FAST CAPITALISM

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Volume 8 • Issue 1

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Fast Capitalism is an academic journal with a political intent. We publish reviewed scholarship and essays about the impact of rapid information and communication technologies on self, society and culture in the 21st century. We do not pretend an absolute objectivity; the work we publish is written from the vantages of viewpoint. Our authors examine how heretofore distinct social institutions, such as work and family, education and entertainment, have blurred to the point of near identity in an accelerated, post-Fordist stage of capitalism. This makes it difficult for people to shield themselves from subordination and surveillance. The working day has expanded; there is little down time anymore. People can 'office' anywhere, using laptops and cells to stay in touch. But these invasive technologies that tether us to capital and control can also help us resist these tendencies. People use the Internet as a public sphere in which they express and enlighten themselves and organize others; women, especially, manage their families and nurture children from the job site and on the road, perhaps even 'familizing' traditionally patriarchal and bureaucratic work relations; information technologies afford connection, mitigate isolation, and even make way for social movements. We are convinced that the best way to study an accelerated media culture and its various political economies and existential meanings is dialectically, with nuance, avoiding sheer condemnation and ebullient celebration. We seek to shape these new technologies and social structures in democratic ways.

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Intoxicated with Raison d'etat

Anej Korsika

Advocates of mercantilism, economic doctrine that dominated Western Europe from 16th to late 18th century, argued that positive balance of trade is of quintessential importance for any successful economic policy. Prime responsibility of every state was thus taking care of imports never exceeding exports. From such a perspective trade was not something beneficial (as proponents of laissez-faire economy, namely Adam Smith, would later on argue) but rather a zero-sum game. Instead of cooperation, states had to compete with one another. Because there wasn't any common denominator that could prove to be of mutual interest, the natural state of affairs between the states, was necessary one of hostility.

Mercantilism became an economic variety of Hobbesian "bellum omnium contra omnes" and its understanding of war as a continuation of political economy by other means already precipitated that of von Clausewitz. It actually seems as if for a certain period of time political economy proudly and shamelessly declared its true purpose. Already liberated from the traditional and religious sentiments and codes of conduct, but still far away from liberal notions of free trade, universal equality etc. mercantilism appears to be a doctrine where appearance and essence of social form collided in the most straightforward way[1].

Perhaps one of its most distinguished (economic) battle cries was the notion of raison d'etat or national interest. This concept (nowadays still the core notion of realist school of international relations) served as the justification for pursuing wealth and power and ensuring states survival and security by any means necessary. Having that in mind it comes as quite a surprise that raison d'etat gained substantial prominence and importance in the public discourse of the former socialist republic of Slovenia. How that came about will be the focus of this paper.

We Want Nothing that Belongs to Others, and Won't Give Anything that Belongs to Us![2]

Addressing the appearance of raison d'etat on the background of Slovenian transition from socialism to market economy, demands at least some general remarks about the transition itself. SRS- Socialist Republic of Slovenia was the most developed republic of the former Yugoslavia. According to a research done in mid eighties, in Ljubljana, Slovenian capital, GDP per capita was 260 percent of the Yugoslavian average. While in Priština, capital of Kosovo- the least developed Yugoslavian region, it was as low as 70 percent of the Yugoslavian average[3].

What is perhaps even more important is the fact that Yugoslavia was not only economically divided but had corresponding political differences as well. Perhaps we can illustrate this with Italy, that has similar differences on its North-South axis, though all citizens still speak the same language and practice a common religion. Yugoslavia on the other hand had three official languages (Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian and Macedonian) and three main religions (Roman Catholic, Muslim and Orthodox). Travelling from one part to another one could experience the diversity that was homogenized under the slogan "Brotherhood and Unity" and later on, with the disintegration of Yugoslavia, experienced its catastrophic turn in the Balkan wars.

On the brink of gaining its independence Slovenia therefore already had a solid and plural civil society that developed throughout the eighties. Various punk bands (Lublanski psi, Niet, Pankrti, Racija, Buldogi, to mention just

a few[4]) had gained a faithful audience and became prominent for provocative song writing. Laibach, a well known and acclaimed band began their career in this period as well. There were numerous political initiatives addressing issues of ecology, LGBT, pacifism etc. All of this was supported and covered by progressive media such as Radio Študent (oldest student radio in Europe: http://www.radiostudent.si/) student newspaper Tribuna (it started publishing in 1951: http://www.tribuna.si/) and many others. Intense theoretical reflection and philosophical engagement with burning social issues was very much present as well (Slavoj Žižek was part of this movement among others). Suffice it to say that it was a real social, artistic and intellectual outburst, that yet awaits a proper theoretical reflection.

Although pluralization of political arena, freedom of speech and human rights were of central importance, its even more noteworthy that self-understanding of the great majority of civil society at the time, was one of posing a left critique to (at least) declaratively leftist regime. This meant that Slovenian Communist Party (SCP) had to deal with these oppositional forces in a specific manner. It couldn't simply discharge them, because in theory both nomenklatura of SCP and the civil society held similar political goals. One of the main critiques of party establishment being that it was not progressive, not even socialist enough! In a sense young progressive intellectuals, artists, activists were much more serious about the communism as the communists themselves were[5]! Therefore simply discharging such an immanent critique would mean that SCP, as well as federal authorities were not true to themselves. That being the case a common party strategy was one of presenting these conflicts as expressions of inner party democracy, while trying to "absorb" among their ranks the most radical elements of the civil society. However there was only so much that party could actually absorb...

Slovenia gained its independence on 25th of June in 1991 when an overwhelming majority of the population voted for the independence (out of 88,5 percent of voters that have attended the referendum, 95 percent voted for the independence). It seems as if the aspirations of the civil society were buried and forgotten overnight. Instead of creative and revolutionary outburst of political energy, nation building (Nationenbildung) became the prime object[6]. Slovenia already being the most ethnically homogeneous of all the former Yugoslavian republics (with the ethnical structure of more than 83 percent of Slovenians) proved itself as increasingly hostile towards the foreigners. Without doubt the most disgraceful and political horrific was the case of the so called Erased. A group of several thousand Slovenian citizens that were born in other ex- Yugoslavian republics. At a certain point these people were disposed of all their documents and effectively became non existent citizens. This shameful event is the dark core of the spontaneous nation building and even to this day the rights of these citizens were still not reestablished[7]. Instead of progressive ideas of political inclusion and expanding the rights of citizens that were prevalent in eighties, a substantial part of population was simply erased. More than ever in Slovenian history foreign became something to be extremely suspicious and wary of. Something that endangered the Slovenians throughout their history and permanently posed a threat towards realizing a thousand years old dream of a sovereign and independent nation state. Even nowadays Slovenia still has a very small percentage of foreigners and gaining an asylum is a daunting if not an impossible task[8].

Although market reforms and capitalism as such were not on the agenda of the civil society in eighties they inevitably came about (some people nowadays even complain that at the time of the referendum nobody actually asked them if they want to live in capitalism and that of course they would not vote for that) . Former state owned enterprises were bound to be privatized and Jeffery Sachs a neoliberal economic guru that preached so called "shock doctrine" had toured around the former Eastern block, stopping in Slovenia as well. However he did not gain a substantial audience for his turbo market reforms, as Slovenian politicians as well as economists were much more fond of the gradualist approach to the whole transition from socialism to capitalism. In contrast to many Eastern European countries the amount of foreign direct investment and foreign capital in general was relatively small. Instead of selling out all the national companies at bargain prices a great majority of them remained in state ownership. Through a certificate system citizens were able to obtain a certain amount of stocks in these former state owned companies, while state still obtained a controlling share through state agencies.

A combination of gradualist approach, a historically suspicious attitude towards everything foreign and a relatively small market of only 2 million potential consumers meant that in contrast to the common scenario in other Eastern European countries a great majority of the Slovenian economy remained in the domestic ownership. Therefore it was as late as 2001 that a really important episode concerning the involvement of foreign capital, came about. Although the scenario was very much specific, the industry concerned was the industry of beverages, more precisely beer and as any Slovenian can confirm dealing with beer is no small deal...

Bottoms up!

In Slovenia there exist two main producers of beverages Union and Laško. Both are actually the names of beer brands, though they are not specialized only in beer. An average Slovenian has a special affinity towards either one of these two brands. Although with younger generation things are not as strict as they used to be, identifying oneself with either of the two brands was of substantial importance. There are certain areas in Slovenia where it is common to drink Laško and drinking Union would be perceived unmanly and other regions where its just he opposite. A common joke of a Union drinker would be: "I drink Union and piss Laško!" while the Laško drinker would claim just the opposite. It goes without saying that both of these brands were packed with tradition (Union being established in 1864 and Laško in 1825) and emotions that accompanied them.

When Laško published the intention for the ownership takeover of Union in 2001 and bought more than 20% of Unions stocks, effectively becoming biggest stockholder, the outburst of the so called "brewery war" came about. In Union they percieved this as the hostile takeover and started searching for a foreign strategic partner with whom they would challenge the intentions of Laško. They found one in the Belgian giant brewery Interbrew. Therefore the only question became whether Union is going to be taken over by Laško or Interbrew. However this wasn't a matter of simple financial transaction as Union and Interbrew argued that if Laško would obtain the controlling amount of stocks this would cause a monopoly and illegal concentration of capital. In such a scenario together with Union, Laško would control more than 95 percent of Slovenian market of beverages[9]. Because of that Interbrew addressed the Slovenian Competition Protection Office to make a judgement about the problematic concentration of capital. This office became one of the most crucial players in the whole "brewery war" that lasted for more than four years. Having said that the attitude towards the products of both breweries was highly emotional it comes as no surprise that this takeover became a prime media story as well as one of the most prominent political issues. Brewery war thus immediately gained legal, political, media and emotional dimensions and it was never just a simple economic takeover.

Perhaps single most important moment was the introduction of raison d'etat or national interest. It became widely accepted that its in Slovenian national interest that Union remains in Slovenian hands, i.e. is taken over by Laško. I believe the interview that was conducted with Tit Turnšek, at the time the chairman of the board of Laško, quite accurately represents the sentiment that was wide spread at the time. First of all Turnšek sincerely admits that the project of takeover had a political backing from the very beginning: "Before the takeover, we have talked with people from Slovenian government. We got the green light, they have agreed that we should establish a Slovenian holding of beverage industries[10]". But the political involvement goes further than that. Laško could count on the support of the left wing, liberal democratic government of, at the time prime minister, Janez Drnovšek[11]. On the other hand the chairman of the board of Union and other members of the board were in much closer relationship with right wing politicians that were in the parliamentary opposition at the time. Perhaps a bit paradoxical (but I guess politics is no sphere to talk about paradoxes) the left wing government became a vigorous supporter of national ownership and national interests, patriotically defending these "values". While the right wing opposition argued for foreign ownership and for respecting the logic of free trade[12].

The image of hostile foreign capital eventually prevailed and once again the slogan of We want nothing that belongs to others, and won't give anything that belongs to us! could be seen imprinted on everything concerning this brewery war. Chairman Turnšek said: "In Europe and in the World Interbrew unfortunately doesn't have the best image. They came after Guardian, the most prominent British newspaper and tried to seize it. But in the rough capitalism things are done this way. I don't judge Interbrew for doing this, they live in rough capitalism, while we still maintain some social dimension. The fact that people from Union went to Belgium and asked them for a takeover is something similar to a scenario where the best Slovenian farmer, who has a big, well established farm and good knowledge would go to Austrian farmer with a little bigger farm and ask him if he would buy him[13]".

Turnšek also commented on those that believed foreign ownership is better: "Perhaps there are some who believe that the alternative is that somebody will buy as all. That a foreigner will buy us. But if you ask me this is not the right way. When foreigner buys us he doesn't do any good for us. He would buy us only because we are good and because we have the knowledge, profits and a good reputation. He would buy us and than take the profits. Is this the imperative of our politics? If it is, then it is rather sad". While Interbrew argued that if Laško is to takeover Union there will be illegal concentration of capital, the argument of Laško was quite original indeed. They have argued that because Slovenia is already effectively part of the global market and will be even more so when it enters EU (it became

member in 2007) one cannot talk about any problematic concentration of ownership. While the representative of global capital (Interbrew) argued for the judgement inside the national borders, the representative of national capital (Laško) argued for the judgement that would encompass the global interconnectedness of capitalism. Eventually Competition Protection Office declared that there is no threat of illegal concentration of capital (monopoly) and Laško became the owner of Union, and I for one believe they both still taste the same as before the war...

Global VS National Capital

Perhaps a reasonable conclusion (at least from capital point of view) would be that Slovenian economy simply wasn't liberated enough, that pro market reforms were not yet sufficiently implemented and therefore "foreign direct investment" simply wasn't possible. Such a perspective would argue that Slovenian capitalism wasn't capitalistic enough. The usual vulgata of liberalization, regulation, privatization and other slogans we are used to hear, whenever capital finds itself in crisis, would therefore apply. One could of course argue that the whole notion of national interest with its historical origins in the period of mercantilism is something that has been superseded and is itself a historical anachronism. But superseded by what?

In contrast to such an approach I believe that national interest is not something extrinsic to highly developed capitalism. Although we are permanently experiencing a great variety of concrete expressions of capitalism, I believe it its crucial to maintain the perspective that all of these have a common denominator, i.e. that they are all the concrete expressions of the same abstract logic of capital. Karl Marx's analysis of capital includes such a dialectic of concrete and abstract on the most elementary level of capitalist production, i.e. on the micro level of commodity itself. Every commodity that is produced in capitalism already embodies a duality of abstract and concrete. On the one hand each commodity has a concrete dimensions- it demands concrete labour and concrete time and when finished has a certain use value. On the other hand all of these characteristics have their abstract dimension as well, each commodity embodies abstract labour and abstract time and as such have an exchange value that guarantees it the potentiality to be exchanged for any other commodity. This elementary dialectic of abstract and concrete that is already present on the most basic level of capitalist production is a necessary dimension of the logic of capital as such[14].

I believe this same logic can be seen on a much more general and broader level when tracking the dynamic between global and national capital. I would argue that global capital could be characterized by the embodiment of the abstract logic of capital, especially from the perspective of capital that is functioning primarily in the context of national borders. It goes without saying that each global capital necessarily works in the context of nation states, thus its logic is in the last instance always concrete. But what interests us is the dynamic between these two. Because, while Interbrew as the representative of global capital could firmly declare that national protectionism needs to be done away with and that everything that matters was the free flow of capital Laško on the other hand couldn't afford such an approach. In a sense what Laško did in its defense and legitimation of its strategy was just consistently developing the argument of Interbrew. If national borders, nations as such and in the last instance national interest really aren't important and the only thing that matters is the logic of capital itself- well what would be holding back Interbrew from just sucking out of Union as much profit as possible and not caring about anything else? Well of course, nothing!

Indeed this is actually the common scenario throughout the globe; powerful global corporations are ceaselessly buying smaller companies and instrumentalizing them for their benefit. In the world where many corporations are much stronger than nation states this is not really surprising. Of course, it has to be emphasized that no matter how much global and detached from any national soil the global capital and its logic may appear at the end of the day each global capital is traceable to a specific nation state. In that context the functioning of global capital suddenly becomes functioning of national capital and it is that very capital that specializes in tearing up all national ties, that becomes the loudest proponent of national interest. Charles Erwin Wilson, embodies this phenomena. First being the president of General Motors and later on obtaining the position of the Secretary of Defense, he had to (though reluctantly) sell for more than 2 million worth of stocks he had in GM. During the hearings before the senate Armed Services Committee, he was asked if as a Secretary of Defense, he would be ever able to make a decision that was harmful towards GM. He answered affirmatively, though he stated that he could not imagine such a situation because: "... for years I thought what was good for the country was good for General Motors and vice versa[15]".

National interest, i.e. mutual interests of the national economy and its corporations thus isn't something extrinsic to the functioning of capitalism, rather its at its very core. National interest as a political strategy that the most important sectors of economy should be in domestic hands in the last instance indicates national capitalism or state capitalism and I believe that is the correct description for none other than socialism. It comes as no surprise that the public discourse in the former socialist republics was often nationalistic as these political projects are best described as processes of building of national capital. In that sense proper free market capitalism and state controlled socialism are again just two concrete expressions of the same abstract logic of capital. Socialism never succeeded in actually subverting capitalism. The social form of conduct was the same as in capitalism and even the self-understanding of socialist leaders was one of catching up with capitalism. Of beating capitalism in its own game, while forgetting that perhaps more than for anything else it holds for capitalism that: "You don't change the devil, the devil changes you!"

Raison d'etat therefore isn't just an anachronistic concept characteristic of mercantilist political economy but something very much integrated in the very inner logic of capital itself. I believe Kojin Karatani is quite right when speaking of nation-capital-state formations as a politico-economical trinity of our world. Therefore I believe that national interest will be anachronistic and superseded only when the nation state as such will be superseded

Endnotes

1. Frederick Engels develops this argument in Outlines of Critique of Political Economy, saying that Mercantile System caused: "... mutually hostile attitude of the nations in the eighteenth century" and that "loathsome envy and trade jealousy, were the logical consequences of trade as such. Public opinion had not yet become humanized". (source: Marxist Internet Archive. http://www.marxists.org/)

2. Velikonja, Mitja (2008). "Titostalgia- A Study of Nostalgia for Josip Broz" Mediawatch Series, Peace Institute, Ljubljana. p.111 (also available on: http://www.doxtop.com). This widespread socialist slogan (in Slovene "Tujega nočemo, svojega ne damo!") demonstrated Yugoslavian confidence as a nation, especially in the period immediately after the II. World War and in the context of Free Territory of Trieste (Svobodno tržaško ozemlje), a territory provisionally administered by United Nations, that both Yugoslavia and Italy had aspirations to seize, thus creating one of the very first crisis of the Cold War.

3. Bertić, I. & Radovinović R. (1984). Atlas svijeta: Novi pogled na Zemlju (3rd ed.). Zagreb, Sveučilišna naklada Liber.

4. All of these bands have their songs available on youtube.com

5. Common strategy (especially amid punk bands) actually included subverting the communist idea(l)s through an absurd repetition and especially through severe and uncompromising insistence on the realization of these idea(l)s. One of the most popular songs by Pankrti was actually the (musical) adaptation of the famous socialist song Bandiera Rossa (Red Flag) which includes the following lines: "Bandiera rossa la trionferà,

Evviva il comunismo e la libertà!" From the psychoanalytical perspective we could argue that the desire can never be fulfilled and that one taking it seriously inevitably perishes while pursuing it.

6. It would be misleading if one would think that what happened was the usurpation of political power by people that didn't share the ideal of the civil society in 1980. Quite the contrary, it was these very same people that seized the power and and effectively buried these ideals. They have done a huge structural leap from posing a critique to a ruling class to themselves becoming a ruling class...

7. Fair overview of the Erased is available on the: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Erased

8. In recent years one of the (perhaps essential) transitional byproducts became the increased nationalism. It resulted in various "patriotic" organizations that have a different degree of hostility towards foreigners. While the most "civilized" ones are presenting themselves as deeply concerned with preservations of Slovenian culture and heritage, there exist outright skin-nazi organizations like "Blood&Honor" as well. It is rather sad that in the period of less than 20 years a tremendous shift in the structure of civil society came about. If the one in eighties was radical because it demanded more rights and liberties for everyone, nowadays such sectors of civil society are demanding quite the opposite...

9. Before the "brewery war" both companies had already taken over almost all of the other companies operating on the Slovenian market of beverages.

10. Turnšek, Tit. 2002. Nismo barabe. Mladina 31: Intervju.

11. At a certain point 57 members of parliament, from various different political parties, even signed an

initiative that argued strategically important companies, i.e. companies that are of national interest, should not be sold to foreigners.

12. How emotionally charged everything became is clearly illustrated by the tittle: "Domestic betrayers of the brewery war" - Why the SDS MP Miha Brejc acted as he was lobbying for the Belgians in the conflict between Brewery Laško and Brewery Interbrew. Trampuš, Jure. 2004. Domači izdajalci pivovarske vojne. Mladina 05. This article was about the right wing MP Miha Brejc and his involvement in lobbying for Interbrew and against Laško.

13. Turnšek, Tit. 2002. Nismo barabe. Mladina 31: Intervju.

14. All of this is systematically developed in the first chapter of the first book on Capital. However Marx does pass his revolutionary discovery of abstract labor and abstract time rather quickly. For a systematic study of these two I highly recommend an excellent study by Moishe Postone: "Time, Labor and Social Domination".

15. It should be emphasized that this quote is more commonly known in the inverted form of: "What's good for General Motors is good for the country" but since Wilson finished his (original) quote with vice versa, I don't see much difference between the two.

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There's Chemistry Between Us: European Transition to Transition

Anže Dolinar

European Transition to Transition

Transition state of a chemical reaction is a particular configuration along the reaction coordinate. In chemistry this state is characterized by a specific property of irreversibility and corresponds to the highest energy level along a certain reaction coordinate. One of the qualities of transition state is its indetermination. In other words, we do not know what really goes on in that state, all we have are approximations.

What concerns me here is the transition state of nation states as a specific configuration corresponding to this chemical analogy. If this analogy holds true two equally important consequences will inevitably follow. Firstly, when a nation state enters the period of transition it is not able to turn the clock. The old becomes old and remains only as a specific residue subjected to political conflict and struggle. Secondly, the state of transition will hold a specific quality of "high energy level". This means that transition itself will for a brief period of time hold the potential which will surpass its previous as its future state. At last, a complete description of a transition state will not be possible, only its approximations.

I will back my attempt at this subject by certain insights provided by Etienne Balibar, concerning the phenomena of borders and frontiers. As the starting point of this inquiry and its referential line of thought I pose the example of Slovenian transition, namely the period betwixt Slovenian independence in 91' and Slovenian entry into the European Union in 2004.

1. Approximation No.1: Creation of civil society in Slovenia

1.1

As far as the gradual collapse of Yugoslavia is concerned, there is a specific momentum I'd like to reconsider. It is the so called JBTZ affair. In the year of 1988 a socially critical magazine Mladina published a series of articles criticizing federal defense minister Branko Mamula. At the end of May of that year three Mladina journalists and a non-commissioned officer were charged with disclosure of military secrets. When all four were found guilty a crowd of 50 000 surrounded the courthouse in Ljubljana and prevented the military from taking them immediately to prison. Even though the historical implications of that day necessarily bear their weight my intention is to point out the rise of a large civil society in Slovenia. During the 80's Slovenia has witnessed a rise of critical art which culminated in the band Laibach and so called Neue Slovenische Kunst (New Slovene Art). Nevertheless the JBTZ affair and the rise of civil society is what interest me here.

The reason for my interest is an article in Mladina dating in time before the JBTZ affair. The article was written by- at that time a Mladina writer - Slavoj Žižek and is titled: Paris 86: Demand, not a request. In it Žižek proposes sort of an update on Althusser's notorious theory of Ideological apparatuses of the state (from now on IAS). This update suggests that what is missing in Althusser's theory is the inclusion of civil society itself under the IAS. As Žižek

notices the thesis itself seems contradictory at first, but is it really? Contradiction itself is the core of the problem here - as Žižek continues. Civil society is the suppressed missing part of IAS. The IAS could never have worked without this suppressed component. It is clear that the thesis itself in some way resembles the one Etienne Balibar suggested for literature and in overall account corresponds to theories of bio politics and society of control. To stick with Balibar, literary work is where ideological contradictions are produced. These are the specific contradictions that cannot be resolved in the sphere of IAS. To return to civil society - in agreeance with our thesis -we must now hold true that there is something inherently ideological and unconscious in it. The suggestion is that the very core of our western ideal holds an ideological character.

1.2

To return to our starting position and the events that took place during the JBTZ affair we must now presuppose the ideological character of the very same civil society that gradually led to Slovenia's independence. An idea which some might call an insane blasphemy but still one worth reconsidering. For if we are able to pinpoint this subversive ideological character we can uphold the thesis and at the same time learn something new about the nature of civil society itself. Ironically such a task does not seem to be extremely difficult. Twenty three years have past since the JBTZ affair and our political and cultural space still seems to be filled up with the very same people that surrounded the courthouse that day.

The momentum that created this large civil society could be considered as one corresponding to a "high energy level". The rise of civil society was flamed by a nation-wide anti Yugoslav and pro democratic emotions. Slovenes were - unlike people in other republics - not so much filled with nationalist emotions. Slovenia was in fact ethnically the most coherent society and that would only change in a small degree after the oil crisis in 73' and the arrival of Yugoslav labor force to Slovenia. Nevertheless the ideas behind this civil society were pretty much clear. The problem that arose and remained is as follows. As one part of civil society would focus its struggle against everything connected with Yugoslavia and socialism another one would in light of changing geopolitical circumstances and the rise of nationalism in republics of Croatia and Serbia prefer to direct its criticism towards the political situation in Yugoslavia at that time. In fact as we know a proposition was made to reform Yugoslavia in a loose federation but was quashed by Milošević. In a mass movement of cultural figures, intellectuals, media and others such polarization of civil society might have been blurred but the difference was nevertheless there.

1.3

The entry of Slovenia in the European Union in 2004 has for some people signified the end of the transition period but how could that be? We have seen that a momentum of a democratic civil movement has during the years fragmented, but still held to its ideological character of this mentioned différance. Ideological components of this civil society can be witnessed everywhere, from every day politics to main media figures, art and so on. The fight against the Yugoslavian central authority has left us with dangerous wounds. As the country is currently in an obvious political crisis some have called out to new generations to step up, but can they really? Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba [1] seem to think so as they find the consolidation of civic culture as one that is finalized by the exchange of generations. I would however object as ideology - as we know - has no history and it seems that it will take something quite different to escape the transitional bubble. Irreversibility thus strikes us as a unique property of the future and not so much of the past. As Balibar noted in We, the people of Europe, the irreversibility of the historical change is very much problematic.

2. Approximation No. 2: Borders of Europe

2.1

As it is obviously still quite "dangerous" to explicitly refer to the above events let me at this point simply take that as a confirmation of the point I was trying to make. I am inclined to interpret the transition state as the interval between the years of 91' and 04'. During this interval there have undoubtedly been moments worth mentioning especially those where the line between politics and economy was blurred. For one, there was a privatization cycle during which state owned property was sold or distributed to private owners.

What seems important regarding a series of scandals regarding privatization is the loss of faith in state

institutions. Backed by the work of Claus Offe 2 we can say that the economic turbulences - that inevitably encompass democratic consolidation of a post authoritarian system – can only result in a stable society if a series of social fuses are established along the way. We are basically saying that along the transformation to capitalism and free market economics there must be a process of democratization and at this precise point things seem to have gone wrong. The idea that capitalism no longer requires democracy as its historical partner is of course not new. Nevertheless the situation in a state of transition is somewhat unique.

2.2

I will attempt to approach this subject trough already mentioned insights of Etienne Balibar. Although theories of transition mostly address the subjects of democracy and capitalism - that is political and economical liberalization- my main focus here will be addressing the phenomena of borders. Borders are the everlasting element of European society and culture. We could even stress that it was Europe itself that exported the phenomena of border into the world during colonization period. Furthermore borders seem to be the underlying element of democracy and capitalism. To successfully complete a transition, a country must enter the European Union – that is the silent imperative and consensus. However we can clearly see that newcomers do not have the same status as the old member states. Two-speed or multi-speed Europe is not simply an isolated incident of slow service in a restaurant but a real problem with no obvious or simple solution.

The problem here in my opinion, following the insights of Balibar, is that borders are falling in strictly economic terms. As every activity now assumes the form of commodity exchange in a "free" environment all that is left are forms of internal exclusion. To stress the idea further – borders themselves are the point where democracy stops and free market economics begins. Here political participation becomes the rule of the police state. Recent deportations of Roma people from France to Romania (Another EU state) are a good example of that (The fact that Roma people were paid to leave does not change the motive and the attitude behind this act). Borders are not democratic- they do not apply to goods and people in the same manner. Which is more, borders are multiplying and fluctuating. The fact that state borders are falling inside the European Union simply means that new borders are being formed on other levels, assuming different functions.

Transition states or those which have supposedly ended the transition period are the states that are predominantly affected by these phenomena. Third world begins in the suburbs as J.P Sartre once wrote and today the suburbs of Europe are the new states, transition states.

3. Approximation No. 3: Heideggerian slip

3.1

One of the qualities of a transition state of a chemical reaction is the fact that we know exactly what the product will look like but we still cannot determine what exactly goes on with colliding molecules during this state. Thus we can apply such a suggestion to a nation state transition as well. Specific actors and circumstances assure us that not a single transition is similar to another. There can of course be and in all fairness are theories that attempt to merge social, cultural, political and economical predispositions that are required for a successful transition.

Nevertheless the point I am trying to make is that European Union itself is in a state of constant transition. Not only are new countries joining EU but also its role as a subject of global politics is shifting and changing rapidly. As the demand for a unified foreign policy increases, we more and more witness the failure of EU countries to construct one. Recent events in Libya have proven that point as has the failed project of a joint EU constitution. It seems than that it is not exactly clear what it means to live in Europe or even to build one.

3.2

In his 1951 essay Building, Dwelling, Thinking Martin Heidegger sets out to clarify the relationship between these phenomena. One of his insights is that building something in its essence already presupposes living in this something. His further clarification shows an etymological relationship between terms "bauen" and "bin". Building is a succession as we first build, than nurture and finally set something on its place. Furthermore the word "Wohnen" or to dwell would mean to stay somewhere and be at peace. To dwell somewhere gives us a chance to open new spaces and move between them. It is building that sets these dwelling places and synchronizes different spaces.

As abstract as this may sound it is exactly the way in which we should approach questions of European identity and integrity. Historical formation of European space is triggered by the rise of sciences. What is called arts in the Anglo – Saxon world is what we know as "humanitas". Humanitas is based in historical consciousness, its inner strength is called tolerance and what is known as an experiment in natural sciences is called discipline in arts. Humanitas in its essence is thus not a social science it's much more- as Heidegger noted- interconnected with the Greek term "paidea" which is usually translated as education but more than that signifies a sort of citizen virtue. The term "paidea" has been reconsidered by many philosophers since Plato has placed it in his Laws. Hannah Arendt has stressed it in great detail especially in relation to authority. As this is no place to address such difficult topics let me simply point out that humanitas is one of the pillars of European heritage. The difference between an authoritarian and a dictatorial system can be traced through the prism of "paidea". It is for this reason why so many philosophers are still dealing with the phenomenon of Nazism and holocaust. Events in Srebrenica, the ICC, the role of UN and Europe are a recent reminder that a phenomenon of violence cannot be taken lightly or be simplified by persecution of single individuals.

To put things into context we should say that in the legacy of European arts lies a key to transpose new borders that are emerging inside Europe. It is dictatorship we fear most and in our fear we cripple ourselves. Fear can be only surpassed via understanding

4. Conclusion

Borders themselves are what we should thus reconsider while trying to build a European identity. Europe should be more than a simple mediator between a powerful West and "savage" East. European identity is a global one and the ability of Europe to democratize the borders established internally should have global effects. Far more than such an attempt should be limited to the political apparatus it is imperative to find solutions inside emerging civil societies such as those we are today witnessing in Spain, we have witnesses yesterday in Greece and will tomorrow in some other EU country. The destruction of an ideological moment of such movements should be carried out as a destruction of borders and a brake with the past. Thus I find the slogan of Bologna Burns movement: "No border, no nation, free education" as one that should symbolize European identity far more than any EU institution.

At the same time we the people of Europe can look outside for inspiration. The events that took place in Chiapas in 94' and the striking writings of Subcomandante Marcos are a constant reminder that change is possible. The heritage of European philosophy is the heritage of the world and as such it should be a corner stone of future projects and actions. Already the protesting masses throughout Europe have proven that they have much more in common than the bureaucrats they are paying to represent them. A global multitude of oppressed, exploited and marginalized people is forming and this time it's their words not guns that will count.

Endnotes

1. In Merkel,1996

2. Offe 1994 - in Merkel

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The Yugoslav Wars as the Primordial Accumulation of Capital

Mirt Komel

If we look upon the situation of the Yugoslav Wars in the 90s, when the transition from a communist Yugoslavia with a self-managing socialist economy to a plurality of capitalistic national democracies came to being, it comes with no great surprise how the situation fits perfectly Marx's interpretation of the "primordial" or "primitive" or "previous accumulation of capital", which is violent by definition and far from being the idyllic story told by the political economists of the period. This economic fairy-tale puts the hard-working part of society that become rich on one side and the lazy that become poor on the other, and such a story was told countless times in different versions by the political economists of the period as well as those in present days who tried to analyze the war in Yugoslavia merely in terms of "economic transition" where violence is seen as an "excess" not inherent in economy as such. The main purpose of this paper is to show how the War in Yugoslavia is not an irrational excess but the other, "head" side of the same coin, that has the rational economic transition as its "cypher", and where one cannot understand one side without the other. Conceptually speaking, the purpose here is to interpret the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia and the constitution of its successor-states with a structuralist approach combining the Marxian concept of the "previous accumulation" with some of the key Lacanian psychoanalytical concepts, such as phantasm and unary trait.

The Myth of the "Previous Accumulation"

As it is well known the basis for Marx's interpretation of the "previous accumulation of capital" was Adam Smith and his famous work The Wealth of Nations, [1] more precisely the third chapter of the second book, "Of the Accumulation of Capital or of Productive and Unpruductive Labor", where the main theoretical assertions states how the accumulation of capital must be previous to the division of labor (Smith, 1987: 142-151). The myth of the previous accumulation supposedly explains how it came that the few had accumulated wealth while the many ended up in poverty: "In times long gone by there were two sorts of people; one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal elite; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. (…) Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins." (Marx, 1877: 500) Like many pseudo-historical theories of the period, in a similar instance like the theories of the social contract in fact, this theory can tell us more of the standpoint of the present when it was produced then the supposed past it tries to explain.

According to Marx the "previous accumulation plays in Political Economy about the same part as original sin in theology", for "its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote of the past" and this "insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defense of property" (Marx, 1877: 500). The parallel with the concept of "original sin" is very important, starting from a fact we must not forget, namely that Smith himself was not only a political economist but a moral philosopher as well. Thus, the story has its moral implication, for the "industriousness" of one group is seen as morally superior to the "laziness" of the other, this opposition coinciding with the opposition

between "good" and "evil". But the most important aspect of this parallel between the "original sin" in Christian doctrine and the "previous accumulation" in Economic theology is that in both cases the responsibility for the current state of affairs regarding the distribution of property is transported from the present and even from history into a mythological past. The myth about one group of people that worked hard and obtained a lot and the other group that was lazy and remained with almost nothing is therefore made to justify the class-division between a minority of those who own the means of production and the majority of those who own nothing but its labor force.

A similar myth exists in the present successor-states Yugoslavia where the current distribution of property is supposed being the result of the "natural" functioning of the newly introduced "free market", which is by no means nor "natural" nor "free", to be sure: the first country to make such a step was Slovenia (to which we will come in details soon) whose first act of independence in economic terms was to close trades with the Yugoslav republics. According to this myth the historical point of the split-up of Yugoslavia functions as a "year zero" where allegedly everybody started from the same departure line, but those who embraced the new ideology worked more and subsequently become rich, while those that were lazy and remained bound to the old ideology remained behind – at least so we are told by the mainstream ideological discourse of neoliberal economics that substituted the previous one of self-managing socialism.

The functioning the myth of the "previous accumulation" in the Yugoslav situation can be clearly shown if we take a closer look at what happened in Slovenia in the "year zero", that is the year it obtained independence. After six months have passed since the referendum on independence on the 26th of December 1990, Slovenia declared sovereignty on the 25th of June 1991 and started the implementation of several independence laws and economic reforms, the introduction of democracy and the opening to foreign markets, including the introduction of its own national currency, the Slovene tolar (Cf. Pleskovic and Sachs, 1994). The then introduced Slovene macroeconomic program[2] was designed as a series of market reforms that has to be actualized together with political independence (Cf. Lipton and Sachs, 1991) – or to put it in another words: democracy was introduced in the same package with neoliberalism. The most important aspect of these economic reforms was related to the question "if the socially owned enterprises should be first renationalized and then privatized or whether the intermediate stage should be skipped. The issue was resolved in favor of direct privatization." (Cf. Pleskovic and Sachs, 1994: 211) Direct privatization meant that what was once "socially owned" according to the collective structure of ownership in the Yugoslav self-management, had now become put on the "free market" and being sold. This resulted in a fundamental change in property-structure: "At present, enterprises in Slovenia are neither state owned nor self-managed: property rights are undetermined. Managers, workers, and the state all have some de jure decision-making powers. However, in practice, most of these enterprises are controlled by managers, who have, de facto, almost absolute decision-making power over them." (Pleskovic and Sachs 1994: 210) The managers or new capitalists therefore entered the scene at the precise moment of transition, after which the once state-owned collective property diapered but was not simply become private property of all the citizens: it become "capital" in the fullest sense of the word.

