. The people took over the position of the absolutist prince: they

seized absolute power. This self-staging of the people already announced what would happen later in this emerging public space where the people had taken the power of the sovereign: they staged their superiority in the name of universalistic principles, with the Jacobins as their *avant-garde*.

This public space produced also new social divisions. It kept woman and children and those without property out of it – these are the exclusionary effects of separating the private and the public sphere. Then the second decisive separation took place: the separation of the sphere of political action and the sphere of economic action. The market provided a space of social action which, like the household, was non-political. The religious sphere found it difficult to cope: it had to make sense to those in politics, in the household and in the market. It had least success in the market, most in the household – and politics remained in a volatile status in-between (which might explain the variance of linking politics and religion in ‘Western countries’ such as the USA or Sweden (or old Europe in general)).

Public spheres still continued to exist outside of the Western world (Eisenstadt et al., 2001), yet they were related to the private sphere in a different way. In conceptual terms, this difference did not exist. The public remained omnipresent in shaping the social bond between people, between me and you. In the Islamic world public spheres provided the space for religious practices through which the actor could participate in the collectivity and, through this collectivity, with other actors. Political power remained integrated and contingent on such public spheres, especially through the religious definition of the basic structure of the law. Islamic law provided the link between political power applying the law in public and the religious community that defined what was right or wrong. Confucian China provided a different type of a public sphere in which rule-orientation was constitutive of appropriate public behaviour. The evolution of these public spheres down to the present, culminating in events such as the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989 (Calhoun, 1994) or the practices in the public sphere of modern Cairo (Salvatore, 1999) took different paths, consolidating different links to the political sphere, to the economic and the private sphere.

Thus, the theory of the ‘public sphere’ is the conceptual key to a highly particular phenomenon that from a comparative historical perspective is part of a highly complex conceptual universe. It is part of a tradition from which it emerged and to which it still belongs. The theory is embedded in a narrative which is the narrative of the Anglo-American liberal tradition, originating in England at some point in the 16th century and generalized through some highly particular ‘Western’ experiences: the experience of the French Revolution and the experience of America by Europe, as exemplified by de Tocqueville’s visit to America, the self-observation of 20th-century America, the post-war experience of Europe in which a master account of this theory was formulated that again was fostered by the European experience of 1989 and the ‘discovery of civil society’, a concept related to the concept of a public sphere. It has become not only the master narrative, but also the theoretically dominant narrative. Which is to say that this theory is part of a tradition and of social processes in which it is embedded and makes sense and which forces us to take into account the history of this concept-making.

The Genealogy of Thinking about the Public Sphere

The people, both the elite and the subjects, living in such public spheres did not know that they were living in such a sphere. Words such as ‘the public’, *Öffentlichkeit*, ‘public sphere of opinion’, or *publique* were invented in the course of the construction of these spaces in Europe; they accompanied this process by giving meaning to them, a meaning that normally did not diffuse down to the people. The theory of what was being made was the theory of the public sphere articulated in different forms, as ‘public opinion’, as *publicité*, as *Öffentlichkeit*, later translated into common words such as ‘public space’ or ‘public sphere’ (which is translatable into other European languages as well, Latin as well as Germanic ones). Its genealogy starts early, with the particular ‘Western path of development’ in theological reflection, passed through the philosophy of the Enlightenment and culminated in the sociology of a public sphere.

Since public spheres existed not only in Europe, the notion of a public sphere or some equivalent is assumed to have existed in non-Western traditions. The most obvious case would be Islamic publics which spring from the same ancestry as the West, being part of the Abrahamic traditions, i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam. There are also parallel developments in the West in the conceptualization of what we call the public sphere. Arabic thinkers and Christian thinkers of the Middle Ages seem not to have differed so much on what they considered to be the public space (Salvatore, 2005). The universalistic types of religions, i.e. missionary monotheistic religions, which governed the reflection on the public sphere, the idea of being a community before God, created parallel traditions of thinking about these spheres in these monotheistic traditions.

What characterized the Christian variant of making sense of the public sphere, i.e. the political theory of the public, constitutes a particular break. This tradition defines itself as *the* break with tradition. The Enlightenment conceives of itself as a self-constituting discourse beyond tradition. This has given it much power: power over those still adhering to tradition, and over those living in different traditions.

Habermas has given a succinct account of this tradition using political theories as they developed in Germany, France and England in the 18th and 19th centuries (Habermas, 1962). This account has been followed by normative debates on democratic political orders and on civil society since then, itself creating different national traditions that defined the political importance of the public sphere. De Tocqueville, visiting America, saw this public sphere with the eye of the Frenchman after the Revolution. The growing importance of the mass media fostered in America the debate on public opinion, while fascism in Europe again precipitated reflection on the role of public communication.

This model is itself part of a tradition in which the link between an autonomous subject and its communicative link to the other is theorized as self-rationalizing public discourse (Somers, 1995a, 1995b). That such a model is the historical outcome of a tradition leading to the West and, as such, a particular solution to a basic problem for which it is a solution, restricts the claim of universality of such arguments. The basic social bond that binds people together in public is constructed in ways that are specific to the Western model. In this model we have a subject that constitutes itself in the political realm, beyond and outside the private realm, even beyond the economic realm, as a political subject. It is through this political sphere that the subject interacts with other subjects and creates the social world to live in. The precariousness of this construction has accompanied the history of the West – the social bond projected into the autonomous political subject has been a risky social construction that continues to have real consequences, i.e. people in search of themselves beyond and before the political sphere. Even worse, this precarious and risky subject underlies the whole normative construction of politics in the Western tradition, namely government by such subjects, i.e. government by the people.

The Political Character of the Public Space in the West

The basis of modern government is reference to the people. Such reference is made in theory as well in practice. In theory, it is argued that the people make a contract with each other to give the government the power and the right to govern in their name. Locke has given a more liberal view of this theory by saying that the contract is something to be renewed permanently. The practical consequences of such ideas are some principles of what the procedures through which people are linked to government should look like. In practice, this has been mainly parliamentary representation and voting. People vote for their representatives who then decide on the legal norms that order social life. Sometimes they might even vote directly regarding particular decisions.

Who are the people? The theory of the public sphere has shaped the answer: government has to be accessible to the public, must be accountable to the public and provide sites where this public can act to control government and to make it accountable. Thus, in the public we have to look for the people. Determining who the people are has been going on for a long

time: first, only those who owned property (because only they were supposed to be ‘autonomous subjects’), then only educated males, finally also women, but only those who fulfilled the criterion of being a member of the community, the nation. This is the unsolved puzzle of the theory of the modern public sphere: it assumes a people contrary to its premises and builds upon such shaky foundations a whole theory of democratic government, government by consent of the people.

This is the political part of the theory of the public sphere. Only those decisions that are agreed to by the people are considered legitimate. Even Max Weber found it difficult to argue that in principle this concept holds, and that in practice we have to measure such legitimacy in terms of the collective acceptance of a decision. This raises a problem: how is it possible that decisions are accepted that are not agreed to by the people, i.e. in which there has been no participation?

One way out of this impasse is the proposal to uncouple the issue of legitimacy and the issue of democratic participation. The narrative of democracy that was developed in the context of the modern nation-state is that legitimacy presupposes democratic participation. This narrative is still told but it loses credibility, given the empirical status of democratic participation in complex contemporary political systems.

Modern societies, however, have become difficult to regulate through the classic democratic principles. They have invented additional procedures which, as a rule, decrease rather than increase the participation of the people. We have increasingly less to do with a system of *government*, but more to do with a system of *governance*. This concept says that decision-making has become so complex that the illusion of a competent legislator can no longer be upheld. They have to avoid becoming accountable for what cannot be calculated. In order to do so, legislators mobilize the public that takes over the responsibility of decisions in risky environments. Linking governance and the public sphere resolves two problems: it allows decisions to be made even in situations of insecurity due to the complexity of issues at stake; it further allows even potentially wrong decisions to be legitimized because they can be attributed to the deliberative action of the public.

The model of policy-makers and policy-making being observed (and if necessary attacked) by diverse publics is thus changing. The link between observers and observed is strengthened: the observed co-opt the observers. The model of the nation-state which has shaped our perception of this link can be described as a two-step observation: a people defined as the public observes their representatives, who again observe those who act in the name of the state. This second step does not entail a clear-cut difference, but in principle that was the idea. Democratic control could be imagined through the first step of observation: a public people observes their representatives.

In the transnational situation, such modes of public observation of political decision-making raise questions about the classic national model. Who observes whom and how is it done? Which raises still another normative question: is democracy, defined as the observation of those in power by a public, possible beyond the nation-state? Since the tradition that has forged modern Western societies makes us assume that such a link between legitimacy and democratic participation is the condition sine qua non of modern forms of political domination, or simply, since we assume that the classic democratic narrative still holds, the question arises: how is this link constructed in societies that extend beyond the national border, i.e. in transnational societies?