In both quoted articles in the paragraph above that treats the economic aspects of the transition in Yugoslavia in general and Slovenia in particular there is, quite symptomatically by my opinion, no analyses made on the effects on the population as the result of the shift in the property-structure (and this in spite of the otherwise detailed analyses of the subject). Symptomatically absent, but not surprisingly, for all the quoted authors were advisers to Lojze Peterle, the first Prime Minister of the first Slovenian government led by the DEMOS coalition.[3] Following their discourse only one can not get any other impression that what we are dealing with is the same "insipid childishness that is every day preached to us in the defense of property" Marx spoke of, for in their discourse (and practice of the Slovenian government at the period) the transition from public to private property seems correspondent to "progress". If one wants to see the other side of the coin that was in international debates denominated the "Slovenian Success Story", one must look at least at the excellent study Social Inequality and Social Capital (cf. Dragoš and Leskošek, 2003), where the authors demonstrate how in the transition processes the common "social capital", that is the common property that was the basis of Yugoslav self-management, was damaged and almost lost through the process of denationalization and privatization, so that the general standard of living for most people in Slovenia declined in terms of social security, public services and other important aspects of living at a level of dignity proper for a living being.

The crucial point when one can nearly grasp the moment of the "previous accumulation" is precisely the denationalization and privatization process that took place and is still ongoing in a now not independent anymore member of the EU Slovenia. The self-managed companies that had a collective ownership structure were transformed

in stock-holders owned corporations during the process of denationalization and privatization, the state being the main owner selling the companies on the stock-market to the best buyers, who are – by one way or another – part of the new Slovenian political and economical elite or "ruling class". To re-activate the parallel between the supposed secular sphere of economics and the religious realm of Christianity: "Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him." (Mt, 13:12) Or to put it in more common-sense words: whoever had the capital or the means to get it bought and are still buying public property and then re-selling it for more and thus achieving abundance, while whoever did not have could not buy anything and even what he had, namely a share in the public property, was and is still being taken from him through the inexorable mechanisms of the so-called "free" market.

The point of the matter is that the free-market is not "free" at all, for its installation in Slovenia and in the other successor-states of Yugoslavia with the most violent means possible demanded the highest of prices: nothing less then thousands and thousands of lives that perished during the Yugoslav Wars.

Phantasmatic Narrative of the "Transition" in Yugoslavia

The very first move Marx does with Smith's myth of the "previous accumulation" in his analyses is to historicize it in order to stress out its distinctive violent character: "In actual history it is notorious that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, briefly force, play the great part. In the tender annals of Political Economy, the idyllic reigns from time immemorial. Right and labor were from all time the sole means of enrichment, the present year of course always excepted. As a matter of fact, the methods of primitive accumulation are anything but idyllic." (Marx, 1877: 500) Not directly labor therefore, but violence is the source of the capital's coming to being, and in the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia we can clearly see how the constitution of the various national states and their new-born economical regimes "robbery and murder" played a greater part then any laborious activity.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia become tremendously violent soon after the other republics followed Slovenian example in declaring independence, but one must always keep in mind that this violence was not only dissolutional but also constitutional, for it was on this bases that the Yugoslav successor-states emerged. In short: violence was not only a means for the dissolution of Yugoslavia, but also – if not primary – used to constitute the new-born national states. To grasp the problem of violence during the Yugoslav war from this perspective we must now adopt Walter Benjamin's general distinction between law-keeping [rechtserhaltende] and law-giving [rechtsetzende] violence from his Critique of Violence (cf. Benjamin, 1996), or to retain the more ambivalent German original term, Gewalt, which – as Jacques Derrida interpreted Benjamin's theory - means power and violence at the same time (Derrida, 1992: 44). In this terms the war in Yugoslavia can be interpreted as a conflict between the hegemonic Yugoslav power violently usurped by the Serbian nationalists led by Slobodan Milošević on the one hand (the law-keeping Gewalt) and on the other the counter-hegemonic power and constitutional violence of the splitting Yugoslav republic becoming national states (law-giving Gewalt). Now, when it comes to state-building processes, and to clarify this blurred distinction between power and violence (a distinction that was used by Arendtians to characterize the democratic transitions in the Eastern Block in general as revolutions on the basis of popular power), we can say with Louis Althusser (1995: 105-110) that a state in order to exist – and based on our own case we can add: and also to constitute itself – needs not only the repressive apparatus (that is, direct violent force), but also an ideological one. And the main ideology that was employed in the constitutional law-giving Gewalt was the neoliberal ideology of capitalism, which promised welfare and wellbeing in the new order of things.

This is precisely the point where the myth of the "previous accumulation" repaints the violence of history with peaceful colors, segregating the violent aspect of the dissolution of Yugoslavia either in the stereotyped "irrationality of the Balkanic peoples" (and thus reproducing the classic "Balkanistic discourse"), or in the more "rational" realm of ethnocentric nationalistic politics (and thus ascribing the responsibility for violence to the "excess of nationalism"). [4] Either way the assumption is always the same, namely that the constitution of democratic and capitalistic states in general and in this region in particular is not something violent in itself and has nothing to do with the genocide in Srebrenica, the siege of Sarajevo or even the bombing of Belgrade. The myth of the "previous accumulation" tries to make a clean-cut distinction between the constitution of the new democratic states and their capitalistic economic systems promoted by statesmen and economists on one hand and on the other the massive violence waged by military and para-military armies and groups.

Many classic as well as modern and contemporary philosophers, from Blaise Pascal to Immanuel Kant and from Walter Benjamin to Slavoj Žižek, developed a concept to grasp the moment of constitutional violence marking the beginning or coming to being of a given order. Žižek, for example, says on this point: "At the beginning of the law, there is a certain 'outlaw', a certain Real of violence which coincides with the act itself of the establishment of the reign of law: the ultimate truth about the reign of law is that of a usurpation, and all classical politico-philosophical thought rests on the disavowal of this violent act of foundation... " (Žižek, 1991: 204) The act of establishment of a given order of law is therefore outside the law itself, but there is more, for this founding and foundamental act of violence must remain concealed, for it is "the positive condition of the functioning of law: it functions insofar as its subjects are deceived, insofar as they experience the authority of law as authentic and eternal." (Žižek, 1991: 204) The structure of this concealment can be described in Lacanian terms as a phantasmatic relationship governing the relation between the subject and his trauma, or, if we broaden the case for our purposes, as the relation between a group of people and their collective trauma.[5] Again with Žižek's words: "Fantasy is the primordial form of narrative, which serves to occult some original deadlock. The sociopolitical fantasy par excellence, of course, is the myth of 'primordial accumulation': the narrative of two workers, one lazy and free-spending, the other diligent and enterprising, accumulating and investing, which provides the myth of the 'origins of capitalism', obfuscating the violence of its actual genealogy." (Žižek, 1997: 10) The trauma of the Yugoslav war was subject to such a phantasmatic narrativisation in two ways by the general public, by mainstream politics, and most importantly by scholars treating this delicate topic: on the one hand there are narratives that tries to found a causal link between the violence that accured during the Yugoslav war and the various socio-political concepts that existed before in the "Balcanistic" discourse of the West on the Balkan (the phenomena of "balkanism" reactivated) – on the other hand, more important for our task at hand, there are narratives that tries to subsume all the events into "non-violent" socio-economic terms taken from the realm of politics and economics, the governing signifier being the pacificator term "transition".

If we now look at this second type of narratives a little bit closer we can see how it perfectly fits and reproduces the myth of the "previous accumulation", for it tries to describe all the history of the Yugoslav conflict as a mere painless process of "transition" (from communism to democracy, from socialism to capitalism). What all of this "transition-narratives" have in common is a tendency to reduce the problem of violence to a very narrow socio-political scope that is outside the realm of "pure" economics. In fact, quite the opposite is true: the genocide in Srebrenica, the siege of Sarajevo, even the bombing of Belgrade are not moments that are foreign to, but inherent to the installation of the new order in the region we are nowadays already used to call "Western Balkans". This very term is indicative, for what happened during the Yugoslav Wars was a "westernization" of Yugoslavia, that is, the constitution of national-states with a democratic form of government and a neoliberal economic agenda.

The Structure of the "Previous Accumulation" in Yugoslavia

The main problem with our interpretation insofar is that what Marx wanted to describe while making his critique of the "previous accumulation" is the transition from feudalism to capitalism in terms of disapropriation of the workers of their means of production, a disapropriation that precedes the creation of the proletariat stricto sensu. To be sure, if we want to speak about the "proletariat" in Marxian terms it is not enough to have workers: what is needed is precisely the moment of "previous accumulation", that is, the disapropriation of the workers of their means of production and their labour force being thrown and sold on a "free market". This is a very important theoretical as well as historical problem, for at the period of our concern the workers in the self-managing Yugoslav socialism were already "proletarians".

To understand this debacle we must first understand how was Yugoslavia founded in the aftermath of the World War II. After the kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941, for the first eleven years officially called "The kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes") disappeared in the ruins of the Second War the republic of Yugoslavia emerged as a result of what is known as the "Yugoslav Revolution". The Yugoslav Revolution has, as all revolutions, two main folds: one the one hand there is the element of "liberation", on the other the even more important element pf "constitution", and as Hannah Arendt pointed out, many scholars tend to forget one half of the same token in focusing just on one aspect or another:[6] "The basic misunderstanding lies in the failure to distinguish between liberation and freedom: there is nothing more futile than rebellion and liberation unless they are followed by the

constitution of the newly won freedom." (Arendt, 2006: 133). The resistance movement led by Tito was known as People's Liberation War (NOB, "Narodnoosvobodilni boj"), and this same movement succeeded in transforming the rebellion into a revolution by founding in 1943 what after two decade of political turmoil and constitutional changes will finally become in 1963 the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with its distinctive "Workers Self-Management" as its fundamental basis. The point of the matter is that the revolution itself was not a proletarian revolution at all, it was a revolution made by Tito's Partisans, who were first and foremost of rural provenience. The industrialization in the full sense of the world begin only after Yugoslavia was founded, and it was during this period that the Yugoslav peasants – the once Partisans – were transformed into proletarians.

This does not mean, however, that we can situate the primordial accumulation in this period, first of all because the self-managing system presupposed that the workers owned their means of production (property was owned collectively according to the ideology of "social property"), and secondly and more importantly, there was no "free-market" where a worker could be thrown with only his labor force to sell and live with. Therefore, if we want to trace the moment of the "previous accumulation", we must trace it precisely at the period when the Yugoslav republics split apart and founded themselves as neoliberal democracies, that is, when the socially owned property was privatized and when the workers were thrown on the free market and thus being subjected to the structural violence of the "normal" functioning of the new system.

Nonetheless, the problem we started with still persists, for the situation in Yugoslavia – and in the Eastern European countries in general for that matter - does not fit the common-sense Marxistic understanding of history as a linear succession of economic systems: slavery-feudalism-capitalism. Taking Marx's theory for a historical narrative and using it to interpret the transition in Yugoslavia in terms of "previous accumulation" therefore apparently does not hold water. Another question is if Marx himself understood his re-interpretation of Smith's theory as a historical theory. Instead of begging the question I prefer simply to base the considerations that follows on the structuralist approach to Marxism as it is understood by Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, et al.

From a structuralist perspective it can be stated that what is conceptualized as the "previous accumulation" by Marx does not refer to any concrete historical period: it is a theoretical tool that can help us grasp the violent moment of capitalism being installed in a given society in any given period. From here on we can re-read the beginning of the chapter of the Capital entitled The Secret of Primitive Accumulation, where it is stated that the whole movement of the capitalist mode of production lies in an apparently simple presupposition, namely that it demands the preexistence of a "primitve" or "previous" accumulation of capital: "The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle, out of which we can only get by supposing a primitive accumulation (previous accumulation of Adam Smith) preceding capitalistic accumulation; an accumulation not the result of the capitalistic mode of production, but its starting point." (Marx, 1877: 500) The movement is therefore circular, "the capitalistic mode of production presupposes the capitalist mode of production" (Baechler, 1995: 169-176), and this "vicious circle" cannot be grasped as a certain universal point in history, but only as a structural moment.

If we now take into account the whole analyses made in trying to apply Marx thesis on the primordial accumulation on the example of the War in Yugoslavia, we can now see how the theory in spite of its historical inadequateness structurally fits very well into the situation during the Yugoslav War: the element of disapropriation of the worker's means of production and their being thrown on the free market, the element of violence behind this process (which is in last analyses violent in itself) and the phantasmatic "transition" discourse that tries to conceal the criminal character of the founding of capitalism in post-war Yugoslavia.

The Unary Trait of the Transition into Managerialism in Former Yugoslavia

I will now address the problem regarding these historical and structural aspects of the transition into capitalism in the former Yugoslavia combining what was here conceptualized as a structural approach towards Marx's theory of the primordial accumulation with the Lacanian concept of "unary trait" or "unary feature", which is in its broadest meaning defines the structural moment of the raise of any given symbolic order into being.

According to Lacan's theory from the XVII. Seminar, the unary trait means the installation of a master-signifier, which is empty and void in itself but gives the meaning to the signifying chain that follows through its installation of a new symbolic order (cf. Lacan 1991). Every existing discursive regime is marked by this fundamental trait, which is not only the source of its coming to being but also keeps the symbolic order functioning and intact. For our purposes

here it is again Žižek's (2006, 60) interpretation that is very useful, for he attributes to this unary trait a distinctive aspect of violence, interpreting it as symbolic violence par excellence. From this perspective every discursive space is not – as it is traditionally seen in opposition to violence – a space of egalitarian intersubjectivity, symmetrical relations and so forth, but quite the opposite, a space marked by the violence of the master-signifier installed via the unary trait. The unary trait can be therefore understood as a two-fold symbolic violence: as violence of putting a given symbolic order on feet and as violence that is thus inherent in the very core of any dominant discursive regime. Or to re-employ Benjamin's distinction: the unary tratit of the master-signifier fulfills the law-giving as well as the law-keeping function of violence.

Already from this general theoretical sketch we can see how well the Lacanian conception of the unary trait fits what can be found in the Marxist theory of the primordial accumulation: from a structuralist approach we can identify the moment of the primordial accumulation of capital as a violent unary trait that raises the capitalistic symbolic order and its dominant discourse. The distinctive traits of the thus erected symbolic order perfectly coincides with what we already treated in dealing with Marx's interpretation of Smith's myth: there is a "primordial" structural moment of violence of the master-signifier, the effects of which are directly or indirectly violent for the subjects involved (the question of "structural" or "systemic" violence), while the dominant discourse appears as purely non-violent and, moreover, serves to conceal any sign of violence from both: its own coming to being and its actual functioning. Or in another words: the dominant capitalistic order speaks of a "non-violent previous accumulation of capital" to canceal the violent and criminal nature of its origin, as well as it speaks in non-violent economic terms to conceal the effects of its structural violence, of the violence inherent in the "natural", "normal" functioning of the so-called free-market.

Now, to focus on the historical context in question, namely the transition in from socialism to capitalism in former Yugoslavia: in the socialistic regime the master-signifier circulating in the dominant discourse was of course "self-management" ("samoupravljanje") as the distinctive trait of the so-called "Yugoslav experiment" where the ownership was collective and property social, during the period of which any capitalistic discourse about private property and free market was banished and regarded as foreign to the existing symbolic order. At the precise moment of transition, as we have seen in the case of Slovenia, the a new master-signifier emerged, namely "management" in the western meaning of the word, for – as we have seen – "social property" ended up neither in the hands of the workers and neither at the feet of the state, but in the mouths of the new-born class of managers. Therefore, we could call this new capitalistic ideology that emerged in the ruins of former Yugoslavia as "managerialism" and its predominant discursive regime as "managerial discourse", to distinguish it from the classic conception of capitalism. This is a not at all arbitrary or cosmetic distinction, but a necessary one if we consider the historical and structural aspects of the newly born regime.

We have seen beforehand how the historical context of the rise and fall of Yugoslavia does not allow us to simply apply the theory of the primordial accumulation of capital upon any of the two transitions in question (from Kingdom of Yugoslavia to the federative republic of Yugoslavia and then to the successor-states of Yugoslavia). Moreover, considering one of the main points of the Pleskovic and Sachs (1994: 210) analyses regarding the shift in the ownership-structure in Slovenia, namely that those in control of the means of production are actually the managers, we can justify the thesis of the transition from socialism not simply to capitalism, but to managerialism. Therefore, what we are dealing with in the newly born national states in the Western Balkans is precisely a symbolic order where "management" is the master-signifier of the predominant ideological discourse of "managerialism", that is, a discourse and praxis of "effectivness" and "productivness" above any wellfare, be it the wellfare of the state or its citizens.

The Lacanian imperative of the surmoi in this situation can be best described by the inexorable alternative between "success or failure", where the managerial surmoi violently dictates: "Succeed or Perish!" And since success can be accessed only by a small minority of the population by definition, the vast majority is inexorably condemned to perish in the anonymous functioning of such a structure itself.

Conclusion

When researchers approach the problem of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the constitution of its successor-states they usually do so in one of the two ways: they or confront the problem of the Yugoslav War in terms of

cultural, religious or political ideologies, analyzing the various ways violence was incited, legitimized and produced, or they put the question of violence into bracelets and focus only on the formal aspects – political, legal, economical - of the transition. The presupposition in the latter is that violence is something foreign to politics, law and especially economics, an "excess" that is not pertinent to the field in question. But as we have seen in applying the Marxist theory of the primordial accumulation of capital, upgraded with a Lacanian approach, to the past Yugoslav situation, violence is inherent in the very process of transition that is pacified in economic terms and concealed in the now dominant capitalistic ideology, here on the case of Slovenia specified as "managerialism".

Endnotes

1. In his interpretation in the Das Kapital Marx explicitly says that the ursprüngliche Akkumulation was not coined by himself but by Adam Smith as previous accumulation, and in fact Marx always refers to it by the term "the so-called primitive accumulation". Therefore, originally "the preivious accumulation" is not a Marxist concept, but since Marx made a critique and gave his own distinctive interpretation of the concept (the interpretation we are following here), become known and generally used in Marxist theory ever since.

2. "In the spring of 1991, the government of Slovenia designed a macroeconomic program for the economic independence and restructuring of Slovenia (Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia 1991). The program, which was subsequently passed by the Parliament, had five elements: (i) monetary independence, (ii) macroeconomic stabilization, (iii) financial restructuring of loss-making enterprises, (iv) restructuring of commercial banks, and (v) privatization. There was also a wide range of legislation undertaken to establish the basic economic institutions of a sovereign state." (Pleskovic and Sachs, 1994: 191)

3. Boris Pleskovic was the chief economic adviser to the Slovene Prime Minister Lojze Peterle in the period of economic reforms (1991-1992), while Jeffrey D. Sachs led a team of "independent" advisers (that included David Lipton) with the task of providing macroeconomic advice to Peterle and assist in the drafting and implementation of the economic reforms.

4. Actually, both can summarized into the category of "balkanism" as coined by Maria Todorova in her ground-breaking work Imagining the Balkans. The central idea is founded on Edward Said's concept of "orientalism" and lies in the assumption that there is a discourse of balkanism that creates stereotypes of the Balkans (Cf. Todorova, 1997). One of such stereotypes, actually the most spread, is that the Balkan people are "irrational and violent by nature", a stereotype that is often used common-discourse to "explain" the Yugoslav wars of the 90s as an "excess of nationalism", as if nationalism itself is something benign and only in its "balkanic" version it turned out to be something barbarically violent.

5. A very good evaluation of the various psychoanalytic approaches to law is given by Costas Douzinas in the book The End of Human Rights, where a distinctive general point is exposed: "Psychoanalysis presents the birth of law as a crime story." (Douzinas, 2000: 298). Despite its implicite critique of the psychoanalitical approach the point is well-catched, for the history of law is a "crime story". The difference between the psychoanalitical approach and a general historical approach to the problem of constitutional violence is that psychoanalyses, at least Lacanian psychoanalyses – contrary to common opionions that people have on psychoanalyses - does not search or even try to grasp the "original story", but merely tries to conceptualize in structuralistic terms the very moment of foundation of any given symbolic order. Or, in short: the general approach of Lacanian psychoanalyses is anti-narrativist, it does not tell a "crime story" nor any story, because the narrative as such – any narrative that tries to grasp the original trauma, wheter on a collective or individual level – is part of the fantasmatic relation itself that must be structurally deconstructed to its basic elements.

6. In On Revolution Hannah Arendt stress out the importance of distinguishing and at the same time keeping together this two aspects of the revolution starting from the point that many rebelions did not end with a revolution for they didn't manage to constitute a new political order and therefore do not deserve to be called a "revolutions" at all: "If however, one keeps in mind that the end of revolution is liberation, while the end of revolution is the foundation of freedom, the political scientis at least will know how to avoid the pitfall of the historian who tends to place his emphasis upon the first and violent stage of rebellion and liberation, on the uprising against tyranny, to the detriment of the quieter second stage of revolution and constitution." (Arendt, 2006: 133)

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Researching Slovenian Media in Transition: Situating Knowledge

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Why?

The most appropriate question to ask at the beginning of any kind of text is, I believe, "why?" Why am I writing this? Why is the chosen topic important? Why to me, why to the reader, why to an inhabitant of Slovenia, and why to anyone else? These questions require answers before any other steps are taken. They are the base that determines the outcome.

Twenty years after the inhabitants of Slovenia decided in one voice (95 %) to split from SFR Yugoslavia, in the midst of a worldwide crisis of capitalism, and very much in sync with the premiere of a South Park episode featuring Capitan Hindsight, there was one question that seemed very important to a great number of people. Starting of as a slogan for a round table organized by Slovenia's third largest daily (Dnevnik) the words "Is this what we fought for?" became one of the focal points of the media debate surrounding this national anniversary. Is what we have after twenty years of transition to capitalism, what we have opted for in 1990? Responses that came from various politicians, analytics and opinion leaders went in the general direction that is implied in the question: The country has problems and this is not what people expected. "People expected a normal system, but now they are disillusioned, because they expected more (Bajec 2010)." Of course many public speakers used the opportunity to praise the time of gaining independence as magical, as a symbol of what Slovenians can really achieve if only they unite, thereby renewing the layer of mythological polish surrounding that time. All in all only one answer to the question, caught my attention and it came from the mouth of Milan Kučan, former president of Slovenia and also an important figure in ex-Yugoslavia. "Yes, this is exactly what we fought for," he stated (Kolednik 2010). Now, Kučan did not mean to say that people should stop fooling themselves and accept that unemployment, pauperization and elitization of education are what capitalism is (also) about, he was talking about how being independent was what "we" fought for and that that is what has been achieved and matters the most (thereby strengthening the myth). He did not mean to say that as a socialist state with an extensive tradition in Marxist studies "we" were very well aware of the flaws of the market, profit maximization, deregulation and still decided to choose them as governing principles, but in a way he still said it. There lies a greater truth behind his quote, which is as Gal Kirn (Kirn 2011: 36) put it in his analysis of liberalism in SFRY: "We doubt that it is too much to say that the referendum of 1990 would have had a different outcome, had the question been: Fellow Slovenians, do you agree to witness, in the next decade, an augmentation of class differences and unemployment, a reduction of holidays and pensions and the privatization of health care …?"

Before I can answer the opening questions, something else needs to be stated. Tonči Kuzmanić (2003: 9) explains that the crucial element of the post-socialist transition attitude is the mythological "satanization of socialism", construction of socialism as "unnatural", that it is actually the same as "communism", which is furthermore the same as "stalinism", which is the same as "totalitarianism" and is as such in the utmost contradiction with human nature as well as the nature of history and morality. So we have, on the one hand, the first doubts about the new order, and on the other a climate that makes it difficult to think of it in Marxist terms: "What are you talking about? Socialism didn't work anyway."

This is why questions surrounding transition are important. They are the historical battlefield that can either

reinforce dominant views or give birth to new ones. I would like to think of communism anew. This is a very honest and simplistic answer, but it still matters. It is an expression of the historical circumstances in which my generation is intellectually maturing. These circumstances (I speak here of the dominant discourses in Slovenian media and public sphere) do not offer an interpretation of history that would allow new ways of thinking about the past and therefore the present. It is because of this, that it needs to be created.

How #1

This should give away that I do not consider the "objective scientific method" to be the key to analysis. Rather I believe that it is inadequate because of three myths that surround it: the myth of one, indivisible and uniform truth, the myth of a reality separated from discourse and of course the myth of the magical procedures that allow us to extract an innocent truth from an innocent reality (Krašovec 2003: 35). To resolve the danger of relativism that threatens this position, I will adopt the model of situated knowledges, developed by Donna Haraway (1999). This means that I will speak and observe from a particular position. This position is firstly a position of a youth, that was born in SFRY, but grew up in Slovenia, and secondly a position of an editor of a marginalized magazine with Marxist tendencies. This does not mean that I will be more right than others, because I am in a somewhat peripheral position. Situated knowledges are not located in concrete bodies of individuals, but rather work "through responsible floating in the field of differences." (Krašovec 2003: 35) Differences is the crucial word here. The power of the current dominant discourses – positivism in natural science, behaviorism in sociology and psychology, neoliberalism in politics and economy, objectivity in journalism – is that it formally neutralizes differences. No matter who you are, as long as you follow such and such procedures, the truth is available to you (the autonomy is "taken" from the players and "given" to the discourse itself). However, because these procedures are always the same, reality is always structured in the same way and so "despite of all the "discoveries" and "advances" the structure of the dominant discourses remains the same, which means that also the effects of power of these discourses remain the same." (Krašovec 2003: 37) In neutral speech differences seem irrelevant and the neutral speech itself is not capable of seeing the real effects of these differences, that can only work in a discriminatory fashion when in the system of equality. This (also) means that when assuming a subjective position you will be disqualified by a speaker, who defends the "objective" position, as being ideologically biased and/or interest guided. Of course, you have all the options not to spread your subjective drivel, leave your ideology at home and just come to discuss facts. So you are equal, but not equal and that is your own fault.

It suffices to say that such a view is of course also ideological. In order to avoid relativism, to be able to assume a position in this debate, I need to state, as Haraway did, that my marginal position deserves preferential treatment (1999: 305): "The standpoint of those subject are not innocent positions. On the contrary, they get preference because it is in principle the least possible that they will allow the denial of the critical and interpretative core of all knowledge (translation from Slovenian by J. S.)."

Now that this has been said I need to focus on another problem. Since I am trying to build a basis for exploring the history of the media in order to produce new knowledge, I seem to have a problem. Situated knowledges are concrete life experiences of marginalized persons, be it those colonized, those without property, or those racially, sexually or ethnically labeled. The situated knowledge I intend to produce is not knowledge about something I have lived, but about something that I access in the same manner anyone else does - through (historical) sources. In this perspective I only have the concrete life experience that triggered the need for knowledge that would be fruitful for the situation I'm in, but not the material that goes with it. The question is, does this make a difference? It seems that having lived through something gives one the privilege to take up a position and speak from it with preference in relation to those who have not done so. I believe that having had the direct contact does not matter as much as "not allowing the denial of the critical and interpretative core of all knowledge." In the end the information a feminist (as in Haraway's case) draws upon is not only what he or she has experienced in his or her lifetime, but also what one might learn from history or other conceptualizations of his or her particular situation. The point of interest in this case is not so much that knowledge is situated with us (that is the knowledge that is culturally available to us), but how we situate knowledge, what view and interpretation we have chosen or believe to not have chosen.

To sum up. I have chosen to build a basis for exploring Slovenian media in transition from a perspective of a youth that is disillusioned about the way in which the majority of the post-socialist media work. Since their

functioning is deeply connected with the socio-economical circumstances that be, this perspective is one based on the critique of capitalism. Since in recent history of the geopolitical region concerned, much has been tried and much has failed on the same basis, the aim of this text is to set up some ideas that could enable us to think about communism and the media again. Ideas that would enable us to act politically again.

How #2

This leaves us with another question of method. On what basis can we think about communism and the media all over again? One way would be to use the same general tactic I used in coming to grips with objectivity. That would mean taking the dominant diagnoses of the media in Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and comparing them to what we have today. A very popular statement about the time between 1945 and 1990 is that it lacked freedom. A response to that would be to take todays media and show that they're not exactly free either or that oppression is at work in a different way. But this has mostly been achieved (Močnik 1985, Bašić-Hrvatin 2004, 2005, 2007), at least in the academic circle, so we can only add something to it or spread the word. When we are asking what to cling on when rethinking the whole situation, this approach tells us what we already know - that we should rethink.

In order to illustrate what kind historical research/attitude is needed I will digress on a topic that speaks very clearly of the "nature" of historical memory and transition. It is the topic of reconciliation. "National reconciliation was one of the key program points that hegemonized Slovenian political space from the mid '80s on. The first flags were of course raised by adherents of the right, with the catholic church at the front. The fight for a new interpretation of history was crucial in forming Slovenliness and disguising social conflicts in a nationalistic robe." (Kirn 2011b: 12) The discourse of reconciliation was especially strong in times of crisis, when the divisions between Slovenians were often put forward as an obstacle for reforms. Crucial are the events of World War II. Reconciliation became a synonym for the condemnation of after-war killings of the collaborators with the occupational Nazi regime, carried out by the revolutionary forces under Tito. "The ideology of reconciliation succeeds in leveling domobranstvo (collaborators – note that domobranec in direct translation means home defender; A/N) with partisans and at the same time condemning the "totalitarian" regime that appeared out of the war. Out of this seeming equalization domobranci come as moral victors that had nothing to do with the criminal regime. Of course the collaboration is kept silent. Reconciliation will accordingly set in as soon as we will be ashamed of communism and will approve fascism (Kirn 2011b: 12) ."

The left, considered as the heir of the former regime, was and is expected to condemn the killings. They have done so and started to defend only the national aspect (how the liberation fight freed Slovenia from the Germans, Italians and Hungarians) of the partisans' fight. This element of reconciliation has successfully covered up the revolutionary nature of the resistance. The left has accepted the moralizing discourse that was set up by the right. The prevailing debate about WWII was concerned with counting bodies. However, what the resistance also achieved is doing away with the old pre-socialist Yugoslavia, "which was based on the hegemony of the Serbian national leadership, political repression and the exploitation of laborers and farmers (Kirn 2011b: 12)". In this way the fight was doubtlessly a progressive one.

Synthesis

We see that rethinking reconciliation gives us a new perspective, that was mostly absent from general discourse. There were nationalisms and a general condemnation of the apparently dark and monolithic socialist era which were at best mixed with nostalgia, but there were no cracks presented and no positions assumed, except those based on Christian morality, collaboration and after-war killings. This is a very superficial "victory", basically fueling the patriotic drive that is supposed to lead Slovenia to another decade of "freedom and prosperity". And this is the exact same equality rhetoric that I mentioned before. Through annihilating differences it works discriminatory.

At this point differences are crucial. One needs to assume a position and one needs to open up cracks. "To show a historical event through the dispersed multitude of evitability – to show something, that was not carried out, but was present as potential. That opens a crack in the present, which allows a different understanding of the order of

things (Bobnič 2011: 16)".

Rethinking reconciliation made visible the possibility of a monarchic rule after the war. In a similar manner Gal Kirn (2011a) has shown that liberalism in SFRY is a product of the 1960s. Had the fights between different currents inside the League of Communists gone another way, maybe there would be more left of socialism. This perspective fights the prevailing view that the end of socialism was a historical necessity and a result of the 1980s. Very broadly speaking we may now see the regression to capitalism as a result of (previously existing) liberalist tendencies mixing with growing nationalisms. We cannot understand it if we think of it "as a consequence of some irrational character of the Balkan nations or superficially as a consequence of totalitarian repression of Titoistic rule. Crucial for the disintegration of Yugoslavia were political and intellectual efforts of the liberals (Kirn 2011: 26) … "

Synthesis and the Media

On the base of all this I will now draw some conclusions/guidelines in connection to media research from the position of a Marxist thinker in post-socialist Slovenia (and maybe wider):

- One should try to compare the two media systems on the basis of the ideals we hold important (for example freedom, autonomy, objectivity, advocacy ...).
- One should question the conceptions of these ideals by applying genealogical analysis to them and "opening up cracks".
- One should assume an openly ideological/political/conceptual position in facing the past media system and demask other positions as ideological.
- One should recognize the achievements that were progressive in regard to the past, the present and one's own political position, even if they show to have or seem to have contained flaws.
- One should discuss the achievements that seem applicable for the understanding or improving of his or her position.
- One should diagnose the flaws and try to correct them never allowing the denial of the critical and interpretative core of all knowledge.

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Slovene without a Passport: Ljubljana, Theory, Utopia

Ben Agger

All writing that passes for theory is autobiography. Or perhaps it is fiction. I am not the first to notice that writing creates the self. But it works both ways: the world we write is informed by the self we have become. And writing constructs the world. As soon as one throws over positivism, which positions the literary self outside of time and place in pursuit of laws of nature and social nature (a prospect disqualified by Einstein in 1905 and by Derrida later), one recognizes that writing is heavily implicated in the world. This is a way of saying that Ljubljana is 'my' Ljubljana and that Ljubljana is a version of the self I am. But the self I am owes a great deal to the Ljubljana I visited in the late 1960s and 1970s—a veritable intellectual and social utopia, or so it seemed to me. As President John Kennedy proclaimed "I am a Berliner" in a stirring speech in 1963, so I am a citizen of Slovenia. They have forgotten to send me my passport—undoubtedly a bureaucratic oversight!

This is a way to understand the story I tell of the impact of Ljubljana and Slovenia on the self I am, especially the literary self I am. Literary self is vague; it is better to say that I 'am' my vita, that which I have published. I am more, and also, perhaps, less. This depends on whether we agree with Hegel that all work (here, writing) involves loss of the object, an inevitable alienation. Or whether we side with early Marx, he of the 1843-44 manuscripts, when he says that self-objectification need not lead to alienation—the very promise of his utopia.

This is not an idle reference. My Ljubljana has everything to do with my reading of the early Marx. Tito, workers' councils, the Praxis Group are manifestations of the young Marx, who defined alienation and tried to redeem it through a society of praxis—a Greek word for self-creative work that blurring with play (as appreciated by the Freudian Marxism of Marcuse who also probably a Slovenian without a passport).

I am certain that Ljubljana does not mean to be appreciated this way, through the hazy and distant prism of my well-thumbed copies of Marx's early writings and Marcuse's Eros and Civilization. I was also reading Slovenia and the rest of western and eastern Europe through the prism of Sartre's and Merleau-Ponty's existentialism, to which I was introduced by John O'Neill, an Irish Marxist and phenomenologist at York University in Toronto. I was already an ex-pat, a Vietnam-era refuge of the United States living in the cosmopolitan city of Toronto. It was from Toronto that I embarked to Europe as a student, having lived there for a year as a young teenager (when my father, a leftist political scientist, took his sabbatical and did research on community power structures in Czechoslovakia, Poland and the former Yugoslavia). I was always/already a European without a passport by the time I finished college and graduate school in Toronto.

And so my Ljubljana was inserted into this emerging mosaic of intellectual and personal identity. I was reading furiously in Marx, both early and later, German idealism, phenomenology, existentialism, Lukacs, and especially the Frankfurt School. Later, we named our identities—critical theory was my main name, although I could have taken other names such as existential-phenomenology. Later, many of us gave ourselves the additional name of cultural studies. But, for me, cultural studies was made possible through my reading of Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment, in which they identify positivism , a fact fetishism that freezes the present into our supposed 'fate,' a notion consistent with Nietzsche's amor fati, the love of fate. In the later sections of Dialectic, Horkheimer and Adorno initiate cultural studies where they denounce popular culture as "mass deception," a thread taken up by Marcuse in his 1964 book One-Dimensional Man, which I was reading as a first-year college student in Toronto.

Then there were the French, who participated in the May Movement of 1968 and later questioned what it means to write and read texts such as science and Stalinism that pretend not be stories, even nightmares. Sartre, Derrida and Foucault were writing parallel to the German critical theorists, similar and yet different. Foucault's Discipline and Punish could have been titled One-Dimensional Man, and Derrida's theme of difference is nearly identical to Adorno's concept of non-identity developed in his pessimistic book Negative Dialectics—pessimistic because in it he gives up the notion of a progressive agency through which the world can be changed, deriving directly from the eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: the point of intellectual work is not only to understand the world but to change it. The New Left, both in America and Europe, insisted, through Husserl, early Marx, feminism, praxis philosophy, that collective change is prefigured by changes and choices people make in everyday life. Such as my choice to go to Canada and then study in Europe while escaping Anglo-American positivism.

In late spring and summer of 1968 I was first in Prague, leaving just four days before the Soviet tanks ended the upsurge of humanist Marxism in Czechoslovakia. I left for Ljubljana, which had become a second summer home for me and my family. I was sitting around a streetside Ljubljana café drinking turska kava and puzzling my way through the headlines of Delo as I learned that the Prague Spring had turned autumnal. This left Titoism as the only global embodiment of the early Marx, he of praxis and autogestion.

This traveling and studying (I heard lectures from Petrovic or Stojanovic of the Praxis group at a university building on the former Titova) constructed the 'me' who would, a decade later, begin to write his own works, albeit haltingly. Finding one's voice is difficult in the noisy room of the academy, especially when the temptation posed by mimesis is nearly irresistible. I now had numerous intellectual heroes, French, German, British and Yugoslav, and they all dwarfed my own sensibility. Slowly, slowly, I began to emerge from their shadow and find my own voice. In retrospect, it is clear that my time in Ljubljana and Yugoslavia was formative for me.

What did I learn from these experiences? It is nearly impossible to separate the personal and intellectual. I was young when I first set foot on the tarmac in Dubrovnik, having flown from Luton, England. I was 13. My father had spent time in Yugoslavia in a United Nations relief force toward the end of WWII, and he was fascinated by this Adriatic country that he found. He was also forming plans to do comparative political science, comparing civil society (as we now call it) in both capitalist and state-socialist nations. Yugoslavia was a fascinating exception.

The whole year I spent headquartered in England and Amsterdam, including eastern European and Soviet travel, was a revelation. Although I lived in an American college town, Europe soon began to flow through my veins. Years later, when multiculturalists in the U.S. mounted a critique of 'Eurocentrism,' I secretly knew that I was guilty as charged! European thinkers asked the right questions: what can I know? What can I hope for? What ought I to do? Kant's questions frame the Enlightenment, and opened what Habermas calls the project of modernity. I'm not in favor of abandoning that project even though, as the other Frankfurters point out, enlightenment tends to become domination, even a holocaust, when positivist method sucks all mystery (Adorno's non-identity, Derrida's difference) out of objects, including other people.

Ljubljana was especially important to me because it was European, a crossroads of cultures, but it was not yet heading in the direction of globalization, a word that didn't exist. It was (is?) human-scale, manageable, medieval and yet also socialist. Perhaps it is a fantasy to link Ljubljana to early Marx; the Titoist third way was a vague mediation. But the fantasy sustained me, especially after Prague fell. Little did I know that Prague, like most of eastern Europe behind the 'Iron Curtain,' would eventually be colonized by western capital and culture; and who would have predicted that the Soviet Union would fissure into ethnic states?

As I said at the outset, autobiography and autobibliography merge. Where one was personally affects and is affected by what one is reading. I was studying the giants of non-positivist European thought, the Germans, French, Hungarians, the Praxis group, as I was coming of age. So place mattered, at least in memory. Reading Kant on the shores of Lake Bohinj produces a different memory than if I had read him in a philosophy class taught by an analytical philosopher in the U.S. It was an omen when I shared a cable car to the top of Mount Vogel with Sartre, Beauvoir and Dedijer. My reading list was standing beside me!

And so my Ljubljana, as I reconstruct it, involved medieval manageability, outdoor cafes where I did my reading, the smoky smell of cevapcici, discussion with my father's Slovene social-science friends, the emerging Titoist take on autogestion, a certain relationship to nature (Bohinj, the Adriatic) which had not yet been paved and malled over, coming of age romantically (of course!), and the house that my parents built on the Croat island of Cres, in a tiny village called Miholascica. As my teens turned into my twenties, and we spent every summer in Ljubljana and other parts of Europe, I felt more at home than I did in the United States, which was surely a factor in our decision to move to Toronto, almost a European city by feel. Wanting to avoid the war in Vietnam was another factor.

As I recall, there was a direct flight from Toronto to either Ljubljana or Zagreb. I began serious study of European theory while a student in Toronto. My summers in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Beograd, Sarajevo, and on the Adriatic coast began to take on a newfound intellectual meaning as I better understood the Praxis group and their heretical critique of Soviet state socialism from within a different version of socialism. I realized that the Frankfurt School and various existential leftists such as Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Enzo Paci were tried to rescue the humanism in Marxism ('socialism with a human face) and that Tito's Yugoslavia was a laboratory of this approach to Marx.

This is not to say that workers self-management came out of a theoretical treatise, although theory was definitely involved as humanists behind the so-called Iron Curtain tried to find warrant in Marx for their resistance to the authoritarianism of Stalinism. Ljubljana cannot be reduced to a text; rather, it is a lifeworld (Lebenswelt), as Husserlians call it. And my experience of that everyday life was filtered through prism of my tender years, my North American background, and a good deal of wishful thinking. The cosmopolitan delights of Ljubljana, Paris, Amsterdam were less about theory than about the accretion and momentum of a humane everyday life that has characterized urban Europe since the middle ages. Surely, the intimate, beautiful and manageable built environment of European cities, especially of the scope and scale of Ljubljana, have something to do with this, as does a certain relationship between humanity and nature that is much more common in Europe than in America. It was possible to fantasize that Tivoli Park represented the redemption of nature.

And so my time in Ljubljana was partly about being in Europe and perhaps the very idea of Europe, a topic discussed eloquently by my Slovenian colleague Ales Debeljak. For me, Europe, symbolized by Ljubljana and rural Slovenia, was in part itself and in part not-America, its presence defined by absence. After all, there was little to like about America when I moved to Canada. The authoritarian state of Johnson and Nixon, and later Reagan and Bush Jr., crushed the progressive projects of the black and student movements, even as the war in Vietnam ended simply because it could not be won. (The parallel to Iraq and, I hope, Afghanistan is obvious.)

A Europeanizing reading of Slovenia particularly focuses on the role of intellectual life in the public sphere. When I was last strolling in Paris, Derrida's latest books were on display in non-academic Parisian bookstores. The major chain bookstores in the U.S. have never sold Derrida, let alone Zizek. As I was doing my apprenticeship as a would-be academic, I found in Europe, both western and eastern, an approach to intellectuality defined by engagement. For an apprentice with my particular politics, this engagement was summarized by the eleventh thesis. But one does not need to be a Marxist—and, after all, what does it mean to be a Marxist in the 21st century?—to insert one's intellectual work and life in a public sphere in which people (Europeans!) take ideas seriously. Dominated by materialism and diversion, American public life and popular culture have always been anti-intellectual, embodied by the image of George Babbitt, the protagonist in Sinclair Lewis' novel Babbitt, first published in 1922. That publication year was one year before the publication of Lukacs' History and Class Consciousness, an inaugural work of 'western Marxism' in which he introduces the concept of reification—a deepening of Marx's original alienation. Also in 1923, the Institute for Social Research was established in Germany, the so-called Frankfurt School, which deepened the concept of reification in 'domination'—an ether of everyday unconsciousness closed to thinking the world otherwise, to utopia.

Ljubljana helped me think the world otherwise, as did other parts of Europe. Amsterdam's canals and Prague's castle were not tourist landmarks for me but memory aids that suggested a vital public sphere with a charming cityscape. These examples gave form to worlds thought otherwise, which, for a young American, meant a world outside of suburbs, malls, Henry Ford's factories, office cubicles housed in modernist skyscrapers. Ljubljana represented this other life.

I have not returned to Ljubljana in many years. Everything is bound to be different, or perhaps it never was. Slovenia now stands alone and entered the EU in 2004. I had hoped that Ljubljana would remain the Only City without McDonald's but was disappointed, if unsurprised, that it, too, has been colonized. A fast laptop capitalism, expedited by CNN and FedEx, has destroyed many aspects of indigenous cultural 'difference', much as Marx predicted when he discussed the tendency of the flight of capital. The intellectual and cultural scorched-earth policy of so-called globalization makes me wonder whether 'my' Ljubljana, as I remember it, still exists. Probably, it does and it doesn't. I'd like to return to my former haunts and check this out, but, first, perhaps the passport office could acknowledge my Slovene identity.

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A Contribution to the Critique of the Political Economy of Google

Christian Fuchs

Introduction

Google is the world's most accessed web platform: 46.0% of worldwide Internet users accessed Google in a three-month period (data source: alexa.com, http://internetworldstats.com/stats.htm; February 10, 2011). In January 2011, Google accounted for 65.6% of all searches in the US, Yahoo! for 16.1%, Microsoft sites (including Bing, MSN, Windows Live) for 13.1%, ask.com for 3.4%, and AOL LLC for 1.7% (http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2011/2/comScore_Releases_January_2011_U.S._Search_Engine_Rankings). In 2010, Google accounted on average for 85.07% of all worldwide searches, Yahoo for 6.12%, Baidu for 3.33%, Bing for 3.25%, Ask for 0.67% and others for 1.56% (January-December 2010, http://marketshare.hitslink.com/search-engine-market-share.aspx?qprid=5). In China, Baidu accounted in 2010 for on average 60.4% of all searches and Google for only 37.7% (January-December 2010, http://gs.statcounter.com/#search_engine-CN-monthly-201001-201012).

Google has become ubiquitous in everyday life – it is shaping how we search, organize and perceive information in contexts like the workplace, private life, culture, politics, the household, shopping and consumption, entertainment, sports, etc. The phrase "to google" has even found its way into the vocabulary of some languages. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "to google" as "search for information about (someone or something) on the Internet, typically using the search engine Google" and remarks that the word's origin is "the proprietary name of a popular Internet search engine" (http://oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0342960#m_en_gb0342960, accessed on February 10, 2011). The German Duden (2009 edition) defines the term "googeln" as "im Internet suchen" (p. 498, = to search on the Internet). The circumstance that a company name becomes part of a vocabulary indicates that the products of large monopoly capitalist companies have become so present in capitalist society that their existence is absolutely taken for granted, not questioned and so strongly fetishized that specific verbs ("to google", "googeln") are defined for expressing the usage of these products.

There are a lot of affirmative, uncritical popular science- and business studies- publications about Google that have a celebratory tone, take for granted economic power and do not see this kind of power's underbelly. For example, David Vise (2005) tells the Google Story in a celebratory tone. He argues that the great thing about Google is that it helps people "to find the information" (Vise 2005:292) they need and that it "reliably provides free information for everyone who seeks it" (Vise 2005:2). Tapscott and Williams invoke the images of revolution and participatory democracy when speaking about web 2.0 companies and therefore characterize Google as providing "participatory Web services" (Tapscott and Williams 2006:193). Bernard Girard (2009) says that Google has "democratized advertising" (Girard 2009:39) and "represents the invention of a new management model – and calling it revolutionary is no exaggeration" (Girard 2009:223). Jeff Jarvis says that talking about Google means "talking about a new society" that is built on "connections, links, transparency, openness, publicness, listening, trust, wisdom, generosity, efficiency, markets, niches, platforms, networks, speed, and abundance" (Jarvis 2009:240f). Books such as the Google Story (Vise 2005), What would Google do? (Jarvis 2009), The Google way (Girard 2009), or Googled (Auletta 2010) not only celebrate Google, but at the same time advance the individualistic myth of the American dream, in which hard working individuals have great ideas and thereby become successful. They ignore the

role played by the work of employees and users in running a company like Google and the role of venture capital in financing it in the first instance.

Studying the implications of search engines has become a specific research field. Zimmer (2010) speaks therefore of the emergence of Web Search Studies as a subfield of Internet Studies. Within this research field, in contrast to popular science-celebrations, a number of critiques of Google has been advanced:

- **Monopolization:** Google holds a monopoly in the search engine market and contributes to the concentration of this market (Maurer, Balke, Kappe, Kulathuramaiyer, Weber and Zaka 2007; Van Couvering 2008, Van Hoboken 2009).
- **Reality distortion:** Google gives a distorted picture of reality that is incomplete, unsystematic and controls what is considered as existent and non-existent (Becker 2009, Darnton 2009, Lovink 2009, Stalder and Meyer 2009, Becker 2009). As users tend to be biased towards following the first search results, no matter if they are relevant for their search or not, Google tends to centralize attention to certain sites and to marginalize attention for other sites (Pan, Hembrooke, Joachims, Lorigo, Gay and Granka 2007).
- **Surveillance:** Google advances user surveillance and privacy violation (Aljifri and Navarro 2004; Andrejevic 2007:129-131; Halavais 2009, Hoofnagle 2009, Lobet-Maris 2009, Lovink 2009; Maurer, Balke, Kappe, Kulathuramaiyer, Weber and Zaka 2007; Munir and Yasin 2008, Rieder 2009, Stalder and Mayer 2009, Tatli 2008, Tavani 2005; Turow 2008:97; Vaidhyanathan 2011:chapter 3; Zimmer 2008a, b).
- **Stratified attention economy:** Powerful actors are more visible in Google search results than non-powerful ones (Diaz 2008, Halavais 2009, Mayer 2009, Rieder 2009, Rogers 2009, Zook and Graham 2007) so that a Googlearchy (Hindman, Tsioutsiouliklis and Johnson 2003) or Googlocracy (Menczer, Fortunato, Flammini and Vespignani 2006) emerges. Introna and Nissenbaum (2000:181) argue that there is a tendency that Google gives "prominence to popular, wealthy and powerful sites at the expense of others" and that as a result the public character of the web is endangered.
- **Intransparency:** The PageRank algorithm is intransparent and kept secret (Lobet-Maris 2009). Google Scholar for example is a thorough search engine that produces better search results than some other academic search engines (Haya, Nygren and Widmark 2007) because it searches through the full text of academic papers, but its search process and coverage are kept secret (Jacsó 2005).
- **Google advances ideology:** Google's management style presents itself as decentralized, flat and based on self-organization, just like the operations of the search engine, which ideologically hides that Google is a force of centralization (Jakobsson and Stiernstedt 2010a). Google advances the techno-determinist ideology that information technology will solve society's problems (Vaidhyanathan 2011:chapter 2).
- **Google is of public interest, but has a private character:** For example, Google Books is an American-centred project that does not make digital books available to the public, but operates the digitizing of books as private business (Baksik 2006, Jeanneney 2007, Vaidhyanathan 2011:chapter 5). Also Google Maps and Google Earth are primarily directed towards advertising businesses (Lee 2010a).
- **Censorship:** From 2005 until 2010, Google allowed for business purposes the censorship of search results for keywords like Tiananmen Square, freedom of speech Tibet or Taiwan in China, which some see as a contribution to civil rights violation (Halavais 2009; Hinman 2005, Jiang and Chang 2008, Vaidhyanathan 2011:chapter 4, Zook and Graham 2007). Others argue that the critique of Chinese censorship of the Internet ignores Western problems of the Internet, such as its domination by commercial and entertainment value (Lee 2010b).
- **Political dominance:** The global nature of Google's services allows the company to evade and bypass national regulations (Kumar 2010, Munir and Yasin 2008).
- **Digital divide:** There is a divide in the skills needed for informed searches (Halavais 2009).
- **Human capacities:** Google is reducing humans' capacities of creative and thoughtful reflection (Carr 2008), reading and writing (Weber 2009).

The task of this paper is to critically analyze the political economy of Google. The approach of the political economy of the media and communication analyzes "the production, distribution, and consumption of resources, including communication resources" (Mosco 2009:2). In a capitalist society, i.e. a society based on the accumulation of capital, "the commodity-form of the product of labour, or the value-form of the commodity, is the economic cell-form" (Marx 1867:90). A commodity is a good that is exchanged in a certain quantity for a certain quantity of money

(or another generalized medium of exchange): x commodity A = y commodity B. As capitalism is an "immense collection of commodities" (Marx 1867:125), the analysis of the political economy of capitalism should begin with "the analysis of the commodity" (Marx 1867: 125). Google is a profit-oriented company, therefore analyzing how Google's commodity production, distribution and consumption process works is of central importance. In the existing research literature, no theoretically grounded systematic analysis of Google's capital accumulation process has been provided so far. This paper wants to contribute to filling this gap. Related to this analysis is the normative question about the good and bad sides of Google, if it is "evil" or not. Google itself claims that it is not "evil". The approach of Critical Political Economy does "not preach morality at all" (Marx and Engels 1846:264), but wants to understand and change conditions that humans live and act in and by which their thinking and actions are shaped. Critical theorists "do not put to people the moral demand: love one another, do not be egoists, etc.; on the contrary, they are very well aware that egoism, just as much selflessness, is in definite circumstances a necessary form of the self-assertion of individuals" (Marx and Engels 1846:264). This means that a critical analysis of Google goes beyond moral condemnation or moral celebration, but rather tries to understand the conditions and contradictions that shape the existence of Google and its users. This work therefore also wants to make a contribution to contextualizing normative questions about Google in the political economy of contemporary society.

In section 2, basic economic data about Google are outlined and Google's cycle of capital accumulation is explained. In section 3, the role of user surveillance in Google's capital accumulation cycle is outlined and a critical interpretation of the role of advertising in Google's terms of service and privacy policies is given. Finally, it is discussed in the conclusion if Google is "evil".

2. Google's Political Economy

Google, which was founded in 1998 by Larry Page and Sergey Brin, was transformed into a public company on August 19, 2004 (Vise 2005:4). Google acquired the video sharing platform YouTube for US$1.65 billion in 2006 and the online advertising service company DoubleClick for US$3.1 billion in 2008 (Stross 2008:2).

In 2010, Google was after IBM, Microsoft and Oracle the fourth largest software company in the world (Forbes Global 2000, 2010 list). In the list of the world's largest companies, Google has rapidly increased its ranking (table 1). 2010 has been a record profitable year for Google: its profits were US$8.5 billion (Google SEC Filings, Annual Report 2010), the largest amount since the company's creation in 1998. Since 2004, Google's annual profits rapidly increased (see figure 1).

Table 1. Google's ranking in the list of the largest public companies in the world (data source: Forbes Global 2000, various years; the ranking is based on a composite index of profits, sales, assets and market value)

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
904	439	289	213	155	120	120

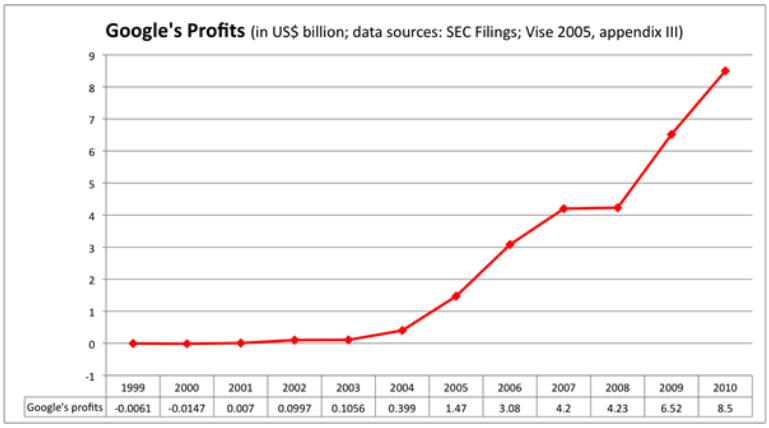

Figure 1. The development of Google's profits

In 2008, the year that a new world economic crisis hit capitalism, Google's market value dropped from $US147.66 billion (2007) to $US106.69 billion (data source: Forbes Global 2000, lists for the years 2007 and 2008). Google's profits remained constant in this period of world economic crisis (2007: $US 4.2 billion, 2008: $US 4.23 billion, Forbes Global 2000, lists for the years 2007 and 2008). In 2009, Google's market value increased to $US 169.38 billion (data source: Forbes Global 2000, year 2009). Google's profits reached a new all-time high of $US 6.52 billion in 2009 and skyrocketed to $US 8.5 billion in 2010 (data source: Google SEC Filings, annual reports various years). So Google's profits were not harmed by the economic crisis that started in 2008. The company stabilized its profits in 2008 in comparison to 2007, accounted for a 65% growth of its profits in 2009 and a 76.7% growth in 2010. An economic crisis results in the shrinking of the profits of many companies, which can have negative influences on advertising markets because companies with declining profits have less money to spend for marketing purposes. As a result, the financial years 2008 and 2009 brought about declining profits for many advertising-financed media companies (Fuchs 2011, chapter 6). Google may have benefited from the crisis because in crisis times "advertisers are more concerned about the costs and direct results of their advertising campaigns" and Google offers good ways of "controlling and measuring […] campaign's effectiveness" (Girard 2009:215). In non-marketing research language this means that Google provides a form of advertising that is based on the close surveillance of users. Google advertising clients know a lot about who clicks when on their ads. Surveillance makes Google advertising predictable, capitalist companies seek to control unpredictability of investments especially in times of crisis and therefore welcome Google advertisement because it is based on a form of economic user surveillance.

Ken Auletta (2010:19) in his celebratory book Googled claims that Google is an egalitarian company and that Brin, Page and Schmidt have modest salaries. Can one speak of economic modesty, if four persons control more than 70% of the voting power and more than 90% of the common stock? Page, Brin and Schmidt increased their personal wealth by a factor of 4 in the years 2004-2010 (figure 2). They are among the richest Americans. It is not that Google is more or less "evil" than any other capitalist company (table 2). Google is an ordinary capitalist company that accumulates profit and thereby also personal wealth of a few by exploiting the many.

Table 2. Development of the ranking of Google's 3 richest directors in the list of the 300 richest Americans (data source: Forbes 400 List of the Richest Americans)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Larry Page	43	16	13	5	14	11	11
Sergey Brin	43	16	12	5	13	11	11
Eric Schmidt	165	52	51	48	59	40	48

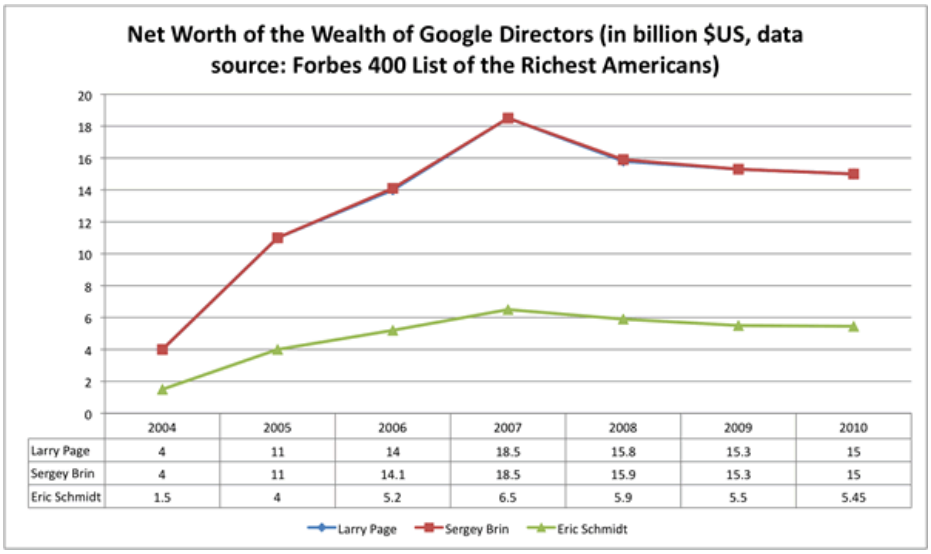

Figure 2. Development of the wealth of Google's 3 richest directors

In 2010, four members of Google's board of directors (Larry Page, Sergey Brin, Eric Schmidt and L. John Doerr) owned 93.2% of Google's class B common stock and controlled 70.1% of the total voting power (see table 3). In comparison, Google's 20 000 employees have almost no ownership and voting power share (the share of stock options and voting power can only be small if more than 90% respectively 70% is owned/controlled by a power elite consisting of four persons) and Google's 900 million users have no ownership and voting power share. Google's users and employees produce its surplus value and have made it into the powerful company that it is today. Using Google or working for Google means being permanently exploited and dispossessed of the profit that is being created by the users and employees. The contemporary proletariat does not so much work at conveyor belts in industrial firms, it to a certain degree creates surplus value for Google (and other social media companies) by using and producing its services.

Table 3. Stock ownership shares and voting power shares at Google, 2010, data sources: Google financial data: Google Proxy Statement 2010 (http://investor.google.com/documents/2010_google_proxy_statement.html), worldwide Internet users: internetworldstats.com, accessed Feb 10, 2011; share of Google users in worldwide Internet users: alexa.com, top sites, accessed Feb 10, 2011)

Name	**Role**	**Ownership share of Google's class B common stock**	**Share of total voting power**
Larry Page	Director, Founder	39.3%	29.6%
Sergey Brin	Director, Founder	38.6%	29.0%
Eric Schmidt	CEO	12.7%	9.5%
L. John Doerr	Director	2.6%	2.0%
19 835 employees *(December 2009)*	Surplus value production		
900 million users *(February 2011)*	Surplus value production		
Total		93.2%	70.1%

These data show that Google is one of the most profitable media companies in the world. But how exactly does it achieve this profit? How does it accumulate capital? Answering this question, requires a political economy analysis of Google's capital accumulation cycle.

There are already some existing analyses of Google that stand in the political economy tradition. I agree with Matteo Pasquinelli (2009, 2010) that an analysis and critique of the political economy of Google and other web 2.0 platforms is needed. I do however not agree with his form of analyzing the political economy of Google by employing the Marxian concept of rent. Pasquinelli's ideas are based on the autonomist Marxist approach. He argues that Google creates and accumulates value by its page rank algorithm. He says that Google's profit is a form of cognitive rent. Marx (1867) showed that technology never creates value, but is only a tool that is used by living human labour for creating labour. Therefore Pasquinelli advances a technological-deterministic assumption that the page rank algorithm creates value. Marx (1894) argued that rent is exchanged for land.

Marx (1894, chapter 48) formulated the trinity formula that expresses the three aspects of the value of a commodity: profit (including interest), rent, wages. Profit is attached to capital, rent to land, and wage labour to labour. The three kinds of revenue are connected to the selling of labour power, land, and goods. Rent is obtained by lending land or real estates. It is not the direct result of surplus value production and human labour. No new product is created in the renting process. Rent indirectly stems from surplus value because capitalists take part of the surplus in order to rent houses, but it is created in a secondary process, in which surplus value is used for buying real estates. "First we have the use-value land, which has no value, and the exchange-value rent" (Marx 1894:956). "Value is labour. So surplus-value cannot be earth" (Marx 1894:954). Therefore using the category of rent for describing Internet practices and their outcomes means to assume that activities on the corporate Internet, such as surfing on Google or creating content on YouTube or Facebook, are not exploitative. The category of cognitive rent is not useful for a critical political economy of the Internet and web 2.0, the notion of the Internet prosumer commodity that is created by exploited knowledge labour, as the following analysis will show, is more feasible.

Hyunjin Kang (2009) argues that Google commodifies its users, identifies the actors in this commodification process and compares them to the traditional mass media advertising process. Bermejo (2009) says that Google does not commodity the attention time of users, but keywords that are sold in biddings to advertisers. Halavais (2009:82) and Petersen (2008) argue that Google and other web 2.0 platforms are based on the exploitation of free user labour. Jakobsson and Stiernstedt (2010b) argue that Google "is engaged in an accumulation by dispossession of one of the fundamental characteristics of being human: the ability to communicate through symbols, signs, and other means of representation". Wasko and Erickson (2009:383) say that "YouTube is not shy about helping advertisers exploit users to generate revenue". Vaidhyanathan (2011:3) stresses that users are "not Google's customers: we are its product. We […] are what Google sells to advertisers". Lee (2011) argues that Google sells three types of commodities: keywords, keyword statistics and search results.

Such analyses are important contributions to the political economy of the Internet-debate, but do not specify the details of Google's capital accumulation cycle, which requires grounding in Marx's theory.

Alvin Toffler (1980) introduced the notion of the prosumer in the early 1980s. It means the "progressive blurring of the line that separates producer from consumer" (Toffler 1980:267). Toffler describes the age of prosumption as the arrival of a new form of economic and political democracy, self-determined work, labour autonomy, local production, and autonomous self-production. But he overlooks that prosumption is used for outsourcing work to users and consumers, who work without payment. Thereby corporations reduce their investment costs and labour costs, jobs are destroyed, and consumers who work for free are extremely exploited. They produce surplus value that is appropriated and turned into profit by corporations without paying wages. Notwithstanding Toffler's uncritical optimism, his notion of the "prosumer" describes important changes of media structures and practices and can therefore also be adopted for critical studies.

Dallas Smythe (1981/2006) suggests that in the case of media advertisement models, the audience is sold as a commodity to advertisers: "Because audience power is produced, sold, purchased and consumed, it commands a price and is a commodity. […] You audience members contribute your unpaid work time and in exchange you receive the program material and the explicit advertisements" (Smythe 1981/2006:233, 238). With the rise of user-generated content, free access social networking platforms, and other free access platforms that yield profit by online advertisement – a development subsumed under categories such as web 2.0, social software, social media and social networking sites – the web seems to come close to accumulation strategies employed by the capital on traditional mass media like TV or radio. The users who google, upload photos, and images, write wall posting and comments, send mail to their contacts, accumulate friends or browse other profiles on Facebook, constitute an audience commodity that is sold to advertisers. The difference between the audience commodity on traditional mass media and on the Internet is that, in the latter case, the users are also content producers; there is user-generated content, the users engage in permanent creative activity, communication, community building, and content-production. That the users are more active on the Internet than in the reception of TV or radio content, is due to the decentralized structure of the Internet, which allows many-to-many communication. Due to the permanent activity of the recipients and their status as prosumers, we can say that in the case of Facebook and the Internet the audience commodity is an Internet prosumer commodity (Fuchs 2010a).

Google relates to Internet prosumer commodification in two ways: On the one hand it indexes user-generated content that is uploaded to the web and thereby acts as a meta-exploiter of all user-generated content producers. Without user-generated content by unpaid users, Google could not perform keyword searches. Therefore Google exploits all users, who create World Wide Web (WWW) content. On the other hand users employ Google services and thereby conduct unpaid productive surplus-value generating labour. Such labour includes for example: searching for a keyword on Google, sending an e-mail via GMail, uploading or searching for a video on YouTube, searching for a book on Google Print, looking for a location on Google Maps or Google Earths, creating a document on GoogleDocs, maintaining or reading a blog on Blogger/Blogspot, uploading images to Picassa, translating a sentence with Google Translate, etc. Google generates and stores data about the usage of these services in order to enable targeted advertising. It sells these data to advertising clients, who then provide advertisements that are targeted to the activities, searches, contents and interests of the users of Google services. Google engages in the economic surveillance of user data and user activities, thereby commodifies and infinitely exploits users and sells users and their data as Internet prosumer commodity to advertising clients in order to generate money profit. Google is the ultimate economic surveillance machine and the ultimate user-exploitation machine. It instrumentalizes all users and all of their data for creating profit.

Google users are double objects of commodification: 1) they and their data are Internet prosumer commodities

themselves, 2) through this commodification their consciousness becomes, while online, permanently exposed to commodity logic in the form of advertisements. Most online time is advertising time served by Google or other online advertising companies.

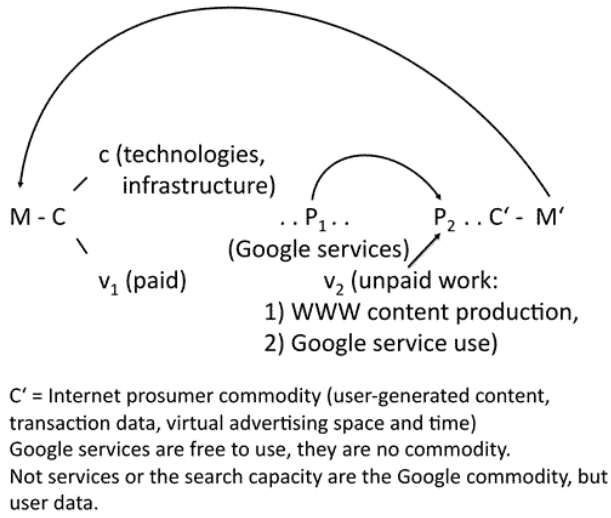

Figure 2. Development of the wealth of Google's 3 richest directors

Figure 3 shows the process of capital accumulation on Google. Google invests money (M) for buying capital: technologies (server space, computers, organizational infrastructure, etc) and labour power (paid Google employees). These are the constant and variable capital outlays. The Google employees make use of the fixed capital in order to produce (P1) Google services (like Google Search, YouTube, GMail). Google services are no commodities, they are not sold to users, but rather provided to users without payment. Free access provision and a large number of services allow Google to attract many users and to collect a lot of data about their searches. The Google search, Google's core service, is powered by the unpaid work of all those, who create web pages and web content that are indexed by Google. They are unpaid by Google, although Google uses their content for making money. The Google services and the unpaid labour of web content creators is the combined foundation for the exploitation of the Google users. They engage in different unpaid work activities (searching, e-mailing, creating documents, blogging, reading blogs, uploading videos or images, watching videos or images, etc) (P2). Thereby a new commodity C' is created, the Google prosumer commodity. It is created by the unpaid work of Google users and WWW content creators and consists of a multitude of data about user interests and activities. Google exploits Google users and WWW content producers because their work that serves Google's capital accumulation is fully unpaid. Google in processes of economic surveillance collects a multitude of data about usage behaviour and users' interests. The Google prosumer commodity C' is sold to advertising clients (the process C' – M'): Google attains money (M') from advertising clients, who in return can use the data of the Google prosumer commodity they have purchased in order to present targeted advertisements to Google users. Google thereby increases its invested money M by a profit p: M' = M + p. p is partly reinvested and partly paid as dividend to Google stockowners.

For Marx (1867), the profit rate is the relation of profit to investment costs: p = s / (c + v) = surplus value / (constant capital (= fixed costs) + variable capital (= wages)). If Internet users become productive web 2.0 prosumers, then in terms of Marxian class theory this means that they become productive labourers, who produce surplus value and are exploited by capital because for Marx productive labour generates surplus value (Fuchs 2010a). Therefore not merely those who are employed by Internet corporations like Google for programming, updating, and maintaining the soft- and hardware, performing marketing activities, etc., are exploited surplus value producers, but also the users and prosumers, who engage in the production of user-generated content and data (like search queries on Google). Google does not pay the users for the production of content and transaction data. Google's accumulation strategy is to give them free access to services and platforms, let them produce content and data, and to accumulate a large

number of prosumers that are sold as a commodity to third-party advertisers. Not a product is sold to the users, but the users and their data are sold as a commodity to advertisers. Google's services are not commodities. They are free of charge. The commodity that Google sells is not Google services (like its search engine), but the users and their data. The golden rule of the capitalist Internet economy is that the more users a platform has, the higher the advertising rates can be set. The productive labour time that is exploited by Google on the one hand involves the labour time of the paid employees and on the other hand all of the time that is spent online at Google services by the users. For the first type of knowledge labour, Google pays salaries. The second type of knowledge is produced completely for free (without payment). There are neither variable nor constant investment costs. The formula for the profit rate needs to be transformed for this accumulation strategy:

$$p = s / (c + v1 + v2)$$

s: surplus value, c : constant capital, v1: wages paid to fixed employees, v2: wages paid to users

The typical situation is that v2 => 0 and that v2 substitutes v1 (v1 => v2=0). If the production of content (web content that is indexed by Google) and data (search keywords, data generated by the use of Google services) and the time spent online were carried out by paid employees, Google's variable costs would rise and profits would therefore decrease. This shows that prosumer activity in a capitalist society can be interpreted as the outsourcing of productive labour to users, who work completely for free and help maximizing the rate of exploitation (e = s / v = surplus value / variable capital) so that profits can be raised and new media capital may be accumulated. This situation is one of infinite exploitation of the users. Capitalist prosumption is an extreme form of exploitation, in which the prosumers work completely for free. Google infinitely exploits its users and the producers of web content that is indexed on Google.

That surplus value generating labour is an emergent property of capitalist production, means that production and accumulation will break down if this labour is withdrawn. It is an essential part of the capitalist production process. That prosumers conduct surplus-generating labour, can also be seen by imagining what would happen if they would stop using Google: The number of users would drop, advertisers would stop investments because no objects for their advertising messages and therefore no potential customers for their products could be found, the profits of Google would drop, and the company would go bankrupt. If such activities were carried out on a large scale, a new economy crisis would arise. This thought experiment shows that users are essential for generating profit in the new media economy. Furthermore they produce and co-produce parts of the products, and therefore parts of the use value, exchange value, and surplus value that are objectified in these products.