A Global Public Sphere – Who Talks with Whom?

The narrative of the Western tradition is carried on – a global public sphere is called for that would provide the model in which the community of a people are connected in such a way that they will trust each other. But who observes whom at the global level? And why does this not lead to mutual understanding? Why doesn’t the supposed internal dynamics of consensus-building built into the Western model tradition work?

The usual critique of the non-representativeness of the global public sphere (such as the

critique of NGOism as lacking connection to local people) remains within the logic of the Western tradition: non-elected people speak in our name at the global level and this works badly (Tarrow, 2005). But there is another problem: some feel that they do not talk the language that would form a basis for talking together. The bond between people does not emerge from the public, and this even more so when we theorize a global public sphere.

This leaves us with an unresolved theoretical question: what do we have to assume in order to understand the construction of a social bond between people that is the result of a people interacting with other people, in front of a people that is called the public? When, why and how does this work? The assumptions of the Western theory of the public sphere do not work – neither in its liberal (the dominant) variant nor in its republican/socialist variant. Therefore, we have to reconsider other publics formed outside the model of the Western theory which assumes a public sphere held together by autonomous individuals. Outside this tradition we encounter different modes of creating the mutual trust that enables people to act in public. There are models around in the manifold traditions in the world that do not require us to conceive of social actors as already constituted actors such as autonomous beings, but as actors in search of the social bond which is triggered when people enter this strange site of social interaction called the public sphere.

To talk about a global public sphere could simply be the continuation of a specific narrative of the social actor turning to politics, i.e. the Western narrative. But it could also turn out to be the space in which competing narratives are again looking for a basis on which to create mutual trust to continue acting together as social beings.

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The Japanese ‘Public Sphere’: the *Kugai*

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Keywords bourgeois society, civil society, the Enlightenment, Japan, property ownership, public sphere, towns and cities

The Public Sphere as a Category of Bourgeois Society

In his *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*), Habermas (1962) presents the public sphere as ‘a category of bourgeois society’ largely based on an analysis of social change in Western European modernity which saw the emergence of the separation between the public and private domains. By achieving the functional separation of the ‘private domain’, the rising bourgeoisie were able to establish a wider domain of freedom of action – a ‘social space’ of liberty. This process of separation of social spheres began in the ‘intimate sphere’, in other words, in the interior space of the bourgeois nuclear family. It was in this sphere that individual autonomy first emerged, around the concept of religious freedom from the Reformation, which crystallized into bourgeois economic society and Enlightenment learning. The latter combined with the institutions of the town and aristocratic social life to create the literary public sphere. In concrete terms, the literary public sphere was enacted in the coffee houses, salons and clubs, where people endowed with the entrance requirement of Enlightenment learning were able to meet freely and on equal terms to discuss literary matters. Newspapers also emerged at this time, providing a medium for public discourse freed from the constraints of time and place, allowing literate people to form themselves into a public without necessarily meeting face-to-face.

The ‘freedom of expression’ in the public sphere developed in close step with ‘market freedom’ in the economic sphere. In the development of the political public sphere, the divide between the ‘private domain’ and the ‘domain of public authority’ was broken through and the bourgeoisie gained participation in affairs of the state through the establishment of parliaments, political parties and the exposure of government policy to public debate. This provided the basis for the legal institutionalization and universalization of bourgeois social relations. It is no accident that bourgeois political revolutions took place earliest

in those countries with the most highly developed market economies, most notably Britain in the 17th century.

The concept of the ‘public sphere’ is thus constructed as an ideal type, incorporating the ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity established first in the intimate sphere. Its central principle is the ideal of public discourse and the norm of shared communication among people with differences. This abstracted ‘ideal type’ or ‘normative model’ provides a basis for the analysis and critique of later developments in which the separation between state and society has broken down, causing a depoliticization of the public sphere. However, these changes are no less a reflection of the continued influence of the bourgeoisie. With the expansion of the bourgeois economy since the 19th century, the contradictions between vested social interests have become so intense that the state has increasingly been called in as an arbiter of social and economic conflicts. The separation between state and society that supported the earlier development of the public sphere has thus collapsed. Under these new conditions of ‘late capitalism’ and the ‘Sozialstaat’, the public sphere has changed in function, becoming little more than a space for advertising and public relations. The task emerging from this analysis is to find a way to overcome this pathology of a depoliticized public sphere and recover its latent critical capacity. This task needs to be addressed both in theory and in practice.

Criticisms of the public sphere concept have generally stemmed from its inherent duality, combining elements of both reality and normativity. Further historical analysis, especially when conducted from a feminist or minority standpoint, reveals the existence of exclusionary mechanisms that have rendered the public sphere closed to large numbers of people, thus casting doubt on the definition of the public sphere as a universal social space open to all. Indeed, it can be very difficult to find any historical reality anywhere providing a basis for the definition of the ideal model of a truly open public sphere.

An alternative to conceiving the duality of the public sphere in terms of ‘norm vs reality’, is to view it instead as ‘potentiality vs reality’. Rather than trying to abstract a normative conception of the public sphere from an idealized account of past history (thus leaving the concept open to critique through the reinterpretation of that history), we

can instead see the public sphere as possessing a ‘potential form’ lying beyond the present horizon. Although not yet realized, this potential form can be extrapolated on the basis of our observations of the processes and direction of change in the existing and past real forms of the public sphere.

Rather than being a static entity, the public sphere is a dynamic and evolving entity. It changes in relation to the specific cultural, technological, social, political and economic conditions of the time. The development of the public sphere can be seen as an instance of the process of the ‘production of space’ as conceived by Henri Lefebvre (1974). We can thus speak in terms of the ‘production of public space’. This leads us in turn to consider the issue of a ‘politics of the public sphere’. This is a politics for the production and maintenance of public space – a space which is not private, nor commercialized, nor under the domination of administrative state authority, where people meet each other as human beings irrespective of their particular role in society or social status. Crucially, the public sphere also acts as a space from which social authority can be critiqued and challenged, and it is thus very much worth the effort of maintaining.

An Alternative Japanese Conception of the ‘Public Sphere’

In terms of the potential of public space, Japan provides an interesting example which further illuminates the concept. As has been emphasized, the concept of the ‘public sphere’, as developed by Habermas, was abstracted on the basis of an analysis of the history of Western European societies. With this in mind, we might next consider what parallels, if any, exist in the history of other regions of the world. Is the ‘public sphere’ an entirely unique historical product of Western Europe? In examining the history of Japan, for example, can we identify anything of a similar nature that we might want to designate by the term ‘public sphere’? If there is such a thing, in what ways does it resemble or differ from its Western European counterpart? What might these differences and similarities suggest about the general concept of ‘publicness’ in human societies?

A logical place to begin the search for an indigenous Japanese ‘public sphere’ would be in the phenomenon of urban settlement. Rather than looking at concrete towns or cities, I will consider the notion of ‘urban place’ (*toshi no ba*, 都市の場) as developed by Amino Yoshihiko (1996). This is a conceptual entity equivalent in many ways to Henri Lefebvre’s (1970) idea of ‘la chose urbaine’. It expresses a form of potentiality or latency which may or may not be realized in actual urban settlements. Indeed, the degree of its realization may

change historically. Although Lefebvre tends to present such change as being unilinear and unidirectional, I prefer to see it as containing the possibility of multiple lines of development and reversibility. Thus, a form lacking any present concrete manifestation could nevertheless persist in a condition of submergence or latency, and might re-emerge to provide the basis for future developments.

Amino (1987) identifies three principles or elements characterizing ‘urban place’: ‘*Kugai* (公界)’, ‘*muen* (無縁)’ and ‘*raku* (楽)’. I will explain below what these terms mean, but first let me note that they are indigenous historical concepts that emerged in Japan during the medieval period. Together they form a set of mutually reinforcing and interdependent social concepts. In the present day, however, their use is rare (at least in the senses described below).

The concept of *Kugai* (公界) perhaps resembles most closely the ‘public sphere’ known in Europe. Derivationally, the word is a compound of two elements: ‘*ku*’ (also more commonly pronounced ‘*kou* (公)’) meaning ‘public’, and ‘*gai* (界)’ (more usually pronounced ‘*kai* (界)’) meaning ‘realm’ or ‘world’. As in English, the word ‘*kou* (公)’ can refer either to the notion of ‘public authority’ (i.e. the state), or to the ‘public’ of the ‘public sphere’ (which is independent of the state). *Kugai* (公界) refers to the latter sense of the ‘public’. At the end of the medieval period and beginning of the early modern period in Japan (around the year 1600), these two different forms of the ‘public’ came into headlong collision. The ‘public authority’ of the warlords (*daimyou* (大名)) effectively crushed the previously existing *Kugai* ‘public’ centred in the towns. This strengthening of state power led to the eclipse of the *Kugai*. As a result, the word has now dropped out of use in the Japanese language.