Googleplex, which is located in Mountain View, California, includes services for child care, personal trainers, haircutters, bike repair, car wash, oil change as well as a laundry, restaurants, cafeterias, bars, sports halls, gyms, swimming halls, volleyball courts, (Stross 2008:13). Google adopted a work time regulation introduced by the 3M company: A certain share of the work time of the employees can be used for self-defined projects. Google has adopted the 20% rule: "We offer our engineers '20-percent time' so that they're free to work on what they're really passionate about. Google Suggest, AdSense for Content, and Orkut are among the many products of this perk" (http://www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle/englife/index.html). This statement is a contradiction in terms: on the one hand Google says that its employees are "free to work on what they're passionate about", on the other hand the company seems to expect that the outcome of this work should be new services owned and operated and thereby monetized by Google. Would Google also grant its employees work time for engaging in building an anti-capitalist new media union or for writing and publishing an anti-Google manifesto? There seems to be "a lot of internal pressure to demonstrate progress with their personal projects, and employees that show little progress are seen as perhaps not being up to the Google standard" (Girard 2009:67).

Gilles Deleuze (1995) has described the emergence of a society of control, in which individuals discipline themselves. He compared the individual in disciplinary society to a mole and the individual in the society of control to a serpent. The mole as a symbol of disciplinary society is faceless and dumb and monotonously digs his burrows; the snake is flexible and pluralistic. The Google worker is a serpent: s/he flexibly switches between different activities (leisure, work) so that the distinction between leisure and work, play and labour, collapses. Being employed by Google means having to engage in Google labour life and Google play life, Google employees are exploited playbourers. At Google, it becomes difficult to distinguish play and work. Luc Boltanski and Éve Chiapello (2006) argue that the rise of participatory management means the emergence of a new spirit of capitalism that subsumes values of the

political revolt of 1968 and the subsequently emerging New Left such as autonomy, spontaneity, mobility, creativity, networking, visions, openness, plurality, informality, authenticity, emancipation, and so on, under capital. The topics of the movement would now be put into the service of those forces that it wanted to destroy. Google's management strategy is on the one hand based on the expectation that an integration of work time and free time in one space and the creation of happiness and fun inside the company make Google employees work longer and more efficiently. It aims at what Marx (1867:chapter 16) termed a) absolute surplus value production and b) relative surplus value production: the production of more surplus value by a) increasing the total labour time, b) increasing the efficiency (output per unit of time) of production. On the other hand it assumes that a relative freedom of action (the 20% policy) can generate new technologies that can be monetized and that this policy makes the workers happy so that they work more efficiently.

Surveillance of user data is an important part of Google's operations. It is, however, subsumed under Google's political economy, i.e. Google engages in user surveillance for the end of capital accumulation. Google surveillance is therefore a form of economic surveillance. Next, Google's surveillance of user will be further analyzed.

3. Google's Capital Accumulation Model and Surveillance

Using Google Street View, one does not get an impression of how the two largest buildings of Googleplex, buildings number 40 and 43 that are connected to each other, because Google Drive and the small roads next to the two buildings are not part of Street View and the pictures of building number 43 that should be accessible by going to the small street next to building number 43 are blurred (data source: Google Street View, accessed on February 10, 2011, 19:40 CET). Also one does not get a view of other Google buildings, either because roads are not visually accessible or the buildings are hidden by trees (for example all buildings of the Google West Campus, buildings 45, 46, 47, 1055, 1098, 900, 1600, Plymouth 1, Plymouth 2). Facing the criticism that photographing citizens' private housing is a violation of privacy, Google's CEO Eric Schmidt commented: "So, you can just move, right?" (http://www.marketwatch.com/story/wary-of-google-street-view-move-ceo-says-2010-10-22). These circumstances reveal the class-divided action of Google: digitizing the world's information includes taking pictures of ordinary citizens' houses, whereas the visual structure of Google's own headquarters remains hidden. Google treats itself with a different logic than it treats citizens. It engages in the surveillance of citizens, but not in the surveillance of Google.

Anderson (2009:chapter 8) argues that Google is a citadel of the "freeconomy" that is based on the principle of giving something for free (access to Google services) in order to sell something else for making profit (advertising). "Companies like Google simply track people's everyday behavior online and distill valuable intelligence from the patterns the behavior reveals. No one minds because the resulting products like search results, are useful" (Carr 2009:138f). Do the users really not mind about Google surveillance or do they just not know enough about it? There was a lot of public criticism of Google's surveillance practices (like in the case of Google StreetView), so one cannot say that nobody minds. Anderson (2009:223) says that the online freeconomy does not mean less privacy because "most ad-driven sites have privacy policies" and the young generation does not value privacy anyhow. "After you've 'overshared' pictures of the drunken scene at your last frat party and described the ups and downs of your latest love affair, how much worse is it if a marketer sends you a discount on a clothing line based on your listed preferences?" (Anderson 2009:223). The sharing of pictures is not an economic issue, whereas the use of user data for online advertising is. The crucial thing about Google's advertising strategy is that it commodifies user data and thereby exploits them economically. Sharing pictures is not an economic action, whereas Google advertising is a problematic economic action – it is exploitation. Anderson's comparison of non-economic and economic processes is misleading.

Google's Eric Schmidt dreams of storing "all of your information" so that "we would know enough about you to give you targeted information, the targeted news, the targeted advertising, to make instantaneous, and seamless, happen". He calls this "transparent personalization" (http://www.google.com/press/podium/ana.html). Google co-founder Sergey Brin suggested a Google Artificial Intelligence dimension, in which brains are "augmented by Google. For example you think about something and your cell phone could whisper the answer into your ear" (Sergey Brin, cited in: Carr 2009:213). Brin: "Perhaps in the future, we can attach a little version of Google that you just plug into your brain" (Sergey Brin, cited in: Vise 2005:292). Google wired with all human brains would be the ultimate form of constant biopolitical exploitation – all human thoughts could be directly transformed into commodities that are sold as data to advertising clients. A perfect dynamic profile of each individual could be created so that not

only his/her general interests are targeted by advertisements, but also commodity advertisements could be served in the second one thinks about a certain circumstance. Targeted advertisements could be directly and continuously be transported to human brains. Google's vision of Artificial Intelligence is constant real time biopolitical exploitation. Hardt and Negri have based on Foucault argued that contemporary capitalism is based on a form of biopower. "Biopower thus refers to a situation in which what is directly at stake in power is the production and reproduction of life itself" (Hardt and Negri 2000:24). Google on the one hand aims at commodifying all knowledge on the Internet and to erect a panopticon that surveils all online user activities. It aims at the commodification of user's knowledge, which is an aspect of human subjectivity. On the other hand Google dreams of the vision that its surveillance reaches directly into the brains of humans in order to monitor all human thoughts. In Google's vision, thinking should be exploited and commodified continuously in real time. Google's vision is one of total surveillance, exploitation and commodification of all human thoughts and activities.

Google uses a powerful search algorithm. The details of the PageRank algorithm are secret. Basically small automated programmes (web spiders) search the WWW, the algorithm analyzes all found pages, counts the number of links to each page, identifies keywords for each page and ranks its importance. The results can be used for free via the easy user interface that Google provides. Google develops ever-newer services that are again offered for free. The PageRank algorithm is a form of surveillance that searches, assesses and indexes the WWW. Google does not pay for the circumstance that it uses web content as resource, although results are provided to users when they search for keywords so that data about user interests are generated that are sold to advertising clients. Google benefits monetarily from the expansion of the web and user-generated content. The more websites and content there are on the WWW, the more content and pages Google can index in order to provide search results. The more and the better search results there are, the more likely users are to use Google and to be confronted with advertisements that match their searches, on which they might click.

The more users of Google's services there are, the more data about the services' users is stored and assessed. Google sells advertisements that match search keywords to ad clients that bid for advertising positions (Google AdWords). There are auctions for ad space connected to certain keywords and screen locations. Google sets the minimum bids. Ads that are clicked more frequently are displayed at a better position on the Google result pages (Girard 2009:31). Specific advertisements are presented to users, who conduct searches containing specific keywords. Google AdSense enables website operators to include Google adverts on their websites and to achieve revenue for each click on an advertisement. Google shares parts of the ad revenue with the website operators that participate in the AdSense programme. Advertisements can be presented in a targeted way to specific groups of users. For doing so, Google collects a lot of information about users. It engages in user surveillance. It is important to study what kind of data about users Google collects, monitors and commodifies.

Stalder and Mayer (2009) say that Google stores data about users as knowledge persons, social persons and physical persons. Zimmer (2008b) argues that Google collects general, academic, political, social, personal, financial, consumer and technological information about users. It is important to classify Google's surveillance data, but a good typology is not an arbitrary list of categories, but is rather based on theoretically grounded criteria that logically explain the existence of categories.

Information can be conceived as a threefold process of cognition, communication and co-operation (Fuchs 2008, 2010b). Cognition is a process that organizes subjective systemic knowledge. A cognizing individual can connect him- or herself to another person by using certain mediating systems. When it comes to feedback, the persons enter an objective mutual relationship, i.e., communication with the help of symbolic systems that help in establishing shared meanings of certain aspects of reality. Communicating knowledge from one system to another causes structural changes in the receiving system. From communication processes shared or jointly produced resources can emerge, i.e., co-operation. Knowledge is in this concept seen as a dynamic, relational social process. The triad can also be seen as one of the individual, social relations, and social systems. This corresponds to the three steps of development in Hegelian dialectics (being-in-itself/identity, being-for-another, being-in-and-for-itself) and to Peirce's triad of firstness, secondness, and thirdness. Google surveillance is based on the collection, storage, assessment and commodification of data about users' cognition, communication, and co-operation (see table 4).

Society can be conceived as consisting of interconnected subsystems that are not independent and based on one specific function they fulfil, but are open, communicatively interconnected, and networked. As subsystems of a model of society one can conceive the ecological system, the technological system, the economic system, the political system, and the cultural system (Fuchs 2008, Fuchs 2010c, figure 4). Why exactly these systems? In order to survive, humans in society have to appropriate and change nature (ecology) with the help of technologies so that they can

produce resources that they distribute and consume (economy), which enables them to make collective decisions (polity), form values, and acquire skills (culture). The core of this model consists of three systems (economy, polity, culture). This distinction can also be found in other contemporary sociological theories: Giddens (1984:8–34) distinguishes between economic institutions, political institutions, and symbolic orders/modes of discourse as the three types of institutions in society. Bourdieu (1986) speaks of economic, political, and cultural capital as the three types of structures in society. Jürgen Habermas (1981) differs between the lifeworld, the economic system, and the political system.

Each of these three systems is shaped by human actors and social structures that are produced by the actors and condition the actors' practices. Each subsystem is defined and permanently re-created by a reflexive loop that productively interconnects human actors and their practices with social structures.

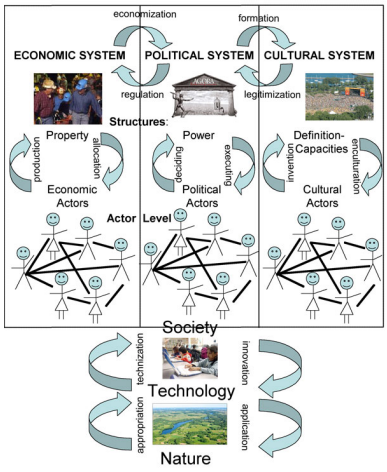

Figure 4. Society as dynamic, dialectical system

The economic system can only produce goods that satisfy human needs by human labour power that makes use of productive and communication technologies in order to establish social relations and change the state of natural resources. The latter are transformed into economic goods by the application of technologies to nature and society in labour processes. The economy is based on the dialectic of natural resources and labour that is mediated by technology. We can therefore argue that socially transformed nature and technology are aspects of the economic system. In all of these systems, users act as individuals and social beings. As individuals, they have a personality that is characterized by specific qualities.

The economic base is constituted by the interplay of labour, technology, and nature (ecology) so that economic goods are produced that satisfy human needs. The superstructure is made up by the interconnection of the political and the cultural system, so that immaterial goods emerge that allow the definition of collective decisions and societal value structures. The superstructure is not a mechanic reflection, that is, a linear mapping, of the base, that is, the relations and forces of production. It cannot be deduced from or reduced to it. All human activity is based on producing a natural and social environment; it is in this sense that the notion of the base is of fundamental importance. We have to eat and survive before we can and in order to enjoy leisure, entertainment, arts, and so on. The base is a precondition, a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the superstructure. The superstructure is a complex, nonlinear creative reflection of the base, the base a complex, nonlinear creative reflection of the superstructure. This means that both levels are recursively linked and produce each other. Economic practices and structures trigger political and cultural processes. Cultural and political practices and structures trigger economic processes. The notion of creative reflection grasps the dialectic of chance and necessity/indetermination and determination that shapes the relationship of base and superstructure.

Applying this theoretical model of society to the phenomenon of Google surveillance allows distinguishing between personal, ecological, technological, economic, political and cultural data about users. These are dimensions of users' interests, i.e. of their cognition processes. Google's surveillance of users' cognition is organized along these different dimensions (see table 4). Furthermore, users make use of their knowledge in order to create user-generated content that also becomes the object of Google surveillance.

Table 4 gives an overview of the various dimensions of Google surveillance: Google commodifies users' cognition, communication and co-operation by engaging in surveillance of these activities, creating data about them and selling these data to advertising clients. The cognition dimension features personal, ecological, technological, economic, political and cultural user data as well as user-generated content. Table 4 also lists examples for those Google services that conduct the surveillance of specific data.

Table 4. A typology of Google surveillance

Surveillance Dimension	**Surveillance Category**	**Surveillance Data**	**Example Applications**
Cognition	personal identity	name, sex, place of childhood, country, current home town, former home towns, profession, company, former companies, current school, schools attended, interests, self-description	Google Profiles, gMail
Cognition	personal identity	Location	Google Mobile applications (Latitude, Goggles, Maps, Mobile Search, gMail, Buzz, etc), Google Chrome (opt-in), Google Android (mobile OS)
Cognition	personal identity	activities, schedule, meetings	Google Calendar
Cognition	personal identity	health data: hours slept, weight, health problems, medications, allergies, test results, procedures, surgeries, immunizations, insurances, copy of health-related documents	
	Google Health		
Cognition	user-generated content (UGC)	Videos	YouTube, Orkut
Cognition	UGC	Images	Picasa, Orkut
Cognition	UGC	Documents	Google Docs, Orkut
Cognition	UGC	Postings	Blogger, Blogspot, Orkut, Knol, Moderator, Jaiku, Buzz
Cognition	UGC	databases, tables	Google Fusion Tables
Cognition	UGC	geo-tagged images	Google Panoramio
Cognition	UGC	search-identified images	Google Goggles
Cognition	UGC	reviews of places	Google Hotpot
Cognition	UGC	document translations	Google Translator Toolkit
Cognition	UGC	Information about locally stored documents	Google Desktop
Cognition	economic data	consumer preferences	Google Search, Shopping, Images, Video, YouTube, News, Books, Directory, Blogs, Chrome+Web History (visited websites), iGoogle, Bookmarks (bookmarks of favourite websites)
Cognition	economic data	shopping behaviour	Google Checkout
Cognition	economic data	financial interests in companies	Google Finance

Cognition	technological data	interests in technology	Google Search, Shopping, Images, Video, YouTube, News, Books, Directory, Blogs, Chrome+Web History (visited websites), iGoogle, Bookmarks (bookmarks of favourite websites), Google Earth, Maps
Cognition	ecological data	interests in nature and geography	Google Search, Shopping, Images, Video, YouTube, News, Books, Directory, Blogs, Chrome+Web History (visited websites), iGoogle, Bookmarks (bookmarks of favourite websites), Google Earth, Maps
Cognition	political data	political interests	Google Search, Shopping, Images, Video, YouTube, News, Books, Directory, Blogs, Chrome+Web History (visited websites), iGoogle, Bookmarks (bookmarks of favourite websites)
Cognition	cultural data	cultural and entertainment preferences	Google Search, Shopping, Images, Video, YouTube, News, Books, Directory, Blogs, Chrome+Web History (visited websites), iGoogle, Bookmarks (bookmarks of favourite websites)
Cognition	cultural data	reading preferences	Google Books
Cognition	cultural data	academic interests	Google Scholar
Cognition	cultural data	language interests	Google Translate
Cognition	cultural data	travel interests	Google Maps, Earth
Communication		contacts, social network	gMail, Google Groups, YouTube, Google Documents, Wave, Blogger/Blogspot, Friend Connect, Jaiku, Buzz, Orkut, Voice, Talk, Analytics
Communication		Communication content	gMail, Google Groups, YouTube, Blogger/Blogspot, Jaiku, Buzz, Orkut, Wave, Voice, Talk
Co-operation		collaborative document editing	Google Docs, Knol
Co-operation		Collective voting on topics	Google Moderator

Google is a legally registered company with its headquarters in Mountain View, California, United States. Its privacy policy is a typical expression of a self-regulatory privacy regime, in which businesses largely define themselves how they process personal user data. Privacy self-regulation by businesses is voluntary, therefore the number of organizations engaging in it tends to be very small (Bennett and Raab 2006:171): "Self-regulation will always suffer from the perception that it is more symbolic than real because those who are responsible for implementation are those who have a vested interest in the processing of personal data". The legal foundations of Google's economic surveillance of users are its terms of service and its privacy policies.

Google's general terms of services (http://www.google.com/accounts/TOS, version from April 16 2008) apply

to all of its services. It thereby enables the economic surveillance of a diverse multitude of user data that is collected from various services and user activities for the purpose of targeted advertising: "Some of the Services are supported by advertising revenue and may display advertisements and promotions. These advertisements may be targeted to the content of information stored on the Services, queries made through the Services or other information".

In its privacy policy (http://www.google.com/intl/en/privacy/privacy-policy.html, version from October 3, 2010), Google specifies that the company "may collect the following types of information": personal registration information, cookies that store "user preferences", **log information (requests, interactions with a service, IP address, browser type, browser language, date and time of requests, cookies that uniquely identify a user), user communications, location data, unique application number.** Google says that it is using Cookies for "improving search results and ad selection", which is only a euphemism for saying that Google sells user data for advertising purposes. "Google also uses cookies in its advertising services to help advertisers and publishers serve and manage ads across the web and on Google services". To "serve and manage ads" means to exploit user data for economic purposes. The Google ad preferences manager (http://www.google.com/ads/preferences/) displays the user interests and preferences that are collected by the use of cookies and used for targeted advertising. So for example Google by its surveillance operations has correctly identified my personal interests in "Indie & Alternative Music", "Rock Music", "Social Networks", "Social Sciences", "Dictionaries & Encyclopaedias" and "Foreign Language Resources" and commodifies this information for its private business interests.

The combination of Google's terms of service and its privacy policy allows and legally enables the collection of a multitude of user data for the purpose of targeted advertising. These self-defined Google rules, in which users have no say and which are characteristic for privacy self-regulation, enable economic surveillance.

Google's privacy policy also specifies that "Google uses the DoubleClick advertising cookie on AdSense partner sites and certain Google services to help advertisers and publishers serve and manage ads across the web". Google uses DoubleClick, a commercial advertising server owned by Google since 2007 that collects and networks data about usage behaviour on various websites, sells this data, and helps providing targeted advertising – for networking the data it holds about its users with data about these users' browsing and usage behaviour on other web platforms. There is only an opt-out option from this form of networked economic surveillance. Google's privacy policy provides a link to this option. Opt-out options are always rather unlikely to be used because in many cases they are hidden inside of long privacy and usage terms and are therefore only really accessible to knowledgeable users. Many Internet corporations avoid opt-in advertising solutions because such mechanisms can drastically reduce the potential number of users participating in advertising. That Google helps advertisers to "serve and manage ads across the web" means that Google uses the DoubleClick server for collecting user behaviour data from all over the WWW and using this data for targeted advertising. Google's exploitation of users is not only limited to its own sites, its surveillance process is networked, spreads and tries to reach all over the WWW.

YouTube's privacy notice (http://www.youtube.com/t/privacy, version from December 8, 2010) says that "advertisers may serve ads based on interests and demographic categories associated with non-personally identifiable online activity, such as videos viewed, frequency of uploading or activity on other AdSense partner sites". This means that all user activities on YouTube and all activities of these users on WWW sites surveilled by Google or one of its subcompanies like DoubleClick can be used for targeted advertising.

Google services on mobile phones are regulated by the Google mobile privacy policy

http://www.google.com/mobile/privacy.html, version from December 14, 2010): The use of mobile Google services "may be sending us location information. This information may reveal your actual location". Also in the use of the service Google Buzz on a mobile device, "your location will be collected by Google" (Google Buzz privacy policy, http://www.google.com/buzz/help/intl/en/privacy.html, version from October 15, 2010). In combination with Google's general terms of service, these regulations enable location-based targeted advertising.

The analysis shows that Google makes use of privacy self-regulation for formulating privacy policies and terms of service that enable the large-scale economic surveillance of users for the purpose of capital accumulation. Advertising clients of Google, who use Google AdWords, are able to target ads for example by country, exact location of users and distance from a certain location, language users speak, the type of device used: (desktop/ laptop computer, mobile device (specifiable)), the mobile phone operator used (specifiable), gender, or age group (data source: http://adwords.google.com).

In December 2009, Google's CEO Eric Schmidt commented about online privacy: "If you have something that you do not want anyone to know, maybe you should not be doing it in the first place" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6e7wfDHzew, accessed on February 15, 2011). Google's terms of service and privacy policies show that

Google's economic aim is to accumulate profit by commodifying user data. Schmidt's statement is an indication that Google or at least its most important managers and shareholders do not value privacy very highly. It implies that Schmidt thinks that in the online world, all uploaded information, personal data and usage data should be commodified and the property of corporations so they can use if for economic ends.

4. Conclusion: Is Google "Evil"?

Google sees itself as "a company that does good things for the world" (Page and Brin, cited in: Jarvis 2009:99). One of its mottos is: "Don't be evil". "You can make money without doing evil" (http://www.google.com/corporate/tenthings.html) is one of the slogans of Google's philosophy. This moral behaviour includes for Google that only "relevant" ads are displayed, that ads are not flashy, that ads are identified as "sponsored links". This paper has shown that Google permanently surveils the online behaviour of the users of Google services and thereby economically exploits them. In Google's moral universe, prosumer exploitation does not seem to be evil, but rather a moral virtue. Google thinks that advertising is evil when it displays irrelevant information, when it is flashy and if it is not recognizable as such. It ignores that the problem is that for organizing and targeting advertising, Google engages in the surveillance and exploitation of users and the commodification of personal data and usage behaviour data. Advertising is furthermore a mechanism that advances the monopolization of business, the manipulation of needs and the commercialization and commodification of culture and life. Advertising and exploitation are always "evil", therefore Google is just like all capitalist advertising companies "evil". In capitalism, evil is not a moral misconduct of individuals, who are blinded and could also act in more positive ways, exploitation is rather a structural and necessary feature of capital accumulation, which makes evil a generic feature of all forms of capitalism and of all capitalist organizations.

One could argue that Google provides a free service to users and that in return it should be allowed to access, store, analyze, and use personal data and Internet usage behaviour and that therefore this is a "fair exchange", not an "evil" relation of user expropriation and exploitation. But the problem is that the power relations between Google and its users are not symmetric. Targeted advertising on Google poses several threats:

- **Ideological power threat:** Online advertising presents certain realities as important to users and leaves out those realities that are non-corporate in character or that are produced by actors that do not have enough capital in order to purchase online advertisements. An online advertising monopoly therefore advances one-dimensional views of reality.
- **Political power threat:** In modern society, money is a form of influence on political power. The concentration of online advertising therefore gives Google huge political power.
- **Control of labour standards and prices:** An online advertising monopoly holds the power to set industry-wide labour standards and prices. This can pose disadvantages for workers and consumers.
- **Economic centralization threat:** An economic monopoly controls large market shares and thereby deprives other actors of economic opportunities.
- **Surveillance threat:** Targeted online advertising is based on the collection of vast amounts of personal user data and usage behaviour that is stored, analyzed, and passed on to advertising customers. Modern societies are stratified, which means that certain groups and individuals compete with others for the control of resources, consider others as their opponents, benefit from certain circumstances at the expense of others, etc. Therefore information about personal preferences and individual behaviour can cause harm to individuals if it gets into the hand of their opponents or others who might have an interest in harming them. Large-scale data gathering and surveillance in a society that is based on the principle of competition poses certain threats to the wellbeing of all citizens. Therefore special privacy protection mechanisms are needed. All large collections of data pose the threat of being accessed by individuals who want to harm others. If such collections are owned privately, then access to data might be sold because there is an economic interest in accumulating money. Humans, who live in modern societies, have an inherent interest in controlling, which personal data about them is stored and is available to whom because they are facing systemic threats of being harmed by others. Large collections of personal information pose under the given modern circumstances the threat that humans can be harmed because their foes, opponents, or rivals in private or professional life can potentially gain access to such data. Since 9/11, there has been an extension and intensification of state surveillance that is based on the argument that security from terrorism is more important than privacy. But state surveillance is prone to failure, and the access of state institutions to large online collections about citizens (as for example enabled by the USA PATRIOT Act) not only poses the possibility for detecting terrorists, but also the threat that a large number of citizens is considered as potential criminals or terrorists without having committed any crimes and the threat that the state obtains a huge amount of information about the private lives of citizens that the latter consider worth protecting (as for example: political views, voting decisions, sexual preferences and relationships, friendship statuses).

Many popular science accounts of Google are celebratory, whereas a lot of social science analyses point out the dangers of the company. One should go beyond one-sided assessments of Google and think dialectically: Google is at the same time the best and the worst that has ever happened on the Internet. Google is evil like the figure of Satan and good like the figure of God. It is the dialectical Good Evil. Google is part of the best Internet practices because it services can enhance and support the everyday life of humans. It can help them to find and organize information, to access public information, to communicate and co-operate with others. Google has the potential to greatly advance the cognition, communication and co-operation of humans in society. It is a manifestation of the productive and socializing forces of the Internet. The problem is not the technologies provided by Google, but the capitalist relations of production, in which these technologies are organized. The problem is that Google for providing its services necessarily has to exploit users and to engage in the surveillance and commodification of user-oriented data.

Marx spoke in this context of the antagonism of the productive forces and the relations of production: "the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production. […] From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution" (Marx 1859:263).

> "In the development of productive forces there comes a stage when productive forces and means of intercourse are brought into being, which, under the existing relationships, only cause mischief, and are no longer productive but destructive forces (machinery and money); and connected with this a class is called forth, which has to bear all the burdens of society without enjoying its advantages, which, ousted from society, is forced into the most decided antagonism to all other classes; a class which forms the majority of all members of society" (Marx and Engels 1846:60).

The class relations framing Google, in which all Google users and web users are exploited by Google and in which the privacy of all of these individuals is necessarily violated by Google's business activities, are destructive forces – they destroy consumer privacy and human's interest in being protected from exploitation.

Google's cognitive, communicative and co-operative potentials point beyond capitalism. The social and co-operative dimension of the corporate web 2.0 anticipates and points towards "elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant" (Marx 1871:335); new relations, which mature "within the framework of the old society" (Marx 1859:263); "new forces and new passions" that "spring up in the bosom of society, forces and passions which feel themselves to be fettered by that society" (Marx and Engels 1848:928); "antithetical forms", which are "concealed in society" and "mines to explode it" (Marx 1857/1858:159).

Google is a sorcerer of capitalism, it calls up a spell that questions capitalism itself:

> "Modem bourgeois society with its relations of production, of exchange, and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells" (Marx and Engels 1848:214).

At the level of the technological productive forces, we see that Google advances socialization, the co-operative and common character of the online-productive forces: Google tools are available for free, Google Documents allows the collaborative creation of documents; GMail, Blogger, and Buzz enable social networking and communication, YouTube supports sharing videos, Google Scholar and Google Books help better access worldwide academic knowledge, etc. These are all applications that can give great benefits to humans. But at the level of the relations of production, Google is a profit-oriented, advertising-financed moneymaking machine that turns users and their data into a commodity. And the result is large-scale surveillance and the immanent undermining of liberal democracy's intrinsic privacy value. Liberal democratic values thereby constitute their own limit and immanent critique. So on the level of the productive forces, Google and other web 2.0 platforms anticipate a commons-based public Internet from which all benefit, whereas the freedom (free service access) that it provides is now enabled by online surveillance and user commodification that threatens consumer privacy. Google is a prototypical example for the antagonisms between networked productive forces and capitalist relations of production of the information economy (Fuchs 2008).

"The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them" (Marx and Engels 1848:215). Google's immanent potentials that can enhance human life are limited by Google's class character – they cannot be realized within capitalism. The critical discussions that maintain that Google advances surveillance society, point towards Google's immanent limit as capitalist company.

Google is an antagonistic way of organizing human knowledge. Marx pointed out that knowledge and other

productive forces constitute barriers to capital:

> "The barrier to capital is that this entire development proceeds in a contradictory way, and that the working-out of the productive forces, of general wealth etc., knowledge etc., appears in such a way that [...] this antithetical form is itself fleeting, and produces the real conditions of its own suspension" (Marx 1857/1858:541f).

Google has created the real conditions of its own suspension.

It is a mistake to argue that Google should be dissolved or to say that alternatives to Google are needed or to say that its services are a danger to humanity. Rather, Google would loose its antagonistic character if it were expropriated and transformed into a public, non-profit, non-commercial organization that serves the common good. Google permanently expropriates and exploits Internet users by commodifying their content and user data. The best solution is the expropriation of the Google expropriator – the transformation of Google into a public search engine. Google stands at the same time for the universal and the particular interests on the Internet. It represents the idea of the advancement of an Internet that benefits humanity and the reality of the absolute exploitation of humanity for business purposes. Google is the universal exploiter and has created technologies that can advance a universal humanity if humans in an act of universal appropriation act as universal subject and free themselves and these technologies from exploitative class relations.

Karl Marx stressed that the globalization of production and circulation necessitates institutions that allow individuals to inform themselves on complex conditions. He said that "institutions emerge whereby each individual can acquire information about the activity of all others and attempt to adjust his own accordingly" and that these "interconnections" are enabled by "mails, telegraphs etc" (Marx 1857/58:161). Is this passage not the perfect description of the concept of the search engine? We can therefore say that Larry Page and Sergey Brin did not invent Google, but that rather the true inventor of the search engine and of Google was Karl Marx. But if Marx's thinking is crucial for the concept of the search engine, shouldn't we then think about the concept of a public search engine?

How could a public search engine look like? Google services could be run by non-profit organizations, for example universities (Maurer, Balke, Kappe, Kulathuramaiyer, Weber and Zaka 2007:74), and supported by public funding. A service like Google Books could then serve humanity by making the knowledge of all books freely available to all humans without drawing private profit from it. A public search engine does not require advertising funding if it is a non-profit endeavour. Thereby the exploitation and surveillance of users could be avoided and the privacy violation issues that are at the heart of Google could be avoided. Establishing a public Google were the dissolution of the private business of Google. This may only be possible by establishing a commons-based Internet in a commons-based society. For doing so, first steps in the class struggle for a just humanity and a just Internet are needed. These include for example the suggestion to require Google by law to make advertising an opt-in option and to surveil the surveillor by creating and supporting Google watchdog organizations that document the problems and antagonisms of Google. Google's 20% policy is on the one hand pure capitalist ideology that wants to advance profit maximization. On the other hand, it makes sense that unions pressure Google to make these 20% of work time really autonomous from Google's control. If this could be established in a large company like Google, then a general demand for a reduction of labour time without wage decreases were easier to attain. Such a demand is a demand for the increase of the autonomy of labour from capital.

Another Google is possible, but this requires class struggle for and against Google in order to set free the humanistic (cognitive, communicative, co-operative) potentials of Google by overcoming its class relations.

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A Notion of Faces Not Laws: Facebook as Ideological Platform

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In the figure of "Big Brother," George Orwell[1] gives us a generic version of the totalitarian leader-image, the face of an all-seeing state power at once governmental and familial. Big Brother is the big Other personified, a symbol of the power of the state that is specifically not the power of the individual; its design hides the average person's own role in propping up the totalitarian order, while suggesting that the gaze of the state is protective, like that of an older sibling. In Facebook, we have another figure of power, not a single still image but a dynamic and interactive social network of friendly faces. A more subtle but real commercial power interest—rather than that of the state—pervades a collection of overlapping connections: friendly, familial, fraternal, collegial, professional.

In Facebook, the face of Big Brother has been replaced by the actual face of your big brother (sister, in my case). And your work friend. And your college roommate. And that person you had a crush on but never asked out. And that face you cannot place but did not refuse to "friend" because you don't want to hurt anyone's feelings to no purpose. You are watching them and they are watching you and you "like" this and they "like" that and the marketers are watching it all and figuring you out. In the future, your desires will appear before you as options to buy with uncanny speed and accuracy, things you did not even know you wanted and likely do not need: options for identity, channels for communication, venues for community commoditized.

Digital Disclosure

I saw a student walking across campus the other day wearing a T-shirt that read, "Got privilege?" Yes, I have always lived as a digital "have." My parents bought a computer when I was very young and I had my own by junior high school. I played my Atari and, for a short period, "visited" online bulletin boards to play the early precursors to today's Massively Multi-Player Online Games. I was formally inducted into the geek elite in 1987 when, to begin my junior year of high school, I moved from my parents' house in Wilmington, North Carolina to the "New Dorm" at the then seven year old North Carolina School of Science and Math. The dorms were not yet networked, but I was assigned an email address usable on the nascent internet. The few times I went to the computer lab to use it, I got my first glimpses of the vanguard of the e-ttached: the small class of people who felt more powerful and self-realized at a slave terminal than in their walking-around reality that they now call IRL, in real life. I overheard them snickering about bombing each other's accounts with automatic spam mailings. I didn't exactly recoil from this expanding virtual life, but I walked away. This was not my crowd, I thought, in a teenage way, oblivious that I was passing up a front row seat and potential role to play in the invention of our future. As awkward as I was, I did not want to mediate my friendships. Face to face still meant sharing space; Skype was science fiction. Over time, the e-ttached class learned marketing and found ways to satisfy the technical and psychological barriers to web use. Computer usage soared and the chiropractors celebrated. The Revenge of the Nerds.

In graduate school, I flirted with the idea of making technology a major part of my intellectual work and identity. I took graduate courses on rhetoric, technology, and the New Economy. I designed academic websites (such as Fastcapitalism) and did a little freelance web work for a dot com startup—can you say "cognitive dissonance"? After I finished my schooling, my interest in technology waned somewhat. I no longer code and I'm no early adapter. This year, I became one of the last people I know to begin text messaging through my phone, when my seventy year old father suggested that I do so. I have thus far successfully ignored the social pressure to Twitter.

I have, though, frittered away hours on Facebook. I have hundreds of "friends," most of whom I can identify if I think hard enough about it. I like to see "where they are now" (when I can remember who they are). I enjoy sharing a new cultural find and benefitting from the discoveries of others: new books, obscure films, recovered videos of favorite musicians on Youtube. Facebook is fun and noisy—a party line. Facebook also has its traps, and investigating these traps is the best way to recognize its true nature. Most users log on to Facebook to network and as a diversion, but Facebook's fundamental purpose is marketing.

I spent about an hour a day for a couple of weeks playing a game on Facebook called City of Wonder. In this game, you grow the population of your city by building houses that produce "people" and then you satisfy the "happiness" needs of people with other "cultural" buildings. To generate "silver" you build yet more buildings that produce various goods. Or you can pay real money with Paypal for "gold." (I am tempted to put "real money" in quotes because all money has a virtual aspect to it, and for the people who play it, even the toy silver has value. Money works because we believe in it, not because of its intrinsic value). The game strikes me as an interesting lesson in economics for a grade school audience. But, as one of my clever students pointed out, these Facebook games are like "the button" from the TV show Lost. You sacrifice your time to the need to click it over and over and you feel a real urgency to do so, but you aren't sure why. It was this student's insight that helped me decide that this experiment had gone on long enough[2]. Was the game named for the fact that it takes a little while for you to Wonder why you are wasting your creative energy helping to build this virtual space?