‘*Muen* (無縁)’ is a key defining principle of the *Kugai*. It refers to the property of something being ‘unconnected’ or ‘unbound’. Such freedom implies the absence of ownership, and indeed the absence of any restrictive social ties involving legal or communal obligation. This lack of connection was itself informally institutionalized providing a space for the existence of the *Kugai*. It was manifest concretely in the areas of land, such as mountains, uncultivated land, riverbanks, beaches, cemeteries, sacred land and roadways, which were not seen as being owned or linked to anyone in particular. These areas provided a physical space where various activities, including trading, solicitation of charitable contributions or religious offerings, open-air entertainments and certain types of ritual, could be carried out independently of public authority. It was also in such places, especially around marketplaces, that independent towns first developed.

In its common contemporary usage, the word 'raku' (楽) refers to the quality of 'pleasure', 'comfort' or 'ease'. However, in the medieval period it also referred to an almost utopian space in which the principles of *Kugai* and *muen* achieved their fullest possible expression. Its concrete manifestation was in the 'fairgrounds' where trading, public entertainment and ritual activities took place freely in a carnivalesque atmosphere. 'Raku' could be described as a 'place of desire' – a social space in which social relations and identities were suspended. It thus had an erotic dimension that rendered it resistant to institutionalization (and therefore may have contributed to its eventual demise).

The agents of the *Kugai* were not the settled agricultural population but itinerant and socially marginalized artisans, entertainers, diviners and holy men. These were people who relied on the possession of special skills or qualities – rather than access to land – to make a living. Indeed, it was these special skills and connections with the sacred that qualified them to operate autonomously in the *Kugai*.

While there clearly are resemblances between the medieval Japanese *Kugai* and the modern public sphere, there are also some significant differences. First, although they both have a close connection with urbanization, there is a difference in the nature of that connection. The public sphere in Western Europe was developed by the bourgeoisie who lived in towns and cities. The public sphere thus grew out of urban settlements. In contrast, the *Kugai* pre-existed towns and was the space in which towns developed. Towns thus grew out of the *Kugai*. However, despite the growth of towns, the *Kugai* itself was not clearly conceptualized or institutionalized. This may be one factor in its eventual demise.

A second difference between the public sphere and the *Kugai* is in their relation to religion and ritual. The rise of the public sphere in Western Europe was closely associated with the process of secularization and 'disenchantment'. It became a sphere devoted (in principle at least) to rational discourse. In contrast, the *Kugai* retained strong links with the sacred and many of its agents were ritual practitioners.

Finally, I want to emphasize one very significance difference relating to the matter of private property. As a social space of the bourgeoisie, the public sphere in Western Europe was intimately connected with the private ownership of property. The ownership of property was the principal means by which the bourgeoisie was able to obtain a degree of autonomy from state authority. One can also say therefore that private property was a necessary condition for the formation of the public sphere. By contrast, the *Kugai* was based precisely on the

absence of property ownership, as is expressed in the concept of *muen*. Although the *Kugai* was, like the public sphere, in a relation of opposition or autonomy from state authority, this was not achieved through the means of private property.

This raises very interesting questions of relevance to the present day. Especially after the failure of the socialist experiments of the 20th century, we are presented with a situation in which private property ownership seems to be a pre-requisite for the public sphere. On the other hand, the *Kugai* presents us with a very different case in which a strategy for public autonomy is predicated precisely on non-ownership. We might then find it possible, or even necessary, to consider property ownership and 'publicness' as entirely separate issues. Is it perhaps possible to find a model for public autonomy based on a concept of 'interactive subjectivity' or 'inter-subjectivity', rather than the dominant individualistic bourgeois subjectivity of the present day? Might we rediscover a concept of *muen* ('unboundness') in the future? Despite its eclipse as a result of the historical process, any remaining latent potential of the *Kugai* is perhaps worth remembering and exploring for the future.

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‘The Public’ in Japan

Kaori Hayashi

Keywords Confucianism, the Emperor, Japan, private, public

For Habermas (1989), the public sphere was seen as arising out of the collective interest of private individuals. This way of thinking led to the assumption common in Western thought, that the independence of the public domain is dependent on the freedom of the private domain (Maruyama, 1974: 103). Hence the public domain has the meaning for private individuals of being ‘ours’ and nobody else’s. The Japanese notion of public stands in sharp contrast to this conception found in the West.