The most popular game on your Facebook, recently surpassing Farmville, is now another City model called CityVille, which I chose not to play because to even start playing you have to agree to waive privacy rights: to give the game company access to "basic information" ("Includes name, profile picture, gender, networks, user ID, list of friends, and any other information I've shared with everyone."); the right for the game company to send you email outside of Facebook; and the right for the game to post to your "Wall," which means that the game makes public announcements within your network of friends about your activity. Those permissions have to do with limiting what information Facebook gives to CityVille. This game demands enough information from Facebook to recognize you, to represent you to yourself and other players with the right picture and such, and the right to market itself using your Facebook page. These permissions say nothing about how CityVille will treat information it gets from your activity within its game, the information it doesn't need to request from Facebook but that you give it directly. What you do inside the game… well, that is fair game. If you "drill down" to learn more about the privacy rights, you see that CityVille has been certified with the reassuringly named TRUSTe Privacy Seal. You have to read on to discover that the purpose of this mark is to inspire trust in users. The TRUSTe policy does not indicate that information is

not shared. To get this mark, the company only needs to communicate whether it shares your information and make a good faith effort to protect your data from unintentional breaches. Furthermore, the privacy policy communicates that the company does share your data with other companies.

In other words, you can trust CityVille not to pretend it won't share your data. If you assume this trust extends to actually keeping your privacy, that assumption is your own silliness at work. At this time, the game is only one month old but already has 61.7 million users. It seems that many Facebookers do not share my concerns about privacy. Facebook and Zynga can fairly claim that they have not shared user information without warning. The precise nature of the door that users have to open in order to let this game in is unclear. From my reading, I have to assume that, other than a reasonable effort not to expose credit card information, there is little protection. After all, the sharing of fungible information is not a minimal necessity; it is the whole point of the platform from the point of view of the service providers. This door would be better described as a network of channels. We may not know for years what rights these millions of users have clicked away for access to a seemingly innocuous diversion, building a virtual toy city.

Hardly an unmitigated evil, Facebook's downsides are easy to ignore—not just the loss of privacy with its open-ended consequences, but also the drawbacks that cynics have warned us about regarding civilization and its technologies for years, such as if when we fail to connect authentically with what and who is near because we are so busy clicking into the void and twittering over distances. Facebook's upsides are obvious. The primary benefit of Facebook is that it offers an easy way to connect and reconnect with family, friends, and acquaintances—often superficially, of course, but not always. I have watched Facebook facilitate a family reunion between the estranged members of the family of someone very near to me. Depending on how it is used, Facebook has the capacity to enrich lives in certain and tangible ways.

As big and cosmopolitan as Facebook is, it has a small town aspect to it. Facebook was modeled on university face books, which were designed for students to get to know each other more easily. Facebook was originally restricted to campuses, and was a way for someone to make friends on campus and, as the film The Social Network emphasizes, a way to get status and get laid. Once Facebook relinquished its exclusivity model by opening to internet users outside of universities, a different set of social concerns came into play. In distinct contrast to some of its precursors (like sexed up MySpace), Facebook is not just a space for peers and most people do not treat it like a fantasy space. Facebookers often "friend" not just their friends but also parents and children, teachers and students, and coworkers of all types. Individuals tend to interact differently with different audiences. Most people say they would tell a story to their parents differently than they would tell a close friend or sibling or people at work. Those who "friend" people from all areas of their lives, though, learn to project a more generic self to Facebook. For many kids, their self-presentation has to be appropriate for peers and parents. For adults, it must cross the personal and professional boundary. And so this image of self is not at all the liberating anonymous self that people used to talk about in connection with cyberspace. Facebook is not a "puppet motel," the name Laurie Anderson used for anonymous chat rooms or virtual spaces where a sleazy atmosphere prevails. The atmosphere of Facebook is playful but also highly constrained by social expectations.

When people deride Facebook, the criticisms are usually not very deeply felt. For instance, people express amazement—in a condescending voice—about what others post: "Do they really think we care what they are eating?" But social games and phatic communication do have value. Doesn't friendship and family interaction always entail some degree of patience with, even care for, the banalities of others? The advertisements, well, those we have long been accustomed to. It is easy to disdain the lowest common denominator offerings of commercial culture, which addict us with its junk food and junk thought. The better offerings of commercial culture, like inexpensive novels, affordable basic goods, higher-quality television, and useful "free" websites like Google and Facebook—these are the things that make commercial culture practically impossible to resist.

What distinguishes these games and other interactions from a nice game of Scrabble with friends for me is that they are mediated by a large corporation (beyond the one time purchase of a game). It isn't new for commercials to try to insinuate products into family and other social contexts, but the interactive nature of Facebook makes this insinuation that much more effective. Meeting up in Facebook can be as much like taking frequent trips to a casino as like gathering in a family-owned restaurant or in one's home. As glad as I am for how virtual communities like Facebook facilitate connections with others, these connections also strike me as a consolation prize for the alienation from more authentic forms of community that societal change has brought. I wonder whether these consolations, like prescription drugs, make it more easy for us to endure contemporary social arrangements and estrangements, to be less likely to reach out for the more rewarding interactions that are available, and to be less likely to demand

rewards that aren't available—including a more just and humane social order.

And yet, an honest consideration of Facebook requires that we consider both its disadvantages and its advantages: first, how Facebook makes private social interactions public in a way that further privatizes and commodifies social space and the public sphere; second, how Facebook as a figure of the emerging shape of social life is substantially different than the figure of Big Brother, opening up opportunities for real-time cooperation and facilitating the sharing of ideas (and not just to marketers and advertisers).

Becoming the Tools of our Tools

During the Clinton presidency, we heard a lot about the digital divide, "haves" and "have nots." Disparities of access to technology (access to access) are a major concern; also of concern is the obligation to use. The cynic Diogenes warned Athenians about dependence on material things as a primary obstacle to self-reliance and true philosophy. We feel this when the power goes out and demands a change in our routine, but the power comes back on and we forget the lesson. We won't soon forget the lesson of the automobile, however. We have built our cities around the automobile and the ideological assumption that we would always be able to move quickly cheaply. Now that the costs have become more obvious, the ideology of car use is written into physical reality. The location of people's homes presents a fairly substantial obstacle between us and a more intelligent arrangement that would require less moving around and make mass transit more functional. On top of the expense of moving homes is people's attachments to them. There you have the cynical critique in a nutshell: There are actual and emotional reasons that people won't live the good life—each new "convenience" adds another so-called reason.

Diogenes' warning, echoed by figures like Henry David Thoreau and Herbert Marcuse, has gained relevance with the passage of time, as technology has crept, then rolled, and then flashed at light speed. Technology is seductive and few have the desire or discipline to do without devices. Elite technologists invent and enjoy disproportionate control over standards and so arguably experience a less alienating relationship to technology. For the rest of us "haves," though, a lingering doubt remains about the effect of technological speedup on our quality of life and our participation as citizens. Being wired (or wireless, for that matter) means being advantageously connected, yes. It also means being "roped in," and not just into that unconvincingly "ergonomic" desk chair.

The traditional cynical solution is to distinguish between needs and wants and to be radically parsimonious about the extras. Diogenes gave up his cup after seeing a boy drink from his hands. Thoreau moved to the woods for a period. Most of us, though, are not ready to make such an experiment, much less to make such a commitment. How does one determine whether a device is a need or a want? It is a question of simplicity, but not a simple question. For my part, I don't expect an opportunity to unplug myself for a period greater than two weeks any time soon. Though my usage is not particularly forward-thinking or extreme, many of my daily rituals involve gadgets. Perhaps not all of my peers would cop to such dependence, but most people I know a generation younger than myself or more would find it at least as difficult to imagine an uncomputed life.

For me, as now for the rapidly-expanding class of wired people, technologies are tools, interfaces, and social spaces. They have become my mainline to writing, in the normal sense of the word, and, also as I think of writing more broadly, as the ongoing, collaborative composition of the social world. Asked to write more than thirty words with pen, I long for a keyboard. Computers have trained me to type, and my hand no longer likes to scribble. As the old cultural ways atrophy and new ways become normal, the implements that support them become cultural fixtures. You can opt out, but to do so means opting out of avenues to community and influence within those communities, which, though we may consider them less authentic, become more central in their cultural importance all the time. Technology has become a major component of my ideology and of most people's, at least in the sense of "ideology" that refers not to a set of opinions but to actual behaviors and rituals that integrate people into social structures. Insofar as electronic devices determine our actual behavior on a day to day basis, it is not too much to say that ideology is engineered.

Platform as Ideological Support

John Adams envisioned the United States as a nation of laws, not men. His idea was that legal codes would

apply to each person equally, not being subject to the whims of powerful individuals, and offer equal protection. There would be no king or Big Brother above the law. There are other codes, though (not legal codes but having legal status as intellectual property) that have increasing influence on the way we live, the shape of community, and the distribution of power. Codes make up the computer applications that we program and that program our lives in turn. It is entirely appropriate that news outlets so closely follow the jockeying between Facebook, Google, and Microsoft, because their market shares dictate their power to construct our technological environment.

Tools meet users halfway. That is to say, the designers make tools and platforms with users in mind, to appeal. Many devices and applications never catch on, and most users will only adjust their behavior to a tool gradually. To be widely adopted, a tool has to have at least some functions that are already in great demand or are easy to learn, intuitive. Once hooked, though, people change their behavior in radical ways in keeping with what their tools—and the changing environment that these tools together represent—have to offer. For instance, the fact that I can access my files from any networked computer changes my relationship to space in real ways. I can work anywhere. The fact that I can text people wherever they are changes my relationship to time. I can alter my plans at a moment's notice. On the other hand, others may now expect me to work everywhere or to change my plans instantly.

The movement from pen to keyboard or from a paper file to an electronic file is not a movement from nature to technology. It is a movement from mechanical technology to electronic technology. Technology is mostly visible when it changes. By those definitions of ideology that see visible options as less ideological and invisible or automatic habits as more ideological, a given piece of technology becomes more ideological as people get used to it as it becomes imbricated with our ways of life. More and more people are developing the skills needed to adapt to new technologies, and effective design makes using new tools more intuitive. As such, part of the dynamic of "fast capitalism" is a new situation in which ideology incorporates change faster. We have choices and purchase new practices from a dizzying array of options; however, as various platforms get more popular, the social pressure increases to text message, Facebook and twitter.

The social pressure to use communication technologies—"You don't have a cellphone?!"—warns against interpreting the availability of consumer choices as a clear avenue to freedom. The fact that control over the development of new technologies is distributed widely through complex economic relationships does not mean there is no coercive element to the adoption of new technoideologies. Is my consent really consent when, with everyone around me participating, it doesn't feel like there are real alternatives? I know that Facebook seeks to exploit my connection to friends and family, but I do it anyway. This is ideological cynicism as defined by Peter Sloterdijk, as when you see something is amiss in your way of living but don't change. It is the polar opposite of Diogenean cynicism, which sought to reject false needs and maximize individual autonomy and intellectual development through a conscious practice of material poverty.

Yet, the speedup of technological change may point to a different sort of ideological dynamic than what Sloterdijk diagnosed, his idea of ideology as cynical intransigence. This other technoideological development, an increased plasticity of ideology, is amoral: computer programming as social programming, e-pedagogy for us all. Pedagogy has always sought to shape practice. Now pedagogy can be designed into virtual and actual environments and updated wirelessly.

I think the word "platform" is helpful when thinking about what it means to think of Facebook as a material, environmental structure of ideology. In politics, "platform" refers to the doctrine of a party; in computing, "platform" refers to a framework for running applications (strictly speaking, a platform goes between an operating system and other applications, so that it doesn't matter if you are surfing the web on a Mac or PC, for instance); in economics, "platform" refers to a device that mediates between suppliers and consumers (television mediates between advertisers and viewers; credit cards mediate between cardholders and merchants). Facebook provides platforms in only the latter two senses. It is not a political platform, but that doesn't mean that its platforms are not politically significant. Facebook and its applications facilitate and encourage networking within and between people of all political mindsets, but they are nevertheless ideological, because they mediate and channel our actions and interactions. Facebook's platform bypasses the pesky obstacles of opinion and reflection. It influences behaviors directly, supporting certain kinds of habits (linking, status updating, gaming) and mediating between consumers and marketers.

Another platform would be the Amazon website, which is primarily an interface between a seller and its customers, and secondarily a place for people to share their opinions about products (a "consumer community"). Facebook, by contrast, seems on the surface to be primarily designed to encourage interactions between friends, but the bottom-line purpose of Facebook is like that of commercial television: to create a platform connecting people and marketing

agents. The great advance of Facebook from a marketing standbook is that its friendly networking context creates an environment in which users readily reveal information that can inform marketing efforts. Advertisements update in real time based upon what users do and say; beyond this, marketers can use the information they gather to make all kinds of decisions about future products and marketing efforts.

Facebook-native games allow you to buy your "friends" virtual objects. You can pay with real money or fake money that it takes time to accumulate, in which case you are paying with your attention to advertisements. As described above, these applications often require that you give access to personal information in order to play them. Facebook has claimed that unless users specifically give this permission, its automated triggering of advertisement does not also give "partners" information about the practices of individuals. This claim has not gone unchallenged. There are suits pending in Rhode Island regarding a series of privacy breaches against Facebook and Zynga, the creator of its most popular games [3]. And even when users are given the opportunity to deny permission to share information, they seem to assume very readily that giving permission will be harmless.

The Bearable Lightness of Relationship Marketing

Facebook is not just a real platform. It is also a figure for all of the various social networks and commercial mechanisms that teach us to channel our self expression in ways that benefit the efficiency of marketing, that teach us to see our purchases and commercial affiliations as signs of identity (Mac, Windows, or Linux?; iPhone or Blackberry?; Farmville or CityVille?) and make us more accustomed to marketing surveillance (like the "savings clubs" in the supermarket that track our purchases). Our willing participation in market research has made capitalism incredibly responsive to consumer desire. Based upon what you choose, it anticipates what you might want and strikes preemptively. Every time Facebook shows me someone I may know (because we have "friends" in common) or Amazon alerts me to a new translation by an author whose works I have purchased in the past, I have reason to be glad they are watching. Each little reward makes me that much less likely to regard all this watching as intrusive. The friendliness of commercial surveillance lowers my guard. Why should I worry for my freedom? This isn't Nineteen Eighty-Four and it isn't the government watching me. Yet, isn't this lack of concern for commercial surveillance consonant with the quiet acceptance of the Patriot Act with its expensive and (I would argue) unconstitutional gathering of information without probable cause?

In the transition from Big Brother to Facebook, the experience of control is transformed. Big Brother announces itself as a coercive top-down force bent on criminalizing pleasure and creativity. Big Brother is dark, a figure of the new dark age, with its medievalesque repression of sexuality and free thought. Facebook—or more precisely the economic social order of which Facebook represents an example and for which Facebook provides a perfect figure—is all light: a mirthful celebration of individuality and expression. "Light" can also describe the relationship to consequences we experience in Facebook. The commercial purpose of Facebook as a medium is overshadowed by the social messages of its participants. Users feel the social consequences of Facebook far more immediately than its economic ones. If you post something that offends your friends on Facebook, you can experience social consequences, and I would not want to deny that these consequences are actual. Yet, we hardly see these consequences as consequences of the medium. We think of them as relationships between individuals. The figure of Big Brother is a dark, imposing presence that announces its control over relationships. Facebook is a bright, facilitating presence, which wins adherents by making its ideological function as subtle as possible.

Describing Facebook's efforts to surpass Google in the area of email by making the technology of messaging quicker and less obtrusive, Andrew Bosworth, the director of engineering at Facebook, has said, "The future of messaging is more real time, more conversational and more casual…. The medium isn't the message. The message is the message." It was Marshall McLuhan's message that the way we communicate has societal effects over and above the content of individual communications. It is no surprise that the message Facebook wants to send is opposite to McLuhan's warning. It is helpful to Facebook's effort to use social networking to facilitate marketing that we do not reflect upon the impacts of the medium, that we readily relinquish our privacy rights in order to play a game we know nothing about.

In Nineteen Eighty-Four, resistance to Big Brother is real because it is risky. Saying "no" to Facebook is an "unbearably light" act. You can say, "I don't Facebook because I don't have time" and the most you risk is mild mocking and fewer invitations to social events. If you say, "I don't do Facebook because it represents yet another

way that the mighty profit motive, the root of all evil, the love of money, binds itself into our lives," your political pretensions may be mocked, but still the Thought Police will not break down your door. The genius of Facebook and its analogues is this: If, after a time on Facebook, you decide that having your friendships commercialized is distasteful and decide to destroy your account, this act will not be seen as a rejection of technology-dependence or commercialism, it will be seen as a withdrawal from community and a rejection of friends.

The Compromises of Cynicism

The tradition of cynicism has been prophetic in its description of how our vision of the good can by narrowed by dependence on material goods. Yet, cynicism has usually been an experiment rather than a complete commitment. According to anecdotes, Diogenes refused certain conveniences as a rhetorical act that communicated his objections to the cultural assumptions and practices at the core of the Athenian way of life. Yet, Diogenes also chose to live in Athens off of its excesses. He did not reject Athens completely by leaving. His philosophy was a way of living better within the city. Likewise, Thoreau's experiment in Walden was incomplete. He did not live permanently in the cabin he built there. He took a break from his periods of isolation by visiting his mother, who did his laundry. Cynical experiments have deep significance for modern life, in which technological speedup continues to mediate our social lives in deeper and deeper ways; however, it would be easy to overestimate the degree to which experiments in disimbrication can release us from our social nature. Their examples inspire us to give serious reconsideration of which of our apparent needs may actually be dubious wants in disguise and whether the values of our culture are as healthy as they could be; however, neither Diogenes nor Thoreau gave us reason to believe that a complete escape from social demands is the path to Enlightenment for the individual or even a real possibility. In fact, there is at times a distinctly anti-social quality to the behavior of the great cynics, whether it is wanking in the agora or refusing to pay taxes. Such gestures are hardly simple to evaluate. When social life crushes the individual or maintains more than one set of standards, as in a nation of men not laws, it is oppressive; however, the ideology of the individual with its debt to the cynical tradition can also threaten more authentic forms of community involvement. I think of the contemporary Tea Party, which seems unable to distinguish the rights of individuals from the power of corporations, paranoid regarding state power but blind to the abuses of Capital.

I hope I have made clear my misgivings about the rising dominance of Facebook due to how it commercializes our actual practices (our very lives) and gives corporations even more personal information that can be used to manipulate us, to further confuse our needs and wants. Unlike medieval religion and the system in Nineteen Eighty-Four, commercial culture does not control us by telling us our desires are base; rather, it satisfies every desire that it profitably can, relieving some of the frustration that might lead us to demand a better order. Big Brother subordinates the individual to the group through suppression; social networking achieves the same result through appeasement and flattery. At the same time, I see that the same interactive nature that makes our imbrications with things complete also opens up increased opportunities for cooperation and sharing of ideas. We should not dismiss too quickly what opportunities platforms like Facebook may offer. Can't we also find some hope in the ascendance of a cultural figure that celebrates both the individual and the social? Can we see each person's Facebook page as a leaf of grass, as in Walt Whitman's metaphor for democratic community? Can Facebook help us sing the body electric? Or is it yet another mechanism by which we indebt ourselves to the company store?

Far from being threatened by information, Facebook profits off the rapid and unimpeded flow of messages. The profit motive still operates, to be sure, but its impact on the content is not the same as in previous platforms like television. Facebook isn't neutral in terms of form—the medium favors shorter messages and videos and addicting games—but it is far more neutral in terms of the opinions contained within the messages. Facebook behavior, make no mistake, is ideological behavior; that behavior is more directly guided by engineering than ever before, bypassing for the most part the complicating factor of opinion. The content of your thoughts while you Facebook do not need to align with any particular perspective; so long as you keep participating, almost any content will do as matter to mine for marketers. The source of messages is no longer centralized and the efficiency of the system means that smaller audiences are viable sources of profit to keep the system running. Because it profits through its ability to move messages cheaply and wants to move more and more without regard for the content, users legitimately enjoy more control over what information is passed. In this sense, Facebook is more democratic than, say, a movie studio, which has to be rather selective about what kinds of cultural productions it promotes because of the expense of

production. This excessive quality of content opens up a significant degree of democracy in the sharing of ideas.

I shared Thanksgiving with my family at the California home of my sister, an hour north of Los Angeles, where my cousin Gina works as a documentary filmmaker. After telling me about her latest project, The 6th Extinction [4], she asked me what I was writing, and I gave her my cynical take on Facebook. Given the fact that her project explores the thesis that there are too many human beings on the planet and that we are causing a mass extinction on par with the other five mass extinctions that have occurred in the last five million years, I expected her to be more negative about Facebook, which is itself a great energy-sucking behemoth. She brought to the issue, though, the perspective of a documentary filmmaker who does not make Hollywood blockbusters, for whom funding is always an issue, and for whom social networking provides a great opportunity to reach out to supporters.

I was already somewhat familiar with this concept of "crowd financing" or "crowdfunding" because I have been a member for four years of Kiva.org, a social networking website that allows you to make no-interest microloans. Gina gave me the links to a couple of similar sites that are designed to help film makers get funding, IndieGoGo and Kickstarter. Filmmakers use Facebook to create a social network of supporters and people with relevant concerns, which they can then refer over to the crowd-financing sites when they have a project in development. People give money because they like the filmmakers, appreciate their work, or want to help bring attention to an issue they care about. This provides an example of how social networking can support collective action in a way that raises the level of discourse. A film does not have to be profitable or find a wealthy patron to get made if its social value can be made evident to enough people. Facebook is, at its core, a marketing platform, but one with democratic potential that can be turned to creative, beneficial use.

Big Brother is a single, gloom-stricken face demanding devotion and submission. It is a symbol of the totalitarian state's false promise to care for its citizens. In Facebook, we see our own friendly faces represented alongside those of others to whom we are already devoted (to some degree). The figure of Facebook suggests a state of freedom facilitated by consumer capitalism. This "freedom" is neither as false and oppressive as that in Nineteen Eighty-Four nor as uncompromised as pro-capitalism types tend to assume. I don't use Big Brother as a foil to Facebook in order to suggest that we should regard social networks as totalitarian or that we should reject them altogether in the tradition of ethical cynicism. Facebooking can be made to serve higher ends, but this mode of use is not the default. Facebook is not Big Brother, but as with Big Brother, it is designed for us but not primarily for our benefit. What is true about capitalism in general is true about Facebook, the vanguard of its ideological support. The most fervent supporters of capitalism defend lightly-regulated markets by comparing the social system they have helped create to totalitarian, so-called communist societies, as if the big political question has only one answer out of two possibilities. This is, of course, a false choice. Just because we are not enslaved to a false god like Big Brother or Stalin does not mean that we are realizing our power in the best possible way.

Endnotes

1. Thank you Becky Scarborough for your papers on Orwell in my Critical Theory class that got me thinking about the contemporary meaning of the figure of Big Brother.

2. Thank you to Daniel Landon for this clever observation.

3. "Facebook and Zynga Face Lawsuits over Privacy Breach," Wall Street Journal. October 19, 2002. Online. http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2010/10/19/facebook-and-zynga-face-lawsuits-over-privacy-breach/

4. http://6thextinctiondoc.com/

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A Research Agenda for Social Media Surveillance

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Introduction

In comparing one type of information leak to another, a comedian portraying Julian Assange stated, "I give you private information on corporations for free, and I'm a villain. [Facebook creator Mark] Zuckerberg gives your information to corporations, for money, and he's [Time Magazine's] Man of the Year" (SNL 2010). The real Assange had much harsher words for Facebook, calling it "the most appalling spying machine that has ever been invented" (Emmett 2011). Facebook is now synonymous with surveillance. Interpersonal, institutional, and other kinds of scrutiny take place on social media. Moreover, they interact with each other in ways that scholars and users are only beginning to understand. The full consequences of social media's expansion remain to be felt. Uncertain conditions of visibility are a certainty on social media.

In adopting a surveillance studies approach, this paper will examine the complex and multi-faceted nature of social media. Facebook and other social media are online services where users submit personal information for any number of reasons. Surveillance on social media involves numerous kinds of watchers. These include friends, family and employers, but also law enforcement agencies and those who control sites like Facebook. This paper reflects on the growth of social media services, and considers their implications for surveillance studies. It proposes a framework for understanding how social media brings together different social spheres, making a range of personal data from those spheres searchable and visible. It also considers two topics that warrant specific focus: investigative surveillance on social media and surveillance by social media developers themselves. This approach is aligned with a science and technology studies perspective that focuses on technologies as they are taken up in society (Grint and Woolgar 1997; Nye 2006). Such a perspective highlights the design stage as well as the circumstances surrounding technological growth. Facebook is perpetually redesigning itself, and its overall trajectory remains opaque to users.

While scholars from various disciplines are studying social media, the increased visibility of personal information through services like Facebook makes them a crucial topic for surveillance studies. This perspective considers surveillance to be the focused and systematic collection of personal information (Lyon 2001). Moreover, the leak is the principal means by which information from one context migrates to other contexts. Leaks often result from malice or incompetence, but Facebook operates precisely to exchange information from one context to another. The leak becomes standard. Surveillance practices result in privacy violations (boyd 2008), but also compromised social relations, social sorting, and an ever-mutating political economy of personal information (Cohen 2008). Surveillance on social media comprises a range of activities, from casual, consensual sociality to covert scrutiny. We can distinguish between instances that are harmless and those that have devastating effects, but they operate on the same interface and use the same information. Moreover, harmless surveillance on social media can trigger harmful consequences, as sites like Facebook lift the boundaries separating peer sociality from large-scale information management and social sorting.

This paper addresses social media more generally, with Facebook as its focal point. In less than eight years, Facebook has accumulated nearly one billion users (FB Statistics 2011). These users share their lives with each other, including over thirty billion pieces of content per month (ibid.). Facebook was launched for university students,

but its users have become demographically and culturally vast. As well, businesses, employers, and politicians now maintain a presence on the site. These official presences enable public relations and promotional efforts, but they also facilitate watching over a specific population, market, or demographic. Facebook and other social media carry a significant cultural impact. These technologies are synonymous with new media communication. Yet on first pass, services like Facebook are quite unremarkable. Facebook does not perform any novel functions: its users exchange personal information and other digital media in a routine manner. Facebook's social impact can also be understated. Its users rapidly grew accustomed to sharing content with 'friends', to the point that it became yet another mundane service that is embedded in social life. Facebook is remarkable in presenting itself as being very unremarkable. Social media are almost-forgettable interfaces that mediate social relations.

Social media are now central to the visibility of personal information. They fuel contemporary identity construction through micro-level relations. A pervasive and situated engagement means that users maintain their reputations through everyday interactions. Goffman's (1959) work on staging social activity has a renewed relevance here, as social media complicates distinctions between the front and back stage in social performances. While some of Facebook's features are more public or performative than others, Facebook has a habit of leaking backstage information into the front. For example, the news feed broadcasts information that would otherwise be restricted to a more intimate audience. The routine breaching of contextual boundaries is especially troubling given the ubiquity of stigmatizing information that individuals hide from public scrutiny (Goffman 1963). As a site that is firmly rooted in multiple social realms, Facebook collects and distributes stigmatizing content. Organizations are changing their practices in response to these conditions. The fact that individuals and institutions operate on the same platform suggests a rise of cross-contextual circuits of visibility.

Facebook has undergone an exponential growth in recent years, and with this growth comes the assumption that it is a de facto site for sociality. Facebook has very quickly dispensed with its novelty, and non-users increasingly have to justify their abstention from the site. Social media are a default location for social life. By extension, they also become a default location and means for identification. This is a paradigm shift for identity construction, but also for identifying individuals. Facebook marks a consolidation of attention among individuals and institutions. Its social relevance is greatly augmented as more attention and engagement is directed towards its interface. Not only does it become the primary location to communicate with people - often in plain sight of a very broad audience - but it also becomes the first location where people are identified. Users invest their attention towards their profiles. But they also invest their reputations, as their profile comes to have a greater monopoly of their identity. Facebook's increasing control of individual identities can be compared to attempts to implement national identity cards. Identity card schemes dictate that every citizen possesses a card, and that the card becomes the frontline means to identify citizens (Lyon 2009). Yet while mandatory schemes are routinely met with resistance, Facebook's emphasis on peer relations and mutual visibility makes it a more attractive option. Moreover, social media adds a networked dimension to identity, as users are also judged by their friends' identities and content (Wills and Reeves 2009).

This paper begins by presenting an overview of surveillance features on social media. This is substantiated by a close look at Facebook's recent development, with an emphasis on cross-contextual exchanges that contribute to a mutual augmentation of surveillance practices. These findings are informed by semi-structured interviews with fifty-six individual and institutional Facebook users. Next, this paper focuses on two categories of surveillance that warrant specific attention: investigations on social media, and Facebook's own efforts to oversee its users. These kinds of monitoring matter to surveillance studies, not only because of their privileged view of social media content, but also because of a current opacity surrounding these practices. This paper identifies the properties that give these watchers a unique vantage over social data, and assesses how they affect conventional understandings of surveillance practices.

Mutual Augmentation of Social Media Surveillance

Social media surveillance is characterized by the expansive growth of these services. Social media continuously adopt new features, to an extent that challenge efforts to understand them. User experiences, scholarly descriptions, and other attempts to know social media are complicated by this growth.

In 2009, I briefly put my social media research on hold in order to focus on other projects. When returning to this research I was stunned by how outdated it had become. Basic facts about its population and valuation were

starkly inaccurate. Furthermore, Facebook had since introduced a number of features that impacted the crux of my arguments, both descriptively and analytically. I had to reconsider my research in light of what Facebook was becoming. Social media in general and Facebook in particular are growing to a degree that greatly complicates any assertion about 'what it is' or 'what it does.' This is a challenge for scholars wanting to speak authoritatively about social media. But it is also a challenge that users are facing in their prolonged engagement with the site. They invest their time and their identities when creating a presence on the site, and this investment is tied to assumptions about what the platform is, how it is used, who is using it, and what values govern its use. All of these features have changed extensively, leaving users to cope with this volatility.

Consider the introduction of the news feed in September 2006. This feature aggregates users' personal information and displays it on a prominent section of the site for others to see. Users were not prepared for this kind of exposure. They protested, but eventually accepted the feed. The news feed has become a fixture in their everyday use of the site. One student reflects on this feature, stating:

> **I remember when the News Feed was first created, the outrage that came from a great number of people. But as they got used to being able to see so much, it became an asset, I suppose, for Facebook creeping and Facebook stalking and keeping tabs on what's going on (Samantha).**

User concerns about their own exposure are tempered by Facebook's function in watching over their peers. Other changes to the interface include new kinds of information submission, new ways to distribute that information, and new privacy settings that regulate how far this information can be distributed. Users are routinely appalled by these developments, but with time and experience they come to accept Facebook as an ever-changing platform. This means that their personal information will likely be disseminated in ways that are unexpected and non-consensual. Users grow accustomed to the volatility of information control on social media.

Social media interfaces change over time. But growing user populations also hold a social impact. Facebook's recent growth comes from an older, geographically diverse population that are linked to a broader range of institutions (Madden 2010). This growing population has an impact on what it means to use Facebook, but also what it means to be seen on Facebook. It marks a growing body of personal information, as well as a rise of contexts from which this information is made meaningful. Facebook itself performs a unique kind of surveillance, and the fact that this is overlooked will be addressed below. But what is also remarkable about surveillance on Facebook is that so many kinds of watchers are involved. Facebook is a public face to a constellation of surveillant agents. In addition to speaking about these separate kinds of monitoring as part of a broader category, we can also see how each of these practices changes by virtue of adopting social media.

Understanding these effects rests on understanding how social media enable information convergence. Different kinds of audiences – and more of each of these different watchers – are turning to the same interface, to access the same information. A converging audience enables a convergence of social contexts. Personal relations are more closely linked to commerce and the workplace. Henry Jenkins (2006) describes convergence as content flows that are more liberated and volatile, notably through the rise of user-generated content. This imagery supports a leak-based view of Facebook. While information leaks were formerly exceptional and unforeseen events, Facebook's exponential increase of leaks amounts to a kind of convergence of social contexts. Facebook's continued growth amounts to a consolidation of visibility (all can be seen on one site), and of watching (all can watch on one site). Surveillance becomes democratizing and decentralized, but this convergence also facilitates a centralized kind of watching. This is important when considering that some groups may have access to information that exceeds privacy settings put in place by users, and that those groups can shield their practices from visibility and maintain a selective presence on the site.

Formerly discrete surveillance practices feed off each other through their prolonged engagement with Facebook. This mutual augmentation is a product of social media's social convergence. In order to understand mutual augmentation, consider three tangible kinds of surveillance: (a) individuals watching over one another, (b) institutions watching over a target population, and (c) businesses watching over their market. Individual, institutional, and market scrutiny all rely on the same interface and information. This means that personal information that has been uploaded for any single purpose will potentially be used for several kinds of surveillance. All three types of watching are augmented by Facebook's exponential growth, as more users are joining the site to watch over peers, populations, and markets. With every additional set of eyes affixed to Facebook, any content already on the site has a larger audience. Moreover, that increased audience is situated in a greater variety of social contexts, starting

with Facebook's growth beyond the university sector. In addition these users all augment each other's visibility by uploading content that implicates each other.

All three populations also share the potential of being watched. They may be visible as a result of information that they upload, or because of content uploaded by other users. Mutual augmentation results in a shared risk and visibility as well as shared tools to watch over others. Individuals, institutions, and businesses report that their own visibility on Facebook is a primary motivation to watch over the site. The potential of being watched by others contextualizes their own surveillance. Not only does this suggest that surveillance is rampant on the site, but it also dampens users' ethical concerns about covertly watching others. Employees in public relations or marketing are keenly aware of this condition, and routinely scrutinize user conversations for mention of the brands that they represent. Use and scrutiny are fuelled by the idea that other users contribute to one's own visibility. Individuals, institutions, and businesses believe that social media endangers their reputation. Out of necessity they scrutinize what others are saying.

Individual users, especially students, were the first to join Facebook. However, they soon discovered that other populations were signing up. These original users are aware of tangible and visible forms of surveillance. They are more likely to be concerned with their parents watching over them than they are with marketers, but they are increasingly aware of both, as well as other types of watchers. As one student remarks:

> I'm just aware that what I do on Facebook is available to a lot of people. (...) You're representing yourself through something that a lot of people can access, so to be aware of how you use that information and what you post (Maggie).

Users are aware of the criteria that other watchers are employing, and will self-scrutinize based on these criteria. Moreover, they will watch over friends and family with an eye for harmful content. This scrutiny serves to protect that person's reputation. These users watch over their peers in the same way that they watch over their own profiles, under the assumption that potential employers and other professionals may be watching. Interpersonal scrutiny becomes professionalized in recognition that professionals are watching.

Institutional surveillance on social media is a direct product of interpersonal scrutiny. Employees use their personal knowledge as Facebook users to watch over populations in a professional context. Their ability to access the site, as well as effectively navigate and search for content, rests on employees' familiarity through their own personal accounts. Moreover, they are able to see content that was uploaded as a result of individual users wanting to remain visible to one another. This kind of interpersonal reciprocation augments institutional scrutiny. Businesses also draw on interpersonal scrutiny by employing early adopters of social media to manage their presence. Not only do businesses watch over interpersonal conversations and exchanges, but a conversational approach is also adopted as a best strategy for remaining visible to their markets. Providing targeted and immediate feedback to clients is increasingly treated as a 'best practice' for online communications, as this feedback is framed as an effective public relations effort.

Facebook is invisible in the sense that it is ubiquitous. It is pervasive to an extent that it hardly evokes our attention. Its expansion into various social spheres elicits little concern or controversy. As a result, information contained on the site can easily migrate to new contexts. While these sites serve to make their users visible to the social world, their own inner-workings remain opaque. Facebook users do not know what to expect from a site that hosts so much of their online presence. Social media are complex networks where different actors and contexts influence each other. These broader effects warrant more attention, but scholars should also look at key actors in this complexity. Two specific kinds of monitoring are considered below. They are not only under-represented in scholarly research, but they also benefit from being relatively covert to users. Their lack of transparency is a concern that should be addressed by empirical research.

Investigative Surveillance on Social Media

When a Wayne Gretzky jersey was stolen from a shop in Ottawa, it only took fifteen minutes for staff to identify one of the shoplifters on Facebook (Butler 2010). While Facebook's history is peppered with student indiscretions becoming public knowledge, police and other investigative agencies are turning to social media in order to collect information about criminal activity. Police consider social media to be part of their jurisdiction, as a source of evidence as well as a location for offences to occur. For instance, threats that are uttered online are treated as

punishable offences (Protalinski 2011). Online venues are not treated as representations of real life spaces, but rather as spaces in their own right. In the United States, Department of Homeland Security officials are 'friending' applicants for citizenship in order to scrutinize them (Lynch 2010). These agencies take advantage of social networks by placing themselves within a context of information sharing and personal disclosure. They also take advantage of users' so-called 'narcissism' (Cheng 2010), as even people who have something to hide want to share their lives with other users.

Social media are increasingly harnessed by law enforcement and investigative agencies. These practices and tendencies also spill out in other sectors, like the investigation of insurance claims (Millan 2011) as well as divorces (Popken 2011). But this remains a critically under-theorized and understudied topic. Social media make large sections of social life visible, and investigative agencies are taking advantage of that visibility. Surveillance studies needs to focus on how this visibility is being used by these agencies. This topic sheds light on contemporary investigation techniques, but it also illustrates the pathways and dynamics of contemporary social media visibility.

Police can obtain information on social media through conventional and unconventional means. Social media services have opened up official channels for police to obtain private information from their servers. These services know their value as a source of evidence for these agencies, to the extent that Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and others have produced compliance documents (Lynch 2011) that dictate what kind of information can be obtained from warrants, court orders, and other legal procedures. When starting an investigation, it is increasingly common for police to first turn to Facebook and other social media. Not only is it a low-cost and low-risk option, but investigators also benefit from not being identified as such. Professional watchers are often personal users, and this knowledge and access are assets. A lot of information on social media can be obtained simply by logging on to these sites. When information is protected by privacy settings, investigators can use a personal profile to establish a connection with the suspect. They may pretend to be a stranger, or even of a trusted friend or family member of the suspect (Zetter 2010; Kerrigan 2011). Although it is not the first time that individuals close to a suspect are used against them, social media offer novel kinds of insight. Police can covertly monitor interaction between a suspect and their peers. This can be done with or without subpoenas, depending on the suspect's privacy settings. As well, visible social ties can themselves be informative. In the case of the stolen hockey jersey, it was the suspect's friends that gave him away, as one of these friends belonged to a Facebook fan community for the store.

Social media policing goes beyond simply gathering information about suspects. Events ranging from house parties to political protests are also made visible through social media. Not only is information about these events public by default, this information is also searchable and archived, making sites like Facebook optimal for investigations. Finally, social media are not just a new kind of watching for police. They can also make crime and criminals visible by quickly broadcasting information about subjects to a vast audience. Social media like Twitter and Facebook are employed to disseminate time-sensitive information, including AMBER Alerts (O'Connor 2011). This suggests enrolling entire social networks to report suspicious activity. A campus security director involved with this kind of initiative elaborates on its implications for surveillance practices:

> I always find it very interesting that when people talk about Facebook and then the next word is security, automatically they have the George Orwell kind of 1984, Big Brother's watching. In our department, it's the exact opposite, right? We're all about sharing information. Our philosophy here is security is everybody's responsibility. Our philosophy here is giving you all the information that you need to make informed decisions about your own safety (Daryl).

This officer positions sharing information with a population in direct contrast to watching over that population. Yet these two operate in tandem, as social media users can be both a target and an extension of a surveillance apparatus. Users not only make themselves visible in a way that augments investigative surveillance, but they also directly contribute to this watching on behalf of the investigative agencies. Social media offer multiple avenues for individuals to augment institutional scrutiny.

These developments are situated alongside existing research on crime and surveillance. First, they suggest a further expansion of a surveillant assemblage (Haggerty and Ericson 2000) of global information flows. This model illustrates how discrete information flows are assembled in order to amplify the scrutiny of social life. At its core, Facebook attempts to link its users together in order to encourage them to share content. Often these users were not previously exchanging information. The emergence of an assemblage is evident when law enforcement and other agencies get involved. Prior to Facebook these agencies could not access much of the personal information contained on this site. But this information is now part of their scope. A social media surveillance assemblage is composed of multiple agencies taking advantage of a staggering amount of personal information. As well,

information on social media becomes even more trans-contextual. Haggerty and Ericson point to how CCTV footage becomes material for entertainment. Social media further exemplify that kind of reconfiguration, as personal exchanges become material for investigations. Social media also furthers a "disappearance of disappearance" (ibid.: 619). Abstaining from Facebook is a diminishing possibility when users upload information about peers who avoid an official presence on the site.

Social media also forces a reconsideration of the nature and effectiveness of undercover policing. This refers to a set of practices to infiltrate criminal spaces and obtain access to otherwise private and closely guarded information. Undercover approaches enhance police surveillance by using deceit and an asymmetry of visibility to locate and incriminate suspects. Policing becomes proactive and based on categorical suspicion, as undercover strategies enable a focus on suspects rather than incident-led scrutiny (Marx 1988). Police efforts on social media greatly facilitate this process. Undercover policing becomes low risk, as police visibility and exposure are negligible. As stated above, investigators can also impersonate trusted peers, a further deception in order to access and watch over suspect in a candid state. Social media also facilitates the use of criminal informants, or 'snitches' (Natapoff 2009; Marx 1984). Social media policing resembles snitching in the sense that investigators direct their attention to a suspect's peers in order to obtain information. Yet this marks a shift in procedure, as these 'snitches' are seldom aware of their involvement in this process. The costs associated with both undercover police work and snitching are lowered through social media (cf. Shirky 2008). As more users live more of their lives on sites like Facebook, their interpersonal visibility becomes an increasingly valuable component of police investigations. Of particular concern is that users may not be aware of these implications.

In briefly considering what is already known about social media capacities and police work, we see that these services mark an enhanced police presence in - and scrutiny of - everyday life. Moreover, police benefit from an as-yet-unidentified quality of social media. This has to do with their indirect involvement with sites like Facebook. Police are not formally associated with social media, and their presence is not public knowledge. Indeed, they are barely visible on Facebook. Unaware that they might be subject to police scrutiny, users are bridging multiple social contexts through Facebook, making their lives – and those of their peers - visible in ways that benefit investigations. Institutionalized scrutiny reaches into depths of everyday sociality (Haggerty and Ericson 2000).

Social media users have countless reasons to engage with these services. But these different users are not simply watching in parallel. Their engagements with services like Facebook have a distinct effect on the kinds of watching and visibility that are made possible through social media. Mutual augmentation suggests that different watchers trigger each other's surveillance. Interpersonal transparency and disclosure is a specific kind of visibility that enhances formal types of surveillance. Users are increasingly comfortable on a platform that is the first line of scrutiny for police investigations. Subsequent research should interrogate the boundary between personal and investigative use, but also between police suspects and their peers. This technology is not a complete disruption of police practices, but their investigative scope is enhanced in a way that is largely undetected, and as such warrants academic scrutiny.

Social Media as (Meta-)Watchers: What Will They Do Next?

Facebook's exponential growth makes it ideal for many kinds of monitoring. These developments only underscore the urgency of looking at Facebook and other social media companies' own surveillance practices. The visibility of users on these interfaces gives the impression that they are directing the growth of social media, that the tail is wagging the dog. To be sure, the entirety of the tail is staggering, but the dog still wields control. For all the talk about coping with and taking advantage of social media, little attention is paid to its configuration. These companies are highly publicized, yet scholars and the broader public have little knowledge about their knowledge of users, as well as their intentions surrounding this knowledge. A specific type of social media surveillance, one that includes the construction and continued maintenance of a digital enclosure, is central to a scholarly understanding of social media, as well as the continued domestication of surveillance technologies.

Information on Facebook leaks from one context to another. Yet the site is designed to retain both content and users. Facebook is internally leaky, but has rigid boundaries. In this sense, it is a kind of enclosure. Mark Andrejevic refers to the digital enclosure as "an interactive realm wherein every action, interaction, and transaction generates information about itself" (2009: 53). This definition suggests an infrastructure where personal information is produced and made meaningful insofar as it generates more information. The enclosure suggests a return to a

kind of pre-modern sociality where everybody knows everybody else's business. Yet the presence of surveillance technology suggests new kinds of visibility. As Andrejevic suggests:

> Interactivity promises not a return to the relative lack of anonymity of village life, but rather to a state of affairs in which producers have more information about consumers than ever before, and consumers have less knowledge about and control over how this information is being used (2007: 27).

On first pass it seems that all social media users have the potential to watch over each other. But those who manage the enclosure have a privileged view of its contents. As a result, user behaviour can trigger revisions to the interface. Users may develop their own practices within an enclosure, and this can be framed as a kind of customization, or even resistance. However, the enclosure's owners can observe and either subsume or eliminate those practices. Manovich (2008) draws on de Certeau (1988) to assert that user tactics become an owner's strategies. Users may develop tactics to manage their presence on sites like Facebook, but these tactics are visible to Facebook itself. Likewise, visible protests within the enclosure and discussions about disengagement from the enclosure can be exploited to retain users. As Cohen indicates:

> Not only is surveillance the method by which Facebook aggregates user information for third-party use and specifically targets demographics for marketing purposes, but surveillance is the main strategy by which the company retains members and keeps them returning to the site. (...) [I]t is the unpaid labour of producer-consumers that facilitates this surveillance (2008: 8).

The increased focus on everyday life is in itself a concerning development. Poster remarks that everyday life was formerly the remainder of institutional action and scrutiny (2004). However, the rapid onset of information and communication technologies in the domestic sphere means it is increasingly subject to commoditization and surveillance.

Treating social media as enclosures provides an important balance to perspectives that regard these services as ephemeral in use and consequence. Users do submit information with immediate and localized contexts in mind. Yet their privileging of these contexts does not diminish long term consequences made possible by the retention of this information. There is a disjuncture between immediate use and long-term consequences of exposure in social media enclosures. People live their lives through social media, and these enclosures are the interface in relations between individuals, businesses and institutions. The mutual augmentation described here is the result of the increased co-habitation of these groups. Facebook as an enclosure retains extensive information about its users, yet little is known about what Facebook is doing with this information, or the kind of watching that it performs.

Facebook and other social media are growing, and their growth is difficult to assess. But these services follow a deliberate trajectory, even if this is only evident to its designers. Specific features are chosen instead of others, and specific purposes are privileged over others. These decisions are part of a larger vision that Facebook's developers are pursuing, and focusing on these developments will contribute to a better understanding of social media surveillance. Research on social media often treats it as sui generis, and assumes that it functions independently of human intervention. This overlooks the intentions and efforts of companies like Facebook. Moreover, this approach is troubling when talking about a platform that adopts new features on a regular basis.

Facebook is distinct from other online services in terms of the possibilities that it extends to users. Users can always upload and distribute content, and they can partially control the flow of their information, but they cannot control the interface that distributes their information. Users can report a troubling photo, or block someone from seeing their profile, but they are otherwise passive to emerging schemes for distributing information. Below are some key features that have been designed by Facebook to regulate the flow of personal information. As these become standard features of social media, we should question their inevitability, and consider alternative efforts.

- Soliciting information from users, and enrolling friends in this effort. Facebook treats incomplete profiles as problems in need of remedy. Not only is the user faced with this concern, but their friends are also asked to provide information about the delinquent user. New users are repeatedly solicited by Facebook to provide personal information, including biographic details, social contacts, and profile pictures. Users encounter these requests when they first log on, but they also appear on their profiles as highlighted alerts. Moreover, their friends will also be asked to supply these details. These efforts guide Facebook users to obtain content from their friends. Generating personal information on social networks rests on relations between users and their peers.
- Restricting the outward flow of information. Facebook has long followed a 'walled garden' approach. As a site of social and informational convergence, it hinders efforts to export content to other spaces. In doing so Facebook obliges

users to inhabit - or dwell (DeCerteau 1988) - rather than simply visit the site. Facebook has recently augmented its messaging service in order to obviate email (Gaudin 2010), and its search feature is meant to rival Google (Vogelstein 2009). These efforts limit not only the outward flow of information, but also the outward flow of attention by users. This produces a kind of watching based on a monopolization of social activity by one company.

- Redirecting users towards each other as feeds. The promotion of information feeds suggests a deliberate strategy to organize and streamline the exchange of personal information. The feed represents Lash's (2006) description of information being pushed onto users. His assessment that "[t]he data find you" (ibid.: 580) can mean that relevant information is pushed onto profiled users, but it also suggests that our own personal information tracks and locates us, greatly augmenting our visibility. As stated above, this is a development that users first resisted, but have since come to treat as central to social media sociality. In that users rely heavily on these feeds, they diminish the importance of the user's construction of a profile as an identity marker, transforming self-presentation into a flow of real-time statements populated by several identities.
- Turning personal information into advertising. On numerous occasions, Facebook has attempted to merge personal information with branded advertising (Pearlman 2007; Zuckerberg 2007; Ling 2008; Zuckerberg 2010). A comment posted about a restaurant can become an advertisement that is directed at the user's friends. Users in turn have consistently opposed these schemes. Yet Facebook continues to push this model as an inevitable feature. Social media taps into a long history of marketers exploiting personal information (Gandy 1993). Advertising schemes increasingly resemble viral marketing (Boase and Wellman 2001). Again, this suggests a dramatic lowering of the costs associated with these activities, so much so that actual user involvement in these efforts is minimized. Facebook's business strategy alters relations between consumers and producers of content (Beer and Burrows 2007). Attaching personal information to a brand or product adds contextual relevance to the latter, while making the former visible in unanticipated ways.

Social media enclosures operate through a remarkable asymmetry of visibility. User activity is made incredibly visible, while the mechanics that govern these practices are themselves hidden from view. Facebook in particular is a database, and one that contains a robust range of content. But it is also an interface for all other kinds of watching. This suggests a kind of meta-surveillance, with Facebook watching over other watchers. As Facebook itself holds all information that passes through it, any kind of watching between users is under their scrutiny. All other kinds of watching on Facebook are a matter of using Facebook, and these practices leave traces that become part of the enclosure. Even actions intended to reduce visibility like removing content or changing privacy settings can be recorded as a kind of information.

Concluding Remarks

Facebook and other social media increasingly regulate social life. The way they collect, archive, and disseminate personal information is noteworthy for surveillance scholars. The Facebook profile has arguably overtaken the CCTV camera as the primary imagery for surveillance studies. Different surveillance models are manifest through Facebook. This suggests a complexity of social media surveillance. Understanding social media surveillance requires an understanding of the features that add to social media's volatility. Even when talking about one kind of surveillance, or one context, other contexts and practices are not far off. For instance, interpersonal visibility greatly augments state and institution-led surveillance. In addition to knowing how different types of visibility and watching are manifest on sites like Facebook, subsequent research should focus on practices that stand apart from the kind of co-visibility that is typical of social media. Police and other investigative agencies are developing a number of strategies to take advantage of the increased visibility of social life. Moreover, interfaces like Facebook themselves have a unique and privileged visibility and control over social media activity.

One lingering concern in the age of Facebook surveillance is the prominence of information leaks. While these were formerly a marginal but troubling occurrence, information now readily flows between social contexts. The rapid expansion of social media in a broader context of ubiquitous leaks suggests a "levelling of the hierarchy of surveillance" (Haggerty and Ericson 2000: 606), in the sense that more and more people are subject to public exposure. Yet this does not imply a democratization of visibility. Any democratizing potential is called into question when its users are entirely visible to agents whose practices remain opaque. Despite the complexity of relations and effects, it appears that new kinds of capital and control will endure through social media.

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Facebook Killed the Reunion Star: How Facebook is Changing Who We Are and What We Do

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Introduction

Ever since I saw the movie Romy and Michele's High School Reunion, I have waited in anticipation for my first high school reunion. In the movie, Romy and Michele were the quintessential geeks in high school, and, when they receive the invitation for their first reunion, they are excited to go back and brag about their fabulous new life as single women in the city. While the movie takes some different twists, the "ugly duckling morphing into a beautiful swan" concept is a major driving force for high school reunions. Is it not every band geek's dream to return to his/her high school ten years post graduation looking like an underwear model driving a bright red sports car? Aside from the superficial appearance aspect, people also wonder where everyone ended up. Did the person voted "Most Likely to Succeed" really achieve great success? Who got married to whom? Who has children? Who is divorced – and how many times?

These were all the questions that were running through my mind when I received the invitation for my first high school reunion, along with the expected - "Has it really been ten years?" Or, at least, these were the questions that should have been running through my mind; however, they had all already been answered - those questions and a lot more. Facebook ruined my high school reunion.

Our ten-year high school reunion was graciously organized by one of my best friends from high school – who now lives in Switzerland. It definitely says something about the times when a girl can organize the high school reunion for a small Texas town all the way from Switzerland! All of the information was posted on a website; however, all of the action happened on Facebook. The discussions went back and forth about who was coming and who was not and why. In the reminiscing spirit, more and more Facebook friend requests were sent out, and I am now practically Facebook friends with everyone from my high school class. With each new friend, I was able to scour their Facebook page for the usual information: marital status, current residence, current workplace, education information; it was like I had an instant resume for each of my classmates. Then, I moved on to their pictures. I was able to see, live and in color, what they all had been doing for the past ten years. I saw one of my best friend's wedding pictures, photos of my ex-boyfriend's new baby, and pictures from college graduations and beach vacations; it was all right there at my fingertips just a click away. And, it was not only the past, but also the present. As I am catching up on the past ten years, my Facebook newsfeed is sending me real-time status updates so I know exactly what everyone is doing at this exact moment. Somebody had cold pizza for breakfast while another friend is headed off to a job interview; with every refresh, I am hit with a stream of the latest information.

So, like any other day, the morning of my high school reunion, I logged in to my Facebook account for my daily fix. Everyone was posting about being back in town and looking forward to seeing each other that evening. When evening came, and I opened the door at the VFW hall where the reunion was held, it was a surreal moment. Everyone was sitting at tables, similar to those from our cafeteria days, talking to each other, just like back in high school. It was

as if no time had passed, and I guess in some ways it had not.

Now, don't get me wrong, I enjoy Facebook as much as the next 20 (almost 30)-something. It is a guilty pleasure to log-on and see what all my "friends" are doing these days. I enjoy the convenience of being able to post quick replies to status updates and the ability to maintain contact with so many people from all avenues of my life. I have reconnected with past co-workers and childhood friends; I can stay in touch with my cousins from all over the country and even send messages to the girl next door. This ability to share so much information, so quickly, and so easily has squelched my curiosity, though. Instead of walking in trying to guess who was who, I had just seen all of their smiling faces on Facebook. I knew who had cut their long hair short and who had dyed their brown hair blonde. There was absolutely no element of surprise. It seemed almost ridiculous when I asked how someone was doing because their status update told me that exact information moments before I joined the party. No one really had anything to say to each other because it had all already been said on Facebook. The only people of interest were those who were not on Facebook, and the only question they were asked was why they were not on Facebook. In fact, a classmate with an iPhone immediately signed up a non-Facebook member to Facebook during the reunion! And then, everyone immediately sent him friend requests from their phones!

All in all, I do have to admit that it was good to see everyone face-to-face. A couple of my dearest friends from high school and I had a really great time actually talking to each other instead of sending messages. However, the overall experience was not at all what I had imagined, and I blame Facebook for the shift. Since now one out of every 13 people on the planet is a member of Facebook, I believe that it is safe to say that Facebook has the ability to change the way our world works – and that it is doing just that (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-10720270, May 16, 2011).

Oversharing

I now know more about the people I went to high school with than I ever knew about them when I spent most all of my waking hours with them. In high school, it seemed that everyone wanted to keep all of their personal information a secret; everyone made a strong effort to separate home life and school life. At school, people projected the version of themselves that they wanted their peers to see, only opening up and sharing their vulnerabilities with a small, tight circle of friends (if anyone). None of us would have ever dreamed to share all of the information that is readily available on Facebook; it would have been one of our biggest nightmares to have all of that personal information visible to our classmates. You did not want anyone to know that the reason you missed math class was because you had an appointment with your dermatologist about that big zit on your forehead, which you had spent an hour expertly covering with concealer; now, on Facebook, people describe in great detail their reasons for visiting doctors, the medication prescribed, and the side effects experienced. And, it is not just medical information that is shared; political views, relationship issues, religious views, and family issues are all up for discussion – nothing is off-limits. It seems that people think nothing of posting any and all of the details of their lives on their Facebook status; the private has gone public.

In her 2008 New York Times article, "Exposed", Emily Gould coined the term "oversharing" to describe how people express the most personal aspects of their lives on the internet. Gould writes, "In real life, we wouldn't invite any passing stranger into these situations, but the remove of the Internet makes it seem OK" (Gould 2008). She is exactly right. I could log-on to Facebook right now and provide countless examples of oversharing. I even had a friend who recently posted about his bowel movements; if that is not the very definition of oversharing, I do not know what is! Sitting in front of a monitor instead of sitting in front of a real live, breathing person relieves all of the consequences of sharing TMI (text speak for "too much information"). One can type a status update and hit enter before ever even processing what information is being broadcast for all of the world to read; the "I have a thought and I think that I want to share my thought" process happens simultaneously and without the filter that reminds us what details are appropriate for sharing to what audiences.

Sometimes, however, oversharing can happen without one even realizing it. On Facebook, if I post a comment about a certain friend's status update, all of my friends and all of my friend's friends can read, and comment on, my comment. People who I do not know at all and whom I have never met can read my thoughts and comments on any number of subjects. If my friend takes a stand about a political subject on his/her Facebook and I make a comment agreeing or disagreeing, a significant number of strangers will now have personal information about who I am. I may

not have intended for my comment to be read by all of those people, and they may not understand and interpret my comment the way that I meant it because my comment was for my friend, who I know and who knows me. They may not know the history behind the comment and thus may totally miss my point. Instantly, people will have thoughts and opinions and will begin to share them, as well. I have seen many seemingly innocent Facebook posts turn into all-out wars featuring heated comments volleyed back and forth – and the person who posted the original status update is not even involved!

Oversharing does not just happen via status posts and comments. The photos section of Facebook features another quintessential example of oversharing. I remember wanting to sanitize all of the pictures my parents took of me during my childhood; I did not want anyone to see that picture of me before I learned to tame my frizzy hair. I would have been mortified if my mother had put it in the yearbook, the closest thing to Facebook at the time. Now, though, people can take pictures from their iPhones and immediately upload them to Facebook. I have seen everything from pictures posted directly from the hospital when a friend had her first baby to a picture of a male friend dressed in a rather revealing swimsuit as part of his Halloween "Borat" costume (how I wish I could erase that from my memory!). One no longer has to wait for film to be developed at the pharmacy; pictures can be immediately shared via Facebook from a camera or cell phone. People post pictures of their recent haircuts and even pictures of what they are having for dinner. One can watch people's entire lives play out like a movie just by clicking on their Facebook photo albums. Also, you do not even have to overshare photos of yourself; if you do not feel like your friend is sharing enough, you can post a picture of him/her and "tag" them on Facebook. The picture is then added to the tagged friend's Facebook page. This feature was used frequently before my reunion. People dug up various pictures from high school and posted them on Facebook tagging their fellow classmates. Just when you thought that you had successfully buried those pictures from your awkward years, now they are rearing their ugly heads for everyone to see. Those who did undergo a positive transformation in the years since high school cannot get away from who they were then, thanks to Facebook. The tagging feature allows others to overshare for you.

I believe that it is the photo feature that had the greatest impact on my reunion experience. Honestly, what are reunions all about? We want to see who gained weight, who lost weight, who got hot, who is not, and who looks nothing like their high school self. During the months before my reunion, as I added Facebook friends, I immediately scoured their pictures. I was able to see my friends, their spouses or significant others, their children, their homes, and anything else that they had posted. As I previously mentioned, when I opened the door at my reunion, that initial shock of seeing my friends ten years later was non-existent; I had just spent the past few months viewing photo albums containing all of the details of their lives, significant or mundane.

Just the fact that we have a term to describe people's desire to share personal information is proof enough that oversharing plays a significant role in our society. I no longer wonder if people overshare, but rather wonder why people overshare. Why do people find it necessary to post the private details of their lives for hundreds of their friends and hundreds more of their friend's friends to read, comment on, and judge? A lot of people's Facebook pages read almost like a diary, and anyone on the World Wide Web, with access to their Facebook page, can read all about them and their life. Something that used to be kept locked and hidden away under the mattress is now as easily accessible as the local paper. It seems that people must want to overshare if they make such an effort to do so and make no effort to keep this information private.

Perhaps people do not feel that they are oversharing; perhaps they choose to share all of the minute details of their life on purpose. Marx describes the alienation of labor as "first, that the work is external to the worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that, consequently, he does not fulfill himself in his work but denies himself, has a feeling of misery rather than well-being, does not develop freely his mental and physical energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased" ([1884] 1972:73). This same feeling of alienation is now applicable to life outside of work; people feel disconnected from their private lives, as well. With the hurried pace of life at home, home is now like work; therefore, the feelings of alienation once tied to labor are now being felt in our private lives. People feel disconnected from life, in general. Instead of enjoying true leisure activities, people are worried about accruing social capital or are simply too exhausted from their labor to even consider leisure. Marx goes on to describe how man "feels himself to be freely active only in his animal functions – eating, drinking, and procreating" ([1884] 1972:74). These "animal functions" are no longer free, however. Parents treat children like little workers, involving them in all sorts of activities from soccer to ballet, and all of these activities are structures and competitive. The days of free, unstructured play are over. Eating and drinking are also no longer free activities. Instead of lingering over a meal or eating as a family at the dinner table to discuss the day's events, people get their meals from a window and devour them in the car on the way to the next structured activity.

If people's lives are not filled with structured activities, they are not free from feelings of alienation. Instead of going out and living life, reality television fills the void; people watch other people living life instead of living their own life, and Facebook is like a real-time reality television program.

Technology is adding to alienation in an entirely new way, and Facebook is a part of this new alienation. Farmville is a popular application on Facebook that allows people to virtually manage a virtual farm; users grow virtual fruits and virtual vegetables and can share them with their Facebook friends. Like Marx's description of alienation in the workplace in which the worker is "related to the product of his labor as to an alien object" ([1884] 1972: 71), Farmville users are related to their farm in the same manner. There are no real tomatoes and no one gets their hands dirty. Now, people are not only alien to the product, they are also alien to the process. Gardening, once considered a leisure activity which could reduce feelings of alienation, has been construed so that it increases feelings of alienation. Farmville is not the only application of this sort, either. There is Pet Society which is "all about… decorating your virtual house and petting your virtual pet" and a host of other applications available (http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2548175922&topic=9548, May 16, 2011).

Facebook is smart, though. While applications like Farmville and Pet Society may increase feelings of alienation, Facebook itself offers a platform to ease feelings of alienation. Facebook creates an issue and solves the same issue thus ensuring its enduring necessity. By oversharing, Facebook users can ease feelings of alienation.

On Facebook, the mundane has top billing. People feel alienated by the banality of their existence, and Facebook provides a forum that makes the everyday newsworthy; in fact, Facebook labels such information the "News Feed" (http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=408, May 16, 2011). The News Feed is constantly updated with posts from Facebook friends. Whether it be an announcement of a major life-event like a pregnancy or a simple statement concerning the weather, all status updates are given the same priority on Facebook. I receive notification of the day of the week from one Facebook friend and at the same time I receive notification that another is being shipped off to war in Afghanistan. Facebook allows everyone to feel important and provides everyone their "15 minutes of fame."

If we accept that people overshare and can rationalize why they might choose to overshare, then, the next logical thought is, "What do people gain by oversharing on Facebook?"

Relationships

Not to oversimplify or sound redundant, but people gain friends by oversharing on Facebook. Oversharing, and having your "overshared" thoughts validated, creates a sense of reassurance and acceptance. If a Facebook user posts a status update about a terrible work-day and five people respond with their condolences, the person who had the terrible day is validated and vindicated. Facebook friendships also develop a sense of community; our Facebook friends make up our virtual neighborhood. When you get a new friend request on Facebook, it is the 21st century equivalent of a new neighbor bringing you a basket of muffins to welcome you to the street. Like the muffins, a friend request makes us feel accepted; we feel like we belong. As Durkheim points out in his theory of social integration, having a network of people with whom to interact and connect promotes mental well-being (Durkheim 1897). Simply stated, Facebook makes us feel good.

In less than ten minutes a day, I can stay current with all of my 158 Facebook friends and know what is going on in their lives. How long would that take without Facebook? It would be practically impossible to successfully maintain 158 friendships at one time, let alone in just ten minutes each day. Our mobile society allows people to end up far from the place they may have called home as child; families are spread all over the nation and world. My own family, which started in a very small Texas town, now stretches from West Virginia to Colorado. Facebook provides any easy way for me to stay in touch with everyone. I have relationships with my cousins that, most likely, I would not have without Facebook.

While I do have quite a few family members as friends on Facebook, a majority of my Facebook friends are people from high school. Interestingly, a lot of those same people would not have claimed me, nor I them, as friends while we went to school together. It is not like I had a bunch of enemies while I was in school; it is just that I had a small, select group of people that I would have deemed friends. The others were more like acquaintances. It seems that Facebook friendships are different than traditional friendships.

To me, a friend is someone you can rely on when you need help, someone you can talk to about your problems, someone who will stand by you in your time of need; a friend is someone you care about deeply and someone who

cares about you. Honestly, most of my Facebook friends do not fall under those categories. Sure, I care about these people because I grew up with them, and I care about them as fellow human beings; however, were I to experience some tragedy in my life, most of the people on my friends list would not be the people to whom I would turn. Outside of the reunion, I have not had a face-to-face, or even a telephone, conversation with the vast majority of my Facebook friends in the past ten years, and I believe that my high school reunion illustrated that fact that although we may all be friends on Facebook, we do not necessarily carry those same friendships over into our "real" lives.

By the middle of the evening, everyone who attended my high school reunion had segregated themselves into their roles from high school. The popular kids were all together, around the bar, reminiscing about football games and parties that they attended. The brainy kids who were in band circled their chairs and started quiet, deep discussions. The kids who were in theatre were out on the dance floor making a scene. It did not take long for the cliques to emerge even after ten years and despite new-found Facebook friendships. Even though I could now count the cheerleaders and quarterback as friends on-line, I still had a sense of discomfort when I considered joining them at the bar; I felt more comfortable with my old friends out on the dance floor. Everyone gravitated to the relationships that they cultivated in high school, the traditional friendships. Even though we may have shared a few sentences on Facebook, I still did not feel like I belonged to the popular crowd.

Facebook friendship creates a false sense of having a relationship. Gould states that, "Depending on how you looked at it, I either had no life and I barely talked to anyone, or I spoke to thousands of people constantly" (Gould 2008). Again, Gould has it exactly right. Depending on how you looked at it, my high school class had overcome the clique atmosphere that dominants adolescence or it was still alive and well. On Facebook, everyone was friends with everyone, but in a real-life social setting, the cliques reemerged. Just because you have an on-line relationship with someone does not mean that you can have that same relationship off-line.

Gould continued to address the impact blogging, and technology like Facebook, has had on relationships. She described how when she first started her job blogging, she felt the need to go in to the office each day; she said that "it seemed important to see Alex, my co-editor, in person" (Gould 2008). However, as time went on, Gould said that she and her co-editor communicated most often by instant message, even though they were sitting next to each other (2008). Gould states, "Soon it stopped seeming weird to me when one of us would type a joke and the other one would type 'Hahahahaha' in lieu of actually laughing" (2008). This is a prime example of the manner in which our current society communicates and fosters relationships: text messaging, Twitter, and Facebook have taken over telephone calls and face-to-face chats over coffee. Friendships no longer have to be maintained by frequent lunch dates or girl's/guy's night out; a quick "LOL" reply to a Facebook status can keep a connection alive. In fact, no contact at all is actually required to maintain a Facebook friendship; once I accept your friend request, we are friends "'til death (or at least the death of my Facebook account) do us part."

By using the term "friend" to describe those people to whom you are linked on Facebook, Facebook is somewhat changing the definition of friend. First, the term friend is now not only limited to those with whom you have a close relationship. I have Facebook friends that I have never met or even spoken to on the phone. Also, friend is now a verb. How often have we heard the request, "friend me"? In fact, in the movie about the creation of Facebook, The Social Network, the creators of Facebook know that they have hit it big when someone tells them to "friend me!". Finally, friends are commodities. Having a large number of Facebook friends is like having an entourage; it means that you are popular and important. The more Facebook friends you have, the higher your status.

Friendships are not the only relationships affected by Facebook, either. Romantic relationships are greatly impacted. Facebook currently offers 11 relationship statuses to define romantic relationships: "Single, In a relationship, Engaged, Married, It's complicated, In an open relationship, Widowed, Separated, Divorced, In a civil union, and in a domestic partnership" (https://www.facebook.com (personal profile), May 16, 2011). I can follow my friends' love lives as their relationship status goes from "Single" to "In a Relationship" to "It's Complicated" to "Single". A friend recently broke-up with her boyfriend, and within minutes of updating her status to "Single", interested suitors started sending her messages. Facebook understands that one's status in a romantic relationship is a defining factor in one's life and thus decided to include relationship status as a profile option along with gender and birthday.

On the fairy-tale side, Facebook allows long-lost lovers to reunite and provides a forum for couples to profess their love. Just this morning, I read a post proclaiming that someone was so lucky to have an "angel" in his life – in reference to his significant other. Wedding pictures and pictures of engagement rings abound on Facebook; even I have my wedding pictures posted on Facebook. On Facebook's darker side, I have seen posts from an angry spouse about last night's fight, and recently, I have heard of Facebook being used in divorce cases. Seemingly innocent flirtations with an ex via wall posts can cause major issues if your current love interest reads them. Facebook also

provides a forum for pseudo-stalkers to track their objects of desire. When I received that dreaded friend request from a boyfriend from my past (who, honestly, I had hoped to never hear from or speak to again), I was worried. I immediately checked all of my privacy settings to make sure that he did not have access to any of my information, even though I am very careful about what information I post to Facebook. Of course, at the same time, I did not want to hurt his feelings, or ignite any past anger, by rejecting his friend request so I happily took the passive-aggressive option – I clicked the "Ignore" button. Thank you, Mark Zuckerberg, for supporting my passive-aggressive nature!

As a happily married person, I have never thoughtfully considered the role Facebook plays in the dating game; however, if I imagine way back to my single days, I can see how Facebook would change the playing field. First, since so many people have a Facebook page, are blind dates on their way to extinction? If I were being set-up on a blind date, the very first thing that I would do would be to check to see if my date had a Facebook. If so (and it would be highly likely given the number of Facebook users), I would be able to see all sorts of information about my date including pictures, religious views, political affiliation, likes, and anything else he chose to post on Facebook. The awkwardness of wondering what he might be like would be greatly diminished. Facebook, however, would not necessarily take all of the surprises out of dating. Like with any dating website, there is no guarantee that the person you see in the pictures on-line is the same person who will be at your door. Facebook allows people to create their own identity and to monitor the "self" that they choose to project.

Self and Identity

But do they? Do people create or mediate the identity that they display on Facebook? Of course, at some level, they must; you have to decide what to post on Facebook and what not to post. However, I wonder just how much true thought goes into this decision process. Before posting a picture on Facebook, do people really think about the effect the picture will have on their identity? Also, I believe that our society is moving towards a more "take me as I am" mentality, and if that is the case, can we really argue that a Facebook identity is drastically different than one's true self?

We live in a world that allows us to construct our identity in a variety of ways – on-line via Facebook posts and statuses, by the clothes we wear, the color of our hair, even the size of our breasts. So, the question begs, are we changing our identity by dyeing our hair or are we only becoming a truer version of the person we believe we really are? Is our constructed identity our true reality? I am not convinced that people really try to construct the best possible identity, rather than their true identity, on-line anymore; I think more and more people are putting their flawed selves out there. A quick perusal through my Facebook newsfeed and the recent picture postings by my friends supports this theory. As aforementioned, people overshare; if they were trying to construct a picture-perfect version of themselves, would they really post less-than-flattering pictures of themselves or discuss a battle with acne via a public wall post?

People no longer really worry about privacy (see oversharing section) so I would argue that the self they create on-line is a true representation of identity. People have the ability to be more "real" on-line than off; the shield of the keyboard and computer monitor provides a sense of security, protection from judgment. Shy people, like me, find it easier to share via email and on Facebook than face-to-face. Facebook allows us to be ourselves.

Jean Baudrillard suggests that reality has been replaced with signs and symbols that are only simulations of reality; "it is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (1983:472). He also describes a third order of simulacra in which there is no distinction between reality and representation; he associates this third order of simulacra with postmodernity (1994). I am not entirely sure what Baudrillard would say about Facebook were he still with us, but I think he would be very interested. I dare speculate that he might use Facebook to further his theory that reality has been replaced and that Facebook has further blurred the lines between reality and representation; Facebook is thrusting us into the postmodern (if you do not think we are already there).

I am not so sure, though; perhaps, the sign is not a copy, as Baudrillard suggests, but rather, the sign is a part of the original. My Facebook profile is not just a copy of who I am; my Facebook profile shapes my identity. Now, I realize that taken out of context that concept may seem rather shallow, allowing Facebook to shape who I am; however, with the proliferation of Facebook in our society, it is not hard to believe that Facebook could play a role in establishing identity. Categories of relationship status, political status, religion, etc. make people think about these labels and assign themselves an identity. Young people who may have not considered their political affiliation as part

of their identity are now faced with a dilemma – who am I? And, what does it mean? Of course, you can opt not to provide this information on Facebook, but not providing certain information can speak louder to your identity than just providing the information in the first place.

Facebook is not only involved in creating identity; it is plays a major role by displaying your identity to others. Before Facebook, we may not have known as much about our friends as we do now. We have all been told to steer clear of two topics with friends, family, and company – religion and politics; however, Facebook puts these topics front and center. When I accept a Facebook friend, he/she can go to my Info page and obtain far more information about me than I might normally provide (and I am rather cautious about the information I offer on Facebook). I do not have anything on my Facebook profile that I think is private, sensitive information, but, at the same time, most people would not come up to me and ask me what religion or political party to which I belong. I am not ashamed of either, and was I asked, I would answer honestly, but the fact of the matter is, before Facebook, it is not likely that I would have been asked.

I can also go to my friends' Facebook pages and learn a lot about their identities. I never really considered my high school friends' religion or political affiliation, but now that I have that information at my fingertips, I find myself very interested in what they have to say. It is not only friends that are interested in their peers Facebook profiles and the information provided there. Employers look at Facebook to determine the "real" person instead of the best-foot-forward, rehearsed identity that people use during an interview. Recently, there have been several news stories about people being reprimanded, and even facing termination, for Facebook posts. This brings up all kinds of first amendment and privacy issues, and I am not going to get into that here; however, it does make me think about identity. People will say and do things on Facebook that they would not do in their daily life, and that makes me think that people are more true to themselves on Facebook – thus creating a real identity, not a simulation. They are more willing to portray their flaws on Facebook, and our flaws make us who we are.

Facebook's identity machine reaches far beyond relationship status, politics, and religion. A person can spend as much time and effort as he/she wants to depict the most complete identity picture possible. There is a never-ending supply of people, places, and things to "like" (Facebook terminology meaning that you click a button stating that you like something and that information is relayed on your Facebook profile page). I have lists of music, books, movies, television shows, and hobbies that I like. There are also groups to join and causes to adopt. All of these things help create an identity. Again, these choices bring up topics and ideas that may have never come up before. Most people may have considered what music they enjoy but may have not spent as much time thinking about global warming, second amendment rights, animal cruelty, or the children's orchestra society – all causes one may join via Facebook. The groups and causes to which one belongs provide insight about their identity, and people may not have really thought about this part of their identity until they receive a Facebook request to join a particular cause.

As I mentioned before, because of Facebook, the people at my high school reunion now know more about one another than they did when we spent five days a week together in school. We not only know the superficial snippets of daily status updates or wall posts, we also know about each other's core beliefs. Facebook, while making it easier to be physically apart, has in many ways brought us closer together. We all have our selves out there for the Facebook world to see – the good, the bad, and the ugly (yes, someone finally posted a picture of my frizzy hair!), and because we are all vulnerable and exposed, there is a comfort and feeling of security. When I read about one of my friend's having different religious or political beliefs than I do, I do not pass judgment or think ill of him/her; rather, I appreciate the knowledge that I now have and appreciate the person that he/she is. Facebook urges us to share with another and to be open and accepting individuals. Of course, there is conflict on Facebook; it is not a utopia. However, I still believe (call me an idealist) that the good is greater than the bad.

Facebook is not merely a reflection of an identity that is already established; Facebook is taking part in the establishment of identity. From his Harvard dorm room, Mark Zuckerberg created a phenomenon that not only changes that way we act, it is changing who we are.

Conclusion

Facebook is a significant social force. There is so much information available to sociologists that it is overwhelming. Jokingly, I told my professor that Facebook ruined my high school reunion. I thought that I did not mean it literally, but I did; Facebook really did ruin my high school reunion. But, in ruining my high school reunion, Facebook may

have improved my daily life. I have more friends now that I have ever had in my entire life! And, I know more about them, and myself, than ever before. I am certain that a plethora of research concerning Facebook is in the works as I type, and I look forward to it. These are interesting times and I am excited to be a part of it.

Chances are I will not see any of my high school friends until our next reunion (in ten years). That may seem sad, but really, why do I need to see them? I have Facebook to keep me company.

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Global Noir: An Introduction

Gray Kochhar-Lindgren

The history of the crime story is a social history, for it appears intertwined with the history of bourgeois society itself.
~Ernest Mandel, Delightful Murder

Global Noir is noise, waiting, jolting, silence, speed, and smog. It is a bullet train disappearing into a tunnel. It is the shadowed intersection where the broken streetlight buzzes and where film, fiction, capital, and a cultural tonality crisscross the hyper-urban imaginary of this staccato moment of nuclear, nano, genomic, and digital globalization. Money has become electric and it shocks. It hollows out Detroit and skyscrapers arise in Guangzhou.

There are no speed limits here and behind all the business of the sound and the fury, there is an almost preternatural quiet, a low heat-generating hum from the terrestrial and near-earth cloud-networks that infiltrate our bodies with constant signals from the satellites, mobile antennae, and the massive server farms that spring from the plains in the middle of nowhere. Noir is watching and being-watched, being-shadowed. Noir is the desolation that we all crave.

In this cluster of essays, we have asked how we can philosophically reconceptualize the concept of noir, how we can crosshatch noir with the nuanced shades of history, how fiction and film screen (as both projective and protective surface) violence, and what contours the political-economy of noir is taking as it globalizes. What is noir in the age of phantomenolgy? How can we unfold the blackness and put it to work? Such questions lure us down dark alleyways, into dilapidated hotels and cafés full of smoke, but this is a digitized world of the always-on.

Global Noir, as these authors conceive of its multiplicities, is the Hong Kong produced film of Broken Tooth's misadventures in Macau and the rise of a new casino economy in that city that is so difficult to politically categorize. It is the Unidentified Narrative Object that addresses the squalid violence of the Camorra in southern Italy (and "Naples," with its Mediterranean coastline and its porous borders, has spontaneously emerged as a connective figure across these essays). Noir is a new geoaesthetic space that opens up to "anothernesses" and redefines the genre of all those murderous plots that move from a to z and thereby resolve the crime with a moment of explanatory repetition. (The world, however, no longer moves in the direction of such "classical" plots.) Noir speaks a cacophony of languages, including Spanish, Cantonese, Putonghua, Portuguese, Japanese, French, British, and American. Noir is the past-in-the-present and has always already appeared in the rain-splashed ruins of New York or Djemila, in the colonial cities that spawn the network of finance capitalism. The plague is let loose.

Noir is formula and stereotype, nothing but kitsch. Noir is discovery, stepping through to the other side of the mirror. On the streets of Hong Kong, cardboard collectors strain to push flatbed carts up the hill and are reflected in the opaque windows of Chase, Citigroup, HSBC, and the Bank of China. There is crime on Wall Street and in Washington, in Delhi and Shanghai, in Lagos and J'burg, in Macau and Vegas, in Havana and Buenos Aires, in Tel Aviv and Damascus, in London and Frankfurt.

Noir takes a smoky shape under dictators; noir speaks to trauma. It travels the networks of migration, mobile phones, Predators and Reapers, and all of us who are trying to stay afloat in the currencies that float, don't float, or take the plunge. Iceland is the site of global noir; Dublin, Madrid, and Athens are imploding. Pandemics spread as parasites hitch rides on sweaters, ships, and planes, as viruses and worms spread like the plague on captured hardware. Madoff, Stuxnet, and Abbottabad are coming soon to a theater in your living room, live and in color on a flat-screen TV.

In the cities of global night, there are dead-ends, broken contracts, button men, and hookers. There are white

collars and white limousines. Dirty dollars and dirty yuan are laundered daily in the banks of the world as they travel at the speed of swoosh: here, then gone. There are dirty cops and dangerous dames. There is no there there and there is no here here, but you can buy noir at every airport kiosk.

All around the mulberry bush. Flash bulbs, flash drives, flash crash.

Global Noir is as smooth as undulating black silk and as disturbing as the scent of a woman on the hunt. Noir is high fashion that hides its origins, its derivatives, and its futures as it covers its tracks with glossy pics, leather boots, and wraparound shades. Black SUVS prowl the streets of every capital. Noir is cool. Noir is cooler than cool; it is the coolness of cool. Noir kills.

Noir has its histories, its wars and parasites, its depressions of boom and bust, its thievery of capital and the capital crimes of heads of states and heads of companies. Noir swindles, promising goods it can't deliver. It wants to keep everything for itself and double-cross its friends. But then there's always the one who keeps justice in view, or at least a certain cynical fairness, the private eye who doesn't know it all but usually knows just enough. Or, perhaps, that figure, too, is dissolving in the black rain of nuclear fallout and credit swaps.

Noir is history as it flickers across the stages of its own media platforms. First there is the screen of print: magazine, newspaper, pulp, dime novels. Poe, Doyle, Hammett, Himes, Chandler, Thompson, Cain. Smart guys, then the tough guys; this is a private dick's game, a man's thing. The dames, like the houses up in the canyons and all the city's cul-de-sacs, are lethal. Then the dames start thinking, too, become the rough-and-tumble ones to bring the bacon home. Now the guys and gals are everywhere and the picaresque hero(ine) is returning to roam the streets of Seattle or Salerno.

A car with its burning headlights speeds along a dark highway out of the 1940s and heads straight for us. It roars through all that desolate loneliness of the American West and the American city—New York, Chicago, LA—and leaps right off the screen into an algorithm of computer code. The platform is once again transmogrifying. We are being-digitized. Print continues; film continues; but now everything is occurring on the digital platform, always globalized, always asynchronous. Development is radically uneven and the reserve army of capital is on the march.

Print accedes to the pearlescent screen of flicks that learn over time to talk via the voice-over and via characters who are always acting. Bogart, McMurray, Stanwyck, Welles, Nichols, Pitt, Clooney, Davis, and Sarandon. Ingrid Bergman is still waiting in the fog with her incomparable hat. Directors and producers are invisible behind the scenes, plotting the angles of the shots and deciding how the money will work. It's all happening in the background as the war winds down and America winds up.

Fast forward.

Global Noir is a casino with neon signs and enormous LED screens flickering across the face of the city of dreams disappearing into the foreclosures of the Nevada desert or across the face of the City of Dreams rising from reclaimed land in Macau. Signs flicker in the night. L.A. Noire is a Rockstar video game. The Lady Noire Affair, by Dior, stars Marie Cotillard who is stunning in her perfectly painted lipstick in Paris, New York, Shanghai, and London, each aligned with a different color but always with a handbag providing object constancy, a commodity to fetishize. "Who knows what's inside that bag?" she asks. We all know the answer to that.

Global Noir is here to stay. In this cluster of essays, Patrick Blaine explores the function of detectives in post-dictatorial spaces, such as in the "labyrinthine Bío-bío market in Santiago…a collecting point for detritus of contemporary life in the capital." Fabrizio Cilento examines Saviano, Garrone, and the infoldings of criminality into the world capitalist system, such as in Scampia, the "largest open-air drug market in the world." Rick Dolphijn enters into the noir of Murakami's inventions that reflect nothing, but, instead, open into a hall of broken mirrors in which we learn about the "true liberation of the dark." Robert Peckham dives into historical labyrinths that lead nowhere, and that, in turn, become global cities "haunted by the specter of pandemics." And Tim Simpson does gangsters, the grind of Poseidon's casino, and the lotto education of the Chinese consumer in the SAR of Macau.

There is from the Southern Cone across the Americas and Europe to the Chinese littoral, a globalization at work that is leaving visible fractures from the fracking currents of the boom and bust of capital, a long wave that smells like money, smells like work, smells like corruption, smells like the thought of art.

Watch out, then. Be careful crossing the road or turning the next corner. Money for nothing and the world-city on the prowl. Be careful what keys you stroke, what kicks you get. There's always a kick-back and you're being tracked.

Pop. Goes the weasel.

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Noir as Politics: Spanish Language Hardboiled Detective Fiction and the Discontents of the Left

Patrick Blaine

Through a markedly realist aesthetic based largely in the subgenre of the "hardboiled" detective novel and the iconic "film noir" movement of the 1940s (both essentially products of the Depression-era U.S.), Spanish-speaking writers were able to confront the ideologies of their governments, as well as the current state of social affairs and politics in various countries that were undergoing periods of massive political and economic upheaval as they began to enter into a much more globalized world economy during the late 20th Century. These political structures included dictatorship, institutionalized revolution, or democratic transition. What was it, though, that drew so many authors from very diverse countries to this trope? Answering that question may also shed light on its appropriation in other parts of the world as well.

Noir or **novela negra** [black novel] stories enabled their authors to arrive at a more genuine rendering of their national situations. In part this is because detective narrative permits a fictional uncovering of the true state of sociopolitical relations, power structures, and contemporary injustice in Latin America that pushes against the official policies of forgetfulness and media-dictated culture. It also allows the questioning of truth in a more general sense, showing in its later, self-reflexive iterations the inability of the deductive method (on which classical detective fiction is based) to explain the world.

In doing so, it indicts liberalism (and neoliberalism by proxy) along with developmentalist visions of history. Even modernity as a whole and its attendant metanarratives are undermined by some of the most recent variants, such as the work of Roberto Bolaño, which traverses Chile, Mexico, and Spain, but in this article I will focus only on those authors who closely follow the original model. The hardboiled, or "private investigator" figure would be adapted first in Mexico, and then in many other countries, as the entire region began the process of assessing the fallout from the totalitarian regimes of the second half of the 20th Century, whether in Socialist Cuba, Mexico, Spain, or the Southern Cone.

Arguably the most influential offshoot of the larger crime fiction genre, "hardboiled" detective fiction has inspired countless novels and films the world over, and has proven itself to be an extraordinarily flexible form, well-suited to reflecting developments that transcend both history and place. Theories abound about why it would eventually enjoy such success, with the more prominent ones pointing toward its realist aesthetic, urban settings, and strong sense of disenchantment with the tenets of liberal society—as well as New Deal efforts to reform them (McCann 16-18). They also indicate a larger societal hunger for justice and a desire for reform, however tainted by cynicism these might be.

The appropriation of the hardboiled subgenre in diverse Hispanic countries is in some ways perplexing. To be sure, the writers like Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortázar in Argentina had self-consciously utilized the "classical" detective trope to great effect (e.g. Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie). What was it, though, about the lonely private eye in his fedora and trench coat walking down a dark, rainy North American street that resonated so much with writers in countries as different as Spain, Mexico, Argentina, Cuba, and Chile? Even if the causes for its adoption are not always clear, there are enough commonalities to begin to draw some conclusions. A pattern that has

repeated itself all over the Spanish-speaking world is that societies that endure economic trauma, dictatorships or authoritarian regimes, or other massive social changes tend to produce a disproportionately high amount of detective fiction as they enter a more critical and self-evaluative period—often as lofty political promises of a new and better society flounder.

Marxist theorist Ernest Mandel, in his 1985 Delightful Murder: A Social History of the Crime Novel, links the development of the hardboiled subgenre to the evolution of crime itself, as well as a growing public consciousness of the flourishing organized crime that took hold during prohibition in the 1920s, coupled with the wild popularity of "pulp" fiction during the same period (33-34). Because the criminal enterprise had turned into a fully professional venture, its infiltration of legitimate political, social, and economic systems was nearly omnipresent. This spawned a new sort of detective that worked outside the normal (compromised) conduits of law enforcement and legality. I would add one more element to this, which is that hardboiled fiction reveals disillusionment with the failures of great social promises made after a significant national trauma: in the case of the U.S., the Great Depression. As I will discuss below, Persephone Braham makes a similar assessment about the dynamic in Spain and Latin America. John Scaggs, on the other hand, offers a very different explanation for the development of the genre, rooting it in American popular culture. He essentially argues that hardboiled fiction is a transposition of the traditional Western frontiersman-hero on an urban scene. The private investigator, particularly as conceptualized by the novelists such as Chandler and Hammett, is typically a rough-and-tumble outsider, somewhat crude around the edges. He (the P.I. is almost always male) is often, at heart, a romantic idealist, searching for truth and justice by any—and often the wrong—means (58).

Scaggs discusses at length the plasticity of the subgenre, as well as its inherent contradictions—mostly rooted in the P.I.'s mercenary ethos and tendency to resort to illegal and often violent tactics—both of which have allowed its long and varied development through the creation of dramatic tension with the reader's notion of what constitutes correct or good behavior. Of particular interest is his observation that, just as often as they find the truth, hardboiled detectives are hired to bury it. He follows Paul Skenazy in observing a certain "haunting" aspect of the past that continues to erupt in the present (66-67). I would argue that this temporal disjunction further contests developmentalist (thus modern) notions of history, and is particularly relevant in the context of Hispanic letters, as it reflects Hispanic societies' incomplete and tempestuous relationship with the Enlightenment and, therefore, modernity itself. As has been discussed at length elsewhere, this is a product of the earlier colonization of Latin America as well as the unequivocally anti-reformation ideology of the colonizers.

Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and Spain are the clearest and most prolific examples of this phenomenon, and have been written about extensively—for instance, by Josefina Ludmer on Argentina, Persephone Braham on Mexico and Cuba, and José F. Colmeiro and Joan Ramon Resina on Spain. Braham and Colmeiro tend to focus on the advent of the hardboiled subgenre as a response to a "culture of disenchantment," whereas Colmeiro and Ludmer study the surge in national crime fiction within the larger developments of 20th century literature in Spain and Argentina, respectively. In work specifically on Chile, there are only a few books written on the subject in Spanish or English. However, a small number of authors (such as Ramón Díaz Eterovic, Mirian Pino, and Guillermo García-Corales) have been working actively on theorizing the field since at least 2000. Most of this work appears in essays, collections, and conference proceedings, with the notable exception of García-Corales and Pino's 2002 book, Poder y crimen en la narrativa chilena contemporánea: Las novelas de Heredia [Power and Crime in Contemporary Chilean Narrative: The Heredia Novels]. The later portion of the present article will address this relatively little-known manifestation.

Once appropriated, the hardboiled mode was commonly referred to as **la novela negra** (the noir novel) or **el neopoliciaco** (the new detective novel). In her 2004 Crimes Against the State, Crimes Against Persons: Detective Fiction in Cuba and Mexico, Persephone Braham focuses mainly on the cases of Cuba and Mexico, but does make frequent reference to the Spanish appropriations of the subgenre. During roughly the same 25-year period (1968-1993), all three countries—along with the Southern Cone—would go through massive changes as they became integrated into an increasingly more globalized socioeconomic paradigm at the same time that domestic politics showed significant degrees of stress or upheaval.

Braham sees the **neopoliciaco** as a manifestation of the disillusionment felt by the Left, for different reasons, in all of the aforementioned countries, because of the relative failure of revolutionary or reformist projects and rhetoric. The three main failures she points out are the 1968 massacre of student activists in Mexico City leading up to the Olympics; the economic chaos, social insecurity, and drug culture that emerged in Spain after the death of Franco; and the essential failure of the Cuban Revolution and "special period" that followed the breakup of the USSR, Cuba's main trading partner and geopolitical guarantor. The hardboiled subgenre represents a way of

describing these realities while maintaining a certain degree of distancing from bourgeois or petit-bourgeois society and values.

Commenting on the Hispanic world's adoption of a genre with an Anglo-American penchant for containing the irrational (counter-Englightenment/counter-bourgeoisie), Braham notes that, "In contrast, Spanish and Latin American reality is at least nominally governed by an antirationalist tradition in both the juridical and intellectual spheres" (5). She says:

...the detective novel has come to serve as a locus for the reenactment of the Latin American dilemma surrounding modernity, which from the moment of Independence, as [Carlos] Alonso asserts, "constituted both the bedrock of Spanish American cultural discourse and the potential source of its most radical disempowerment." (5-6)

That is to say that Spain, as the most significant cultural and political progenitor of much of Latin America, was itself in a disempowered position in relation to the rest of Europe (and by extension the United States). Spanish-speaking Latin America, as the former colonial subject of Spain, was doubly disadvantaged, and therefore even less likely to be able to integrate fully into modernity. The former Spanish colonies had to deal not only with the colonial legacy, but also with their relatively weak and dependent position within the hemisphere.

The development of detective fiction in all three countries was distinctive, and was affected by three separate historical processes. For the genre in Mexico, Spain, and Cuba, the first critical event was the massacre in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas [Plaza of Tlatelolco] in Mexico City (1968). In this tragedy, government troops fired on and killed unarmed students and housewives (200-300 by most counts, but possibly many more). Exact numbers of arrests are not available, and many people were disappeared and their bodies burned. This blatant violation of human rights destroyed any vestiges of hope that the populist ideals of the Mexican Revolution were still represented by the PRI (Institutionalized Revolutionary Party). Shortly thereafter, in 1969, Rafael Bernal published El complot mongol [The Mongolian Plot], which foreshadowed a boom from the 1980s on in Mexican hardboiled detective fiction. Bernal's detective, Filiberto, is in essence a police hit man, and he is trying to foil a supposed plot to kill a visiting U.S. President.

Although Filiberto has few redeeming characteristics, and would prefer to keep it that way, despite himself he reveals certain impulses toward doing good. Moreover, he also demonstrates through his actions the crass brutality of the Mexican security forces, which are continually answering to International forces. This indicts both Mexico's relative lack of sovereignty and the truly undemocratic nature of the government that has come out of the Mexican Revolution (PRI). Rough, but not without a sense of humor, he compulsively spews forth interjections of "¡Pinche pasado!" ["Fucking past!"] and "¡Pinche leyes!" ["Fucking laws!"]. (7, 11) A former national army soldier, Filiberto further complicates the idealism of the Revolution by the fact that he "is not disillusioned only about the failure of revolutionary hopes for equality and justice. His nostalgia is more for the life of the soldier, where rape, pillage, and murder didn't need to hide themselves behind a bureaucratic mask" (Braham 69).

Even more famous in the Spanish-speaking world than Bernal's detective, however, is the long-running Belascoarán Shayne series, written by Mexican author Paco Ignacio Taibo II. It began with Días de combate [Days of Combat] in 1976, and continued through the most recent installment, 2005's Muertos Incómodos [The Uncomfortable Dead], which was co-written long-distance with Subcomandante Marcos (the leader of the Zapatista rebels). This ongoing novelistic cycle is comparable in length and international influence to that of Catalan writer Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. The detective, Hector Belascoarán Shayne, is a former engineer turned radical activist who definitely does not approach his mysteries rationally.

At times, he terrorizes people during investigation, occasionally for self-gratification when he thinks that the criminal deserves it. A tremendously self-reflexive, contentious character whose eye patch underlines his identity as an eccentric or pirate, he is also given to interacting with the media...and in the process comments on his own status as a character in a literary work, as he "[inserts] his cases into radio talk shows and other media" (Braham 91). Also, Belascoarán Shayne continually makes reference to other detectives in literature and film, noting himself that neither his techniques nor Mexico itself lend themselves to rational methods, as the entire political system and law enforcement apparatus are completely devoid of reliability and propriety.

Both Taibo and Bernal perform work within the genre that can be characterized as postmodern. Through displacing and adapting the original genre of hardboiled fiction, placing it in late 20th Century Mexico City, they make it something different—something new and unique to their own circumstances. Although definitions of postmodernity abound, Braham provides a particularly good one that applies to all three national contexts she discusses, as well as Chile's:

Postmodernism is a slippery and contentious term in any context: in general historical and sociological terms, it

describes a reaction to modernity conceived as a worldview rooted in rationalism, empiricism, industrial development, and political and economic liberalism (including both Capitalist and Marxist philosophies). Postmodernist devices in literature include parody, pastiche, references to popular culture, intertextuality, and a treatment of subjectivity as both desirable and suspect, depending on the position of the subject with respect to the modern episteme. (14)

In post-Franco Spain (1975-) the most celebrated hardboiled writer has been the previously mentioned Manuel Vásquez Montalbán, with his protagonist Pepe Carvalho. Like many other Spanish-speaking detectives, Carvalho is an avid reader, and despite his rough edges, he is well-educated. As a representative of the new Spain, he is disillusioned after the transition from dictatorship to constitutional monarchy failed to meet his expectations, but he is determined to press on. A man of eclectic tastes, he occupies a mountainside home in an upper-middle class section of Barcelona and eats gourmet food out of the pot, while sipping his wine from a crystal goblet. He enjoys the company of a prostitute, but also prizes his time alone, and reproaches himself for spending so much time with her. Perhaps the most eccentric aspect of Carvalho's behavior, though, is his proclivity for burning books from his enormous library, as he does in the 1975 Tatuaje [Tattoo], the second of the fourteen-book Carvalho series. A good example from this novel is when the detective burns a copy of España como problema [The Problem of Spain] for its offensive suggestion that the postdictatorial problems of Spain could be reduced to just one (22). Through similar episodes Vázquez Montalbán comments implicitly on more academic, or "high-brow" exchanges concerning the state of affairs in contemporary Spain, as well as making a running tongue-in-cheek commentary about the act of writing itself, all while managing to entertain and occasionally shock his readers.

Arising in an isolated socialist context, Cuban detective fiction has a very different trajectory. In some ways it resembles much of the cultural production seen in democratic transitions in that it represents a progressive disillusionment with the ideology and promises of the Revolution. It begins supporting official doctrine, such as in Luis Rogelio Nogueras' Y si muero mañana [What if I Die Tomorrow?] (1976). When the U.S. refused to ally with Castro's Cuba, they had turned to the Soviet Union for strategic economical and political support. Then, with the fall of the Soviet Union and the extreme deprivation of the "special period," beginning in 1991, Cuban detective fiction began to question the viability of the Cuban Revolution in a post-socialist world and its legitimacy as an authoritarian state. The best-known author in this genre is Leonardo Padura Fuentes, whose 1997 Máscaras (Masks) questions the ideology of the Revolution, but goes further in interrogating its underlying sexual dogma and homophobia. As Braham explains, Padura himself considers his work to be postmodern, "in that it uses intertextuality [...] incorporates elements from popular culture [...] focuses on all aspects desirable and undesirable of Cuban society; and subordinates the rationalist elements of the mystery to social criticism and novelistic art" (Braham 56).

In Chile detective fiction did not make a serious appearance until 1987, but the events of the 1973 coup weighed heavily on Latin American letters, as they marked the beginning of a new, more murderous scale of repression. There were a few pieces of classical detective fiction written in Pacifico [Pacific] magazine before the Coup, but by and large, the genre of crime fiction did not resonate with either Chilean authors or the reading public before its emergence in the mid-1980s, when the first embers of postdictatorial reckoning had begun to flicker. Before the Coup in 1973, the Boom had dominated the literary scene, and in the years immediately following the Coup, national production of literature was drastically cut. During the mid-1980s, the military government was still firmly entrenched, but it was gradually losing its iron grip on the country. In this climate, literature was permitted, but by no means encouraged.

During its first decade the Pinochet dictatorship, with U.S. support, succeeded in implementing profound changes in the Chilean economy, replacing the mechanisms of state-sponsored development with those of Neoliberal free market structures. These changes implied massive privatizations (most notably of the pension system), and were extremely lucrative for the wealthy, while undermining the power of the middle class. The effects on the working class, in turn, were harsh and far-reaching.

Crime fiction in the postdictatorial context, then, allows for the questioning of hegemonic narratives concerning the "success story" of Neoliberalism, by showing glimpses of those who were left in the dust of the BMWs and Mercedes of the dictatorship and the corporate conglomerates. Abuse of power, in private and public contexts, along with lopsided law enforcement, combined to exacerbate the stark socioeconomic inequality that worsened during the first years of the transition. Many Chilean artists responded to these changes by choosing to represent those who had been forgotten during the economic reorganization. By describing their situations and realities, the authors were able to speak for those who would contest the hegemonic, mass media-based culture of the market.

The adoption of the hardboiled detective as main character thus served as a weapon of resistance to fascism and an antidote to neoliberalism. The detective represents a possibility for private justice when the state has either turned its back on the average citizen, or has been actively complicit in repression. It is also able to penetrate the conciliatory

rhetoric and elided conflict of the transitional government and corporate media. Even in literature not featuring a private eye, detective tropes and narratives are often used by characters to reclaim genuine, durable personal and national truths, as well as a sense of agency.

Just as U.S. hardboiled private eyes often found, it is very easy for a postdictatorial detective to assume the role of oppressor, albeit on a small scale. Revenge is shown to beget violations of human rights, and a climate of violence that engenders more aggression and even sadism. This, in turn highlights the impossibility of true justice being realized. Not only is the violation of human rights, through torture or cold-blooded murder, shown to be indefensible, but the inadequacy of any punishment to right the wrongs is revealed. On this subject, Ariel Dorfman, author of La muerte y la doncella (Death and the Maiden), writes, "Pensaba que, por lo menos en el caso de Chile, era posible que la única reparación real para muchas víctimas fuera, al final de cuentas, nada más que la verdad desnuda y terrible" [I thought that, at least in the case of Chile, it was possible that the only real reparation available to many victims was, in the end, nothing more than the terrible, naked truth.] (Dorfman 86). In the postdictatorial context, then, faith in the state and in the courts was shown to be severely shaken, and these newly constituted political bodies were seen (at least until 1998) as being wholly contingent on the military's willingness to them to continue in power.

I will examine these contradictions first in the detective fiction "boom" of the late-1980s and 1990s, with particular attention to the works of Ramón Díaz Eterovic's Heredia, which is viewed by many authors and critics to be foundational in the Chilean context. To discuss the Chilean variant of the hardboiled novel, it is essential to understand the conditions under which the appropriation was made. In the fifth chapter of Delightful Murder, entitled "The Ideology of the Detective Story," Mandel notes that "Corruption, violence, and crime were evident not only in the periphery of American society, but in its very centre. [. . .] From the outset then, the American crime story presented crime as far more completely integrated into society as a whole than the British did" (46).

The shift from seeing crime and inequality as something outside society to having infiltrated the highest ranks of social institutions is what made the hardboiled novel (and consequently the **neopoliciaco**) an art form that is born out of what is referred to by many critics as a "culture of disenchantment." In the case of the Latin American **neopoliciaco**, however, it also represents a reaction against the Boom's tendency to elide political realities in favor of a temporally displaced mythology. As Persephone Braham explains,"The **neopoliciaco** represents a reaction against the mythologizing aestheticism of the Latin American **boom** of the 1960s and 1970s. Coarse, realistic, and chaotic, it is marked by the same pessimistic idealism as the first hard-boiled fiction" (12). In the case of Chile, the ruthless destruction of Salvador Allende's presidency and of the **Unidad Popular** [Popular Unity] government represented a severe blow to the hopes of the Latin American left, and gave way to fascism and calculated, coordinated, institutional crime.

To differentiate this from the U.S. political culture that Mandel refers to, the crimes perpetrated in Chile (and Argentina during the same time period) were part of a carefully planned effort to remold society and the economy from top to bottom. It was not a case of individual abuses of otherwise venerable institutions. The role of the detective in the postdictatorial context is to determine the truth that lies behind government rhetoric. Since the police, the **Carabineros**, are a branch of the Chilean army, they cannot be counted on as a source of impartial truth, or to sympathize with those who have been brutally repressed. This makes detection a distinctly non-governmental enterprise in Chile; it, therefore, depends on popular support and serves the community in moving towards the restoration of what was lost during the dictatorship.

Ramón Díaz Eterovic, author of the Heredia series, sees detective fiction itself as having a similar purpose during the transition: "la configuración de la memoria histórica del país y la descripción de la atmósfera social de la dictadura y sus años siguientes" ["the creation of the country's historical memory and the description of the social atmosphere of the dictatorship and the years that followed it"](García-Corales 2005: 88). The emphasis in these novels, in other words, is less on the resolution of crimes than on a collective effort to restore a lost past which has been forcefully and artificially extirpated. It also resists the present aesthetic paradigms (as strong as their pull might be), based on the psychology of the market, which imposes a constant, forced obsolescence on all aspects of life, flattening affect and relying on the empty repetition of patterns of communication.

Díaz Eterovic's Heredia truly fits into these criteria. He has a penchant for spending hours in the infamous, labyrinthine Bío-bío market in Santiago, which is filled with all sorts of stolen and discarded goods for sale—thus bypassing and undermining the capitalist marketplace. Most importantly, however, this market represents a collecting point for the detritus of contemporary life in the capital. His desire to immerse himself in this environment is just as telling—if not more so—than instances in which he notices the frequent destruction of old buildings in the

downtown area that he frequents (Díaz Eterovic 2001: 99). Díaz Eterovic's character also shows the influence of other well-known Spanish-language detectives, such as the aforementioned Belascoarán Shayne and Cavalho. All are well-read outcasts who are able to observe the goings-on of cities and societies in general from a peripheral standpoint that affords them some measure of objectivity.

Like Paco Ignacio Taibo vis-à-vis Belascoarán Shayne, recent statements by Díaz Eterovic show that he continues to consider Heredia a viable, if aging and increasingly anachronistic, character. In the novels, Heredia is constantly aware that the role of the private eye in Chilean society is a precarious one. La ciudad está triste [The City Is Sad] (1987) tells the story of the detective's search for a disappeared female medical student. Heredia eventually discovers that she was involved with and killed by some powerful figures from the Santiago criminal underground, but in doing so he also manages to exact a certain amount of revenge upon them. One of the main issues broached by the book is the solitary, at times desperate efforts by private citizens to seek truth and justice on their own. The investigative police are of no help in this, since finding missing persons in dictatorial Chile is not at all a high priority for them. They only become concerned when it is apparent that people are dying for non-political reasons.

As a detective figure, Heredia fits perfectly into the hardboiled mold and ethos. He is an ill-tempered loner who is very critical of the dictatorship's security apparatus and tends toward the unhealthily romantic. He has a friend working as a police detective who occasionally helps him out with cases and tries to temper the private eye's zeal for justice. Heredia complicates his status as a "good" character because he is just as likely to use force to extract information from a source as any other method, introducing the moral ambiguity and irony of the detective committing injustices in the pursuit of justice. He also recognizes the failure of reason and deduction as methods of detection.

It is worth noting that, in the first Heredia novel, the human rights violations and crimes of the state are referred to very obliquely. For example, under his name the sign on his office door reads "investigaciones legales" ("legal investigations"). Heredia muses, "sin saber hasta esa fecha qué demonios quería decir con eso. De seguro provenía de los años en que dejé de estudiar leyes, porque comprendí que la justicia se movía por otra parte, amparada por la complicidad del dinero y el silencio" [I still didn't know what the hell I meant by that. It must have been from the years that I stopped studying law, because I realized that justice was found somewhere else, protected by the complicity of money and silence](Díaz Eterovic 1987: 10). This type of general social indictment is typical of works written under the dictatorship, in which direct links were normally not made between the state and criminality. After the dictatorship ended, however, this changed, even for Heredia. Díaz Eterovic has said that he chose the hardboiled subgenre in order to reflect the experience of a city "bajo vigilancia" (under surveillance), but there is little evidence that he intended this self-reflexive mode to apply to his own writing as well (Díaz Eterovic 2002: 48).

In the third novel in the series, Nadie sabe más que los muertos (No One Knows More than the Dead] (1993), Heredia takes on the burden of locating detenidos/desparecidos [detained/disappeared people]. This direct confrontation of the dictatorship's crimes shows the profound difference that the formal end of the dictatorship in 1990 had on the subject matter that authors could utilize. This applies to both the direct relationship between the political environment and cultural production, and the way that the Heredia series acts, Díaz Eterovic says, as a historiography of Chile during the political transition (Garcia-Corales 2005: 92).

The Heredia series was a first step in a much wider postdictatorial appropriation of the crime fiction aesthetic. Throughout the end of the dictatorship and the complicated first decade of the transition, it was repeatedly appropriated and changed in order to reflect and criticize the state of the country. In some cases the private detective figure was supplanted by someone of a more credible profession, such as a journalist or a police investigator. Eventually, the basic paradigm and assumptions of the hardboiled novel were subverted and questioned in what some would call "anti-detective" novels, most memorably by writer Roberto Bolaño, who did for the Latin American hardboiled detective what Jorge Luis Borges had done for the classical detective in stories like "The Garden of Forking Paths" and "Death and the Compass." In Bolaño's novels there is no guarantee that the perpetrator will be discovered, or that the crime will be avenged. In fact, sometimes the crime pursues its investigator, destroying any sense of rationality, just as much for the reader as for a given character. Justice is far from simple, and even our most cherished institutions and metanarratives—truth and a stable sense of morality—are no longer safe.

The critical ethical relativism that marks Bolaño's novels is a hallmark of fiction produced throughout the Spanish-speaking world following the first wave of novels that sprang out of the events of the late 1960s to mid-1970s. Just as national innocence was lost in the U.S. because of scandals that showed the highest institutions to be corrupt and lacking in moral authority, Spanish-speaking countries confronted compromised democratic transitions,

ineffective truth commissions, and stagnant supreme courts, and meaningful justice seemed all but impossible. Victims had to be satisfied many times with simply exposing the truth, but this was both insufficient and impossible to discover. Variants of the crime fiction genre have continued to be a relevant way to confront these countries' problems, even as the specific manifestations have changed, the underlying issues of injustice, inequality, criminal complicity, and social tension remain.

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Saviano, Garrone, Gomorrah: Neorealism and Noir in the Land of the Camorra

Fabrizio Cilento

Unidentified Narrative Objects

In the opening chapter of Gomorrah, Roberto Saviano describes the arrival of shipping containers from China loaded with dead bodies spilling out in the port of Naples. "The hatches, which had been improperly closed, suddenly sprang open, and dozens of bodies started raining down. They looked like mannequins. But when they hit the ground, their heads split open as if their skulls were real. And they were." Just a few lines later, Saviano reveals his source: "The port crane operator covered his face with his hands as he told me about it, eyeing me through his fingers. As if the mask of his hands might give him the courage to speak. He'd seen the bodies fall…" (2006:3-4).

This example illustrates how, throughout his personal journey into the realm of the Neapolitan-based organized crime system called Camorra, Saviano does not distinguish the author's subjective gaze from that of his unofficial sources. Instead, he creates an eye/I dynamic, that is, an oscillation between centered and autonomous subjectivity. The incorporation of unanticipated viewpoints such as that of the port crane operator allows Saviano to break the boundaries between the journalistic inquest, a whistleblower's account, and the political pamphlet. To embrace multiple identities is an ethical position, a rejection of a politically correct point of view on the Italian Southern Question.

Portrayed as an open, infected wound, the port of Naples constitutes a perfect location for revealing the global dealings of the Camorra. Such a setting is revelatory of the influence of American film noir and hard-boiled literature on Saviano. Recent studies by Gyan Prakash and Edward Dimendberg1 have discussed film noir's preoccupation with the urban landscape and dystopic images of the modern city. The liminal space of the port is topical in the history of noir: from the arrival of the freighter La Paloma in San Francisco's dock in The Maltese Falcon (John Huston, 1941) to films such as Port of New York (Laslo Bendek, 1949), to more recent neo-noirs such as The Usual Suspects (Bryan Singer, 1995).

The link with a noir imaginary is the peculiarity of Gomorrah and possibly a key factor in its success when compared to the large body of nonfiction reportages or academic books on organized crime. While a book on the Camorra would typically sell between 5,000 and 10,000 copies and rarely crossed the regional borders of Campania, Gomorrah became an instant bestseller translated in over fifty languages. On a contextual level Gomorrah is not radically different from previous books on the topic, which describe the illegal trafficking of the Camorra in similar ways. In fact, Saviano was accused of plagiarism in 2009 by freelance reporter Simone di Meo and by the local newspaper Corriere di Caserta (and then acquitted by the Naples courts the following year). Caught in the fiction vs. nonfiction debate on the nature of the book, critics overlook the author's stylistic choice of narrating actual events by adopting the language of global noir. The influence of noir on Saviano is clarified and even accentuated by Matteo Garrone's cinematic adaptation of Gomorrah. Garrone stated in numerous interviews that he first experienced a sinister attraction to the hyperreal 'images' that the book presents, such as the Chinese bodies with open skulls looking like mannequins, and only later became preoccupied with Saviano's overall analysis of the crime system. While the book is an epic attempt at describing the larger-than-life apparatus of an all-invasive conspiracy, and to

coherently represent fragmented pieces of the unknown, the film is a complementary tool that proceeds by giving autonomy to a series of minor, and apparently secondary episodes. These scenes portray the invisible everyday life under the state-within-the state that criminality has constructed in the outskirts of Naples.

Because Saviano's book is neither a novel nor reportage, neither narrative nor journalism, in New Italian Epic Wu Ming defined it an UNO, that is "Unidentified Narrative Object" (2009: 12). Saviano uses police reports, judicial documents, and personal experiences to depict Naples' organized crime operations within the globalized economy. Again, what is unique is that Saviano blends these technical sources with the storytelling typical of the hard-boiled school of writing and film noir. This, and not the revelation of the naked facts, allowed him to reach both a specialist and a vast generalist audience. While there is certainly interest in the organized crime issue, not everyone is willing to decipher the heavy technicalities, to spot the recurrent falsifications in official documents, or to climb the bureaucratic jargon's wall of ice. Saviano managed to find a remarkable balance between the necessary evil of technicalities and an evocative noir language (which involve gruesome details and succinct anecdotes).

Saviano's narrative voice resembles that of an investigator who is both fascinated and repelled by crime. At times the author embodies an ultra-analytical and ultra-educated version of Sam Spade or Philip Marlowe, or better, of a Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe with an unprecedented sociopolitical awareness that leads into activism. But the author's voice in the book is also enigmatic at times. Some passages describe new lethal drugs being tested on heroin addicts, an indifferent crowd passing by the wounded dying in the streets, a crossfire killing of a fourteen-year-old girl, and primitive rituals for recruiting young teenagers into the crime organization and testing their courage. How was Saviano able to see all this? Who is the narrating "I"? Are we reading a piece of journalism, or a novel disguised as such? According to Wu Ming, this sort of question leads Gomorrah into the UNO. In order to understand this, as well as the transition from Saviano's Gomorrah to its film adaptation by Garrone, I propose to expand on the concept of Wu Ming's UNO, arguing that it should not be limited to literature, but can also be extended to Saviano himself as a result of his unprejudiced use of different media. The author himself can be considered an UNO, a ubiquitous storyteller in the age of media convergence and participatory culture. Saviano received numerous death threats, and was forced to live in seclusion under constant government protection, but this did not prevent his provocative ideas from simultaneously circulating on different media, throughout national newspapers, television, social networks, literary blogs, platforms such as YouTube, and theatrical and cinematic adaptations.

Garrone's film appears as an important extension of an innovative communication strategy rather than a close re-proposition of the original material. When Garrone started shooting Gomorrah, Saviano had already successfully raised awareness about the Camorra. Thus, the film is able to bypass much of the first hand informative and pedagogic material and to concentrate on a minimalist rather than "epic" approach. Gomorrah is an ambitious film that overcomes the present impasses of Italian neorealist heritage by blending it with noir moral ambiguity and visual culture. For this reason, Garrone's work is revelatory of how today film noir is a not a uniquely American cinematic phenomenon, but rather a transnational and transgeneric one, capable of crossing national boundaries and dramatizing the crisis of urban peripheries.

Saviano in the Age of Convergence Culture

After the publication of Gomorrah, Saviano appeared several times on television, interviewed by well-known journalists and talk show hosts such as Enzo Biagi (Rotocalco televisivo), Michele Santoro (Annozero), Enrico Mentana (Matrix), Daria Bignardi (Le invasioni barbariche and L'era glaciale), and Fabio Fazio (Che tempo fa and Vieni via con me, which he co-hosted). Saviano was also interviewed by Nazanine Moshiri on Al Jazeera's People & Power (where he was labeled "the Italian Salman Rushdie"), by Laurence Pollard on BBC's Culture Show, and by NOS Netherlands, the Dutch national television. His communication strategy recalls that employed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, another intellectual who wanted to be seen protesting television on television and who used paid time to stage his ferocious polemics against the so-called "economic miracle" (1959-1964) and its afterwards.2 Saviano's monologues and interviews in the era of Silvio Berlusconi's failed "Italian miracle" and conflicts of interest are often self-reflexive, with the result that the medium itself is put on trial for the distorted information it provides. Organized criminality had never before been addressed with such precision, frontally challenged or described in such detail on TV. It is not surprising that these epiphanies made headlines on national newspapers, and that in the public opinion the writer's persona quickly became inseparable from that of the public storyteller. This was also confirmed when in

2009 Saviano received an honorary degree in Communication and Art Teaching from Milan's Academy of Fine Arts in Brera. Saviano dedicated the awards to the people from the south of Italy living in Milan, generating subsequent polemics with senator Roberto Castelli from the Northern League.

Saviano quickly transcended the literary object, or at least has demonstrated Gomorrah's capacity to exist simultaneously inside and outside the page. Seen in this light, Gomorrah appears to be an UNO not only for the literary techniques effectively described by Wu Ming, but especially for Saviano's capacity to transform a best-seller into a fluid work in progress that each time resists its detractors by refining its own arguments, or by choosing new objectives. Thus, the legitimate critiques regarding the role of the publisher (which emphasize the rigorous work of editor Helena Janeczek at Mondadori) or the accusations of plagiarism and inexactitudes are marginalized, since they miss the main point of Saviano's communication strategy. Furthermore, in the age of media convergence and participatory culture, the TV appearances continue to successfully circulate across different systems, once they are uploaded on platforms such as YouTube and social networks such as Facebook. Today Saviano is a writer as much as he is a ubiquitous storyteller, for security reasons physically separated from the community in which he grew up, but virtually present in it more than ever. He is a catalyst able to generate in-depth discussion and to bring to light what had been, before the "Gomorrah effect," conveniently removed from the Italian civil conscience for decades. Another proof of Saviano's pursuit of this strategy lies in the fact that he has chosen the dynamic essay form over the novel for The Beauty and Inferno (2009) and Vieni via con me (2011), which contains the stories that were presented in the TV program he co-hosted. While of course he may publish another UNO novel in the future, what is remarkable about Vieni via con me is that Saviano adapted texts originally conceived for television monologues into a book, and not vice-versa.

Gomorrah Between Neorealism and Neo-Noir

The elliptical and episodic cinematic adaptation of Gomorrah is the most significant step in its metamorphosis into a trans-media text. Garrone successfully blends Italian neorealism with film noir and its sci-fi derivations, creating another unique, unidentified object both in the panorama of contemporary Italian cinema and that of global neo-noir. It has been said that classic film noir has been conceived 'under the influence' of German expressionism, French poetic realism, and Italian neorealism. Historically, the fruitful relationship between noir and Italian cinema is as old as Obsession (1943) - Luchino Visconti's proto-neorealist 'dislocation' of James M. Cain's hard-boiled novel The Postman Always Rings Twice (1934). This is an early symptom of how the phenomenon of film noir is heterogeneous, polyglot, and indeed cosmopolitan. "Noir sensibility has, from the 1930s to the present, articulated forms of emotional attachment beyond one's country of origins, and in its special relationship to a putatively universal 'modern man' forged in the shadow of global catastrophe" (Fay and Niedland 2010:2). Obsession's alienated characters are the product of exploitive and corrupt domestic relationships. Disguised as another image of American decadence and corruption, the foreignness of Cain's literary source allowed Visconti to indirectly critique the Fascist model of the patriarchal family as portrayed in the so-called "white telephones" films, a series of romantic comedies with elegant scenarios and aristocratic protagonists removed from the struggles of everyday life.

In turn, it would be difficult to overestimate the influence of neorealism on subsequent American film noir. This emerges in some of the most representative post-World War II American noirs such as Knock on Any Door (Nicholas Ray, 1949). Ray's film focuses on the dismal aspects of life and at times uses decadent exterior locations rather than studios. Furthermore, it denounces youth criminality (a topic that is also crucial in Gomorrah) as the product of a deranged social environment rather than of intrinsic human evil.

Gomorrah demonstrates how this tradition of elective affinities between Italian art cinema and film noir is still a vital tendency. Garrone's film is outstanding when compared to numerous the anti-mafia and anti-Camorra films produced in the last fifty years – a tendency animated by noble intents but at times plagued by disappointing results.3 Instead, Gomorrah is informed by Paul Schrader's definitions of noir as "an uneasy, exhilarating combination of realism and expressionism" (1972:584), and "a moral vision of life based on style" (1972:591). As Porton wrote in a recent issue of Cineaste:

> "Trained as a painter, Garrone possesses one of the sharpest eyes in contemporary cinema. Gomorrah teems with memorable

> compositions that offer visual equivalents to Saviano's more analytical perspective: the grotesque, if absurd, spectacle of naked gangsters tanning themselves in a solarium before a violent outburst interrupts their leisure as the film opens; a car swerving through a statuary park after another ghastly shoot out; two crazed kids emptying their machine guns on a beach; and a hapless truck driver splattered with toxic sludge" (2009:2).

If thematically Gomorrah pushes the limits of noir's pessimistic view of society, stylistically it involves numerous low-angle shots and an abundant use of the chiaroscuro technique. The latter constitutes a liberating choice that breaks any stereotypical view of Naples as "sun city." In this way Garrone's Naples echoes the Los Angeles depicted in movies such as Double Indemnity (Billy Wilder, 1944) and Blade Runner (Ridley Scott, 1982). In many long sequences such as the initiation ritual in a cave of the Camorra's young members, the city's outskirts appear shady, rebellious, dysfunctional, entrenched in ecological and racial crises, and above all paralyzed by organized criminality's internal wars. Moral and political authorities have vanished from the cursed territory with criminality rising to become "the system." This is perfectly integrated in the everyday life of a land in which victimization of the inhabitants is not the exception but the norm. In Gomorrah, monstrosity is something banal, almost natural (the only glimmer of hope for an alternate way of life appears in the few seconds in which a young character called Roberto rejects crime's logic and abandons the organization).

This appears to be an extension of a process initiated by classic noirs, which already presented a harsh account of capitalism. Film noir, with its private eyes, rogue cops, white-collar criminals, and femme fatales, reveals the collateral effects of American life. The criminal world cannot be conveniently isolated within the urban underworld as in the old gangster films of the 1930s because it flourishes everywhere. Every man is a potential criminal, and not even a quiet, anonymous life in suburbia is immune from violence. Film noir also undermines the cliché that in America there is always a second chance. "There is no reprieve in film noir, but characters just keep paying for their sins. In Joseph Lewis' Gun Crazy (1950), the focus was not on the victim but on the criminals themselves. One is compelled to share their fear and even their exhilaration. There was no moral compass anymore, to the point that even the audience is pulled into the action and becomes an accomplice" (Scorsese in A Personal Journey Through American Movies, 1995). What noir pointed at was a "moral denunciation in the name of basic values among which one finds the privilege accorded to relations of proximity and respect for ideal virtues to the detriment of material values," (Vernet 1993:36) which is often resolved in a courtroom or a police station. Gomorrah shares many of these same characteristics, from the lack of reprieve and a focus on the criminals, to the stylized lighting and composition. However, in the apocalyptic Gomorrah the traditional morals are absent, and there are no basic shared values to defend.

In transforming a 300-page book that contains an impressive amount of first-hand information into a two-hour film, Garrone and a small group of screenwriters, which initially included Saviano, deliberately rearrange chosen facts and proceed by subtraction. While the book has an international scope that involves Russia, Belarus, Scotland, the United States, Spain, the Middle East, and Colombia, the film follows just five main story lines. The protagonists are Pasquale, a master tailor who works in the black market to produce clothing for the high fashion labels that will go on to fit Hollywood stars; Don Ciro, whose duty is to deliver payments to the families of the accomplices who are in prison; Marco and Ciro, two teenagers obsessed with Scarface (Brian De Palma, 1983) who take Tony Montana as a role model; Maria (named Carmela Attrice in the book), murdered with the involvement of the thirteen-year old Totò for the betrayal of her secessionist son; and finally Franco, a toxic waste management specialist, and his young helper, Roberto. Through a brilliant montage á la Robert Altman,4 Garrone blends these stories together, touching upon different points of the Camorra's socioeconomic reach in a series of short cuts that develop simultaneously and at times intersect.

The common denominator of these stories lies in their allegorical value. The characters are executioners and at the same time victims manipulated by invisible forces. They live the illusion of cutting their own deals with the crime system, of bending its savagery to their own ends. Garrone focuses on the wretched of the earth: Camorra's daily laborers and foot soldiers operating in the suburbia. While minor in the book, these characters are elevated to protagonists. Despite the limited scope of the film, the idea of the Camorra as a global phenomenon is suggested through the presence of Nigerian and Chinese mafia (FIG.1), and by the superimposed text that appears at the end of the film, stating that the Camorra has invested in the rebuilding of the Twin Towers site.

Figure 1. Xian and the Chinese driving the tailor Pasquale to an illegal factory.

A notable absence in the adaptation is that of Saviano's persona and his narrative "I" that emerges in many introspective chapters of Gomorrah, which could have been easily adapted in the film as a voice over. As Jameson pointed out in "Synoptic Chandler:"

> "Both pulp or hard-boiled detective stories and film noir are indeed structurally distinguished by the fundamental fact that the voice-over, which signals in advance the closure of the events to be narrated just as surely as it marks the operative presence of an essentially radio aesthetic which has no equivalent in the earlier novel or silent cinema... It is at any rate clear that the voice over of the hard-boiled detective... offers a specifically radio pleasure which must be paid for by a kind of closure that allows the novels past tenses to resonate with doom and foreboding and marks the detective's daily life with the promise of adventure" (1993:36-37).

However, since Gomorrah is caught in a never-ending negative spiral dynamic, the closure of events brought by an authoritative voice becomes impossible. In Gomorrah there is no crime case to solve, no failure of the institutions to defend shared values, no struggle of an innocent individual, and thus no need for narrative closure. Everyone is, at a different level, involved and an accomplice in the system. Furthermore, we have explored how the narrative pleasure of Saviano's voice-over contextualizing shocking events has been a symbolic Trojan horse through the medium of television. As theorist Michel Chion in Audio-Vision has pointed out, television is essentially an auditory rather than a visual medium (1990:37). In order to satisfy his sociopolitical agenda, Saviano's monologues, the ultimate 'voice-over' of our civil conscience, audaciously construct a narration within the facts for his audience rather than simply commenting about the facts. Instead, Garrone has declared numerous times that he is not animated by such pedagogic and openly political impulses, privileging a stylized approach to the events instead.

Garrone's film problematizes cinema's representation of organized criminality, emphasizing that the battle of the Camorra is not fought exclusively at an economic level, but even more so at an imaginary level. In the chapter "Hollywood," Saviano describes how the resistible rise of a crime boss depends on the ability to instill a mix of terror and admiration in the local people through a vernacular appropriation of global cinema stars (which often becomes an involuntary parody). When it comes to the Camorra, it is life that imitates cinema, and not vice-versa: killers changed their way of holding a gun to imitate Quentin Tarantino's characters, a female boss nicknamed Nikita has bodyguards who dress in fluorescent yellow outfits like Uma Thurman in Kill Bill (2003), and Cosimo di Lauro's clothes are reminiscent of those of Brandon Lee's in The Crow (Alex Proyas, 1994). New generations of Camorra mimic cinematic villains in order to construct their own legend and present themselves as local heroes able to keep the order and to redeem the cursed territories surrounding Naples.

The idea of de-glamorizing Camorra is crucial in Garrone's adaptation: there are no elaborate weddings or

summit meetings, but only a squalid, day-to-day struggle for survival. The incommensurable distance between Hollywood characters and the protagonists of Gomorrah emerges in the sequence in which Marco and Ciro quote passages of Scarface in an abandoned building at the city's edge (which belonged to the boss Walter Schiavone, who commissioned a replica of Tony Montana's villa as seen in De Palma's film). Rather than showing the mafia bosses in the film, Garrone concentrates on those at the bottom of the hierarchy. However, despite the fact that Gomorrah constitutes a new frontier in the brutal and raw representation of crime, there is no doubt that the film has appealed to younger generations of criminals. This hypothesis has been recently supported by a Northern Italian gang of teenagers in Quarto Oggiaro (Milan), whose members have been caught mimicking Marco and Ciro's poses and behaviors. Criminal teenagers shot cellular phone pictures of themselves in their underwear with a Kalashnikov pointed at the camera, an open homage the famous beach scene of Gomorrah (FIG. 2-3).

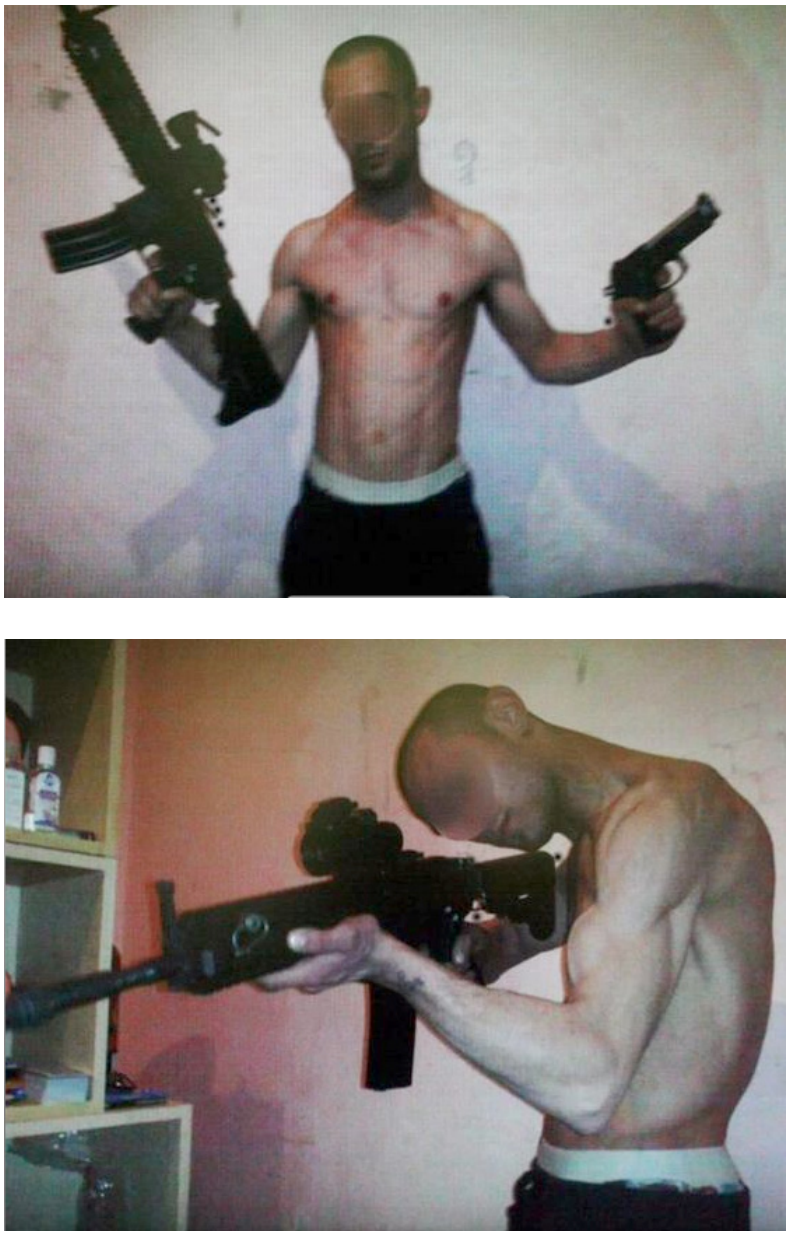

Figure 2-3. Life imitates cinema even when it comes to Gomorrah. Two cellular phone portrayals of a member of the Quarto Oggiaro gang.

Although never complacent, Garrone is undoubtedly fascinated with the recent anthropological mutations of Neapolitan petty criminals. The rural background and association with banditry that marked the criminals a few decades ago has been washed away by the economic miracle, and supermodernity of the Neapolitan suburbia is surprising to international audiences. New generations of criminals, both in Gomorrah and in the pictures above, present a buzz haircut rather than a traditional hat, tattooed muscles pumped up by steroids, knockoff fashions, and the latest cell phones. To furnish an aesthetic portrayal of petty criminals is the project of the whole adaptation, which is not animated by the neorealist impulse to convey a pedagogic message or noir's need to solve the case.

What Garrone adopts from neorealism instead is a rigorous documentary-like style which emerges in the numerous sequences shot by a handheld camera. The operator is Garrone himself, who brings us unusually close to the criminals and in doing so incessantly interrogates what degree of "reality" is developing in front of the camera. Garrone creates a compelling link with the book by shooting on location in Scampia. Situated in the Neapolitan suburbia, the town is the largest open-air drug market in the world. In 2004 a bloody gang war erupted in the area between the controlling Di Lauro clan and a breakaway faction. The cinematic crew of Gomorrah aimed to reconstruct some of these dramatic events and was the first one allowed in the territory, which is considered a fortress in the hand of criminality, or a state within the state. However, at that time there was a tacit truce, a dynamic somewhat analogous to a dictatorship allowing UN inspections in their territories. In addition, for some drug dealers who appeared in the film playing themselves, Gomorrah represented a unique chance to fulfill their dream of becoming part of the cinematic world. Afterward, four were arrested for their crimes.

> "They were happy to participate in the film and share their experiences. To a certain extent, they were the first audience for the film, since they were always behind the monitor as I was shooting. They could tell me if a certain detail was correct. When I was shooting the scene with Totó and the drug dealer, the camera was at the top of the building. During the scene, an actual drug dealer, thinking the scene was real, came from the back to engage in an actual drug transaction. Then the drug dealer came and saw the scene on the monitor and advised us on how a drug deal should be conducted. In instances such as these, I was very concerned to get all the specifics correct...Since they had grown up in this environment, they weren't aware that it was anything abnormal" (Garrone in Porton 2009:6).

The heritage of masterpieces such as Roberto Rossellini's so-called "war trilogy" (1945-48), Salvatore Giuliano (Francesco Rosi, 1961), and The Battle of Algiers (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966), emerges in long uncut sequences, the use of natural lighting and of dialect, a degree of guided improvisation, and a mix of professional (the star Tony Servillo) and non-professional actors on set, chosen according to the principle of typecasting. These choices are particularly effective in the scenes set in "Le Vele," the infamous pyramid-shaped complex surrounded by dioxin-sprayed fields, a symbol of the country's different economic synchronies and of the permanence of the Third World within the First World. Here we finally visualize what we had only read in Saviano's work: the Neapolitan junkspace, the convenient black hole which hides what the Northern part of the peninsula does not want to see, eat, or above all, breathe.

Garrone gives a personal touch to the original material when he mixes the neorealist heritage with a sci-fi and neo-noir aesthetic. This conveys the uncanny feeling of incredulity that one experiences while reading Gomorrah for the first time, since Saviano's reconstituted reportage seems to come from another, deranged planet. The film's prelude is programmatic in this sense, and it reveals that Gomorrah will not be yet another neo-neo-neorealist film,5 but a work that revitalizes the national tradition from within. In order to do so Garrone opportunistically employs the use of lighting and the dystopian feel of Blade Runner, the aesthetic use of graphic violence of Hard-Boiled (John Woo, 1992), and the dark irony and narrative twists of The Usual Suspects. Like Singer's film (which in turn constructs on a wave of 1970s conspiracy films),6 Gomorrah describes a potentially infinite network and "effectively exacerbates the ultimate question of the location of power…the apparent intuition that power may not be localizable, or at the very least that is so ceaselessly mobile that you can never assuredly point your finger directly at it" (Larsen 2002:17). We have seen how, differently from an early neorealist film such as Rossellini's Open City (1945) that presents a stark division between good and evil, or even differently from a film noir, in which the borders between good and evil are blurred, in Gomorrah it is not clear who the villains are and who we are supposed to empathize with, because there are no immediate alternatives (neither the detective nor Saviano as the investigative journalist) to the all-pervasive criminal system.

This is evident in the opening sequence of the film, in which we witness a triple execution in cold blood taking place in the claustrophobic space of a suburban tanning salon for reasons that are never revealed. Over a mechanical sound, the sinister figure of an avenger emerges in a medium shot from the blue artificial light of a solarium (FIG. 4). "You got a crap body," comments the executioner before killing one of his targets, while the camera indulges on the overweight men's eye-protections, tattoos, and golden chains. These are the only images that emphasize the

cult of beauty of the Camorra (some of them are having a manicure), and in retrospect we realize that a dark irony permeates them, since later in the film we learn that these people live in a territory devastated by toxic waste. The use of blue light is an evident homage to Blade Runner, in which Scott often adopts a soft frontlight (sometimes a soft uplight with a hard backlight) in order to create its celebrated silhouettes and chiaroscuro effect (Bukatman 1997:29). Soon, the neomelodic Neapolitan music in the background ("Our story seems like a TV animation" coherently goes the song) is covered by the sound of several gunshots. The avenger and his accomplice flee, while the image of the hyperrealist dead bodies lingers until the title of the film appears in purple against a black background. This reproduces the colors of Andy Warhol's Knives that appear on the cover of the Italian edition of the book. In both Saviano and Garrone's works, narrative complexity is mixed with a critical absorption of pop art/culture.

Figure 4. The Camorra avenger in the opening sequence of Gomorrah.

The critic Chuck Stephens emphasized the similarities between the housing project in Scampia and the dystopian architecture of Blade Runner. Creating an at times obvious but effective light and dark symbolism, Garrone stages many scenes within the subterranean structures of "Le Vele," along the apartment-block rooftop gardens, or in the bowels of parking structures. Outside the traditional neorealist time and space, Garrone creates a polycentric and morally ambiguous world in which roads fork, corridors lead to other corridors, and so on in a series of vertiginous symmetries. "Life under Camorra is science fiction – and space, its final frontier," Stephens notes, a concept that is exemplified again when Franco and Roberto emerge after inspecting a cargo container dressed in Hazardous Materials gear (Stephens 2009). In all this, the gaze is not that of the well-informed native Saviano, but that of a witness suddenly injected into the dark side of neocapitalism.

The successes of both the book and the film derive from the sensation that one must understand for the first time something that investigative journalism and cinema has narrated numerous times (Fofi in Non solo Gomorra, 2008:8). At the same time, the movie illuminates the first link of a chain, but there are no names mentioned, and no direct denouncement of the agreements between Camorra and politicians. This does not diminish the impact of the film, since Gomorrah's focus is on the landscape, the bodies and the faces of its non-professional actors, an investigation on the territory that hunts its figurative essence. Rather than describing the state of things as Saviano does, Garrone chooses to describe a non-place that nails the characters to their own destiny. The emotions arise more from an observation of the facts than from the rhetoric artifice of an eyewitness who is omnipresent and judgmental, linking and didactically guiding Camorra's pathways (De Sanctis in Non solo Gomorra, 2008:36). In this sense, Garrone's Gomorrah portrays the contemporary moral impasse of an entire country and is a funeral to easy and consolatory sociological interpretations of the Southern Question and organized criminality.

Endnotes

1. Prakash, Gyan, ed. 2010. Noir Urbanism: Dystopic Images of the Modern City. Princeton: Princeton University Press and Dimendberg, Edward. 2004. Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

2. See Policardo, Gabriele.2008. Schermi corsari: Pasolini in televisione. Roma: Bulzoni. Another source is the film-montage of the most significant appearances of Pasolini on Italian and French television Il rito del degrado. Pasolini e la televisione (Roberto Chiesi, 2006), available at the Centro Studi-Archivio Pier Paolo Pasolini in Bologna. This document offers a direct cross section of the director's meditations on Italian society in the period 1966-1975.

3. For an overview of recent anti-mafia films see Marcus, Millicent. 2007. "In Memoriam: The Neorealist Legacy in Contemporary Sicilian Anti-Mafia Film." Pp. 290-306 in L. Ruberto and K. Wilson, eds. Italian Neorealism and Global Cinema. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

4. In particular The Player (1992), characterized by a rich intertextuality and a dystopic view of Hollywood's generic conventions. Throughout the film, Altman quotes the opening shot of Orson Welles' Touch of Evil (1958), and renders homage to film noir icons such as Humphrey Bogart (who appears on one of the menacing postcards directed to the greedy studio executive Griffin Mill).

5. This term began circulating in relation to Gianni Amelio's Il ladro di bambini (1992). The proliferation of prefixes is self-explanatory in regard to the neorealism's aesthetic impasse.

6. See Jameson, Fredric. 1995. "Totality as Conspiracy" in The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 9-84.

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"The World of the Grotesque is the Darkness Within Us": The Noir Geoaesthetics of Murakami's Nakata

Rick Dolphijn

"Light displays both itself and darkness"
Baruch de Spinoza, Ethics

The work of the immensely popular Japanese noir or "sushi noir," as he calls himself (Mussari: 97) author Haruki Murakami is characterized by an odd sense of repetition. Mark Mussari is right when concluding, for instance, that "Hotels play a recurring role in Murakami's writings, and they often function as portals to other planes of existence" (70). Yet the repetition here, contrary to how one might read this quotation, does not lie in the word "hotel,", or in the cats and crows or in any other word that often appears in Murakami's stories. It would make up a strange linguisticism to assume that the "hotel" in Kafka on the Shore should relate (because of the word used) to the hotel in 1q84, or that the cat in Norwegian Wood is necessarily connected to the cat in The Wind-up Bird Chronicle.

The repetition, instead, happens in the way "other planes of existence" are introduced with the hotel. The repetition appears to us in feeling the movement of withdrawal from under the words as these other planes of existence suddenly realize themselves, removing us from the familiarity of presence over and over again. Only then "something beyond words appears to make itself felt" as Hobson reads a similar movement in Derrida (1998: 211). Only then do the words of Murakami become haunted.

Moving beyond the words themselves takes us to the breaths by means of which the words travel, by means of which they are being articulated. Being left to the tender mercies of these breaths, as they come from all possible directions, repetition takes place. Throughout his work, Murakami continuously breathes another space into a room, into a suburb of Tokyo, into a forest or into a highway. It clinches itself onto the objects, on the words being spoken, on the futures to come. Then, with a Lynchian slowness, this anotherness takes over. It is always already out there, as it is always in here.

In his earlier short stories, space is still rather mechanistically approached as a means to release the breath of noir. In *The Elephant Vanishes*, for instance, we find ourselves in the suburb where the only attraction of a former zoo is an elephant that somehow disappears with its caretaker (which was impossible, considering the size of the elephant and the routes available). Similar to how H.P. Lovecraft, in his first short stories, experiments with an unknown and unknowable (for untraceable) secret that forms the center of his space (think of his The Music of Erich Zann), the early Murakami, too, circles around such a single crack in the world, a wormhole or vacuum solution that warns us fot the existence of another spacetime.

Later in his oeuvre, however, the crack is not placed center space, but rather seem to be absolutized in the sense that, more and more, anotherness is approaching us from every possible angle. In his latest work, 1q84, this anotherness (established by the Little People) breathes into every possible space (from Tokyo to Chikura) as for instance the sky now always carries two moons: the moon we've always known is now accompanied by a small, green and hideous moon that haunts it just like the Mothers are haunted by the Daughters and the 'pupa of air' that is ready

to duplicate everyone everywhere.

This second moon affirms us that as of now (at least since 1q84), the black holes are everywhere; they shimmer in all the personae, all the buildings and the words that seem to create the particular space. Everywhere one sees a shadow that "is a manifest, though impenetrable, testimony to the concealed emitting of light" (1977: 154), as Heidegger had already put it. The shadows are not relative (to the sun for instance) but are present behind all illumination. China Mièville once very nicely verbalized the omnipresence of shadows, concluding that: "I saw others in similar shadows, similarly hard to make sense of, emerging, sort of, not approaching me, not even moving but holding themselves..." (2010: 198). In 1q84 the presence of another space turned absolute, but it was especially in Murakami's most celebrated novel Kafka on the Shore that the felt presence of anotherness was actively writing itself in every space. This epic work, Murakami's most complex writing, provides our best scenario for learning about the immanent noirness of space.

The stories in Kafka on the Shore are brought to us by Kafka Tumura and Saturo Nakata, the two main characters that travel (from Tokyo to Takematsu), but not together. As always with Murakami, the characters are not developed in any detail, but much more function as media to the story in the Simondonian sense: they merely give a name to "the clinching into synergistic relation of a diversity of elements" (Massumi 2009: 43) as this makes up a situation. They cannot be considered the perspective from which the story unfolds. They are in no way relative to "other elements" that should be of our concern. As with the axonometric landscapes of ukiyo-e artist Ando Hiroshige (1797-1858) who famously painted the 53 stops of the Tokaido (the main road between Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto), the travels reveal