The word ‘public’ is often translated as *kou* (公) or *kookyō* (公共) in Japanese. But this use produces some problems. *Kou* (公), which is also read as *ōyake* (公) (written as the same Chinese character), derives etymologically from a word meaning ‘great residence’ and then took the meaning of ‘the master’ at a later date in pre-modern Japan. The word *watakushi* (私) which translates as the English ‘private’, as opposed to ‘public’, means, among other things, the first person singular ‘I’ as well as a subordinate of an *ōyake* (公) master. Thus, in Japanese, the word ‘public interest’ designated (and still more or less does) something like ‘the master’s interest’ (Mizubayashi, 1996: 115). It was only with the Meiji Era modernization after 1868 that the European sense of public was introduced into Japanese academic and intellectual life. But its use in this sense in common daily conversation was (and still is) rather rare. Overall, the conventional understanding of ‘public’ is still dominant, in which the public domain belongs to ‘them’ (the masters), and not ‘us’ in the way they thought in the West.

In addition, an ethical judgmental connotation was added to the word ‘private’ and ‘public’ due to the principles and wisdom based upon Confucianism that dominated the samurai class during its reign. Among the various interpretations of Confucianism, the Chu Hsi School was most accepted throughout the intellectual world of the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). One of Japan’s leading political scientists, Masao Maruyama, elaborates on this point:

‘Public’ is synonymous with the principles of heaven, and ‘private’ with human desires . . .

Hence a ‘private’ matter is an evil that must be rejected. The Chu Hsi scholars of the early Tokugawa period faithfully followed this interpretation. Hayashi Razan, for example, argued that ‘a benevolent man is a person who has eliminated selfish desires and has adhered to the public good based on the principles of Heaven. Public good based on the principles of Heaven means righteousness . . . This is the path that is natural and does not involve private considerations.’ (Maruyama, 1974: 104–5)

In Japanese, then, there remains the connotation of being fair and just *per se* in the word ‘public’ and the public belongs to the master, or Heaven (and thus it is above criticism), whereas the private contains evil, redundant, and private concerns which must not be sustained in the public realm. It tends to be regarded as dishonorable to adhere to one’s own ‘private’ codes.

Under these semantic conditions, the interactions of individuals in almost every social situation have tended to be perceived in terms of this hierarchy of their ‘private (私)’ (subordinate) and ‘public’ (master) aspects. This mechanism is as follows: ‘*watakushi* (私)’, a private person, is subordinate to his/her public master ‘*ōyake* (公)’, but he/she, in turn, is also ‘*ōyake* (公)’ vis-à-vis his/her own subordinates. It means also that the obligations a person owes to his/her master are something public, and thus have priority over one’s private concerns and feelings (Aruga, 1967: 229–34). In such a social context, little space has been left for an individual to pursue his/her subjective autonomy, conduct critical debate with others, and make his/her own judgments.

This interpretation has given the word public the strong denotation of ‘official’ or the authority for one to serve at a later date. Though a similar meaning of public exists in the West as well, the situation is slightly different in Japan in that it lacks the experience of bourgeois society that protected the autonomy of privacy from state authority. In Europe, autonomy was justified among the bourgeoisie ‘precisely in reference to the concept of free power of control over property that functioned in capitalist fashion’ (Habermas, 1989: 74).

It should also be stated that this Confucian way of understanding the public and private has secured the traditional Japanese social structure. After the Meiji Restoration, by placing the

imperial rule at the top as the public and equating it with the notion of 'Heaven', the endless obedience of the supreme imperial rule was imposed through the chain of the public and private that permeated society. At the top of the hierarchy was the heavenly imperial seat, and there at the top the chains of the public and private from all the social strata converged and enforced the integration of the nation.

The Emperor continued to take this integrative position even after World War II, because the post-war Constitution stipulated that the Emperor was a 'symbol of the nation'. Therefore, even in the post-war democracy there remains 'a dualism of "public (official)–state–governmental authority" (setting the emperor at the top) and "private–individual–civil"' (Hanada, 1997: 19). And this is one reason why misunderstanding arises when we discuss the public sphere in Japan. In Japanese society, the public and private are construed as a 'twisted double structure'. Hanada ascribes various problems of the public sphere in present Japan to this structure. He cites N. Yasunaga's argument that the state, in trying to deny the private entity of individuals in the name of the public (official), actually cultivates (in a contradictory fashion) the private entity in a hidden way. Hanada concludes that under the dominance of such a twisted double structure, the construction of the public sphere in the normative sense would be extremely difficult (Hanada, 1997: 19).

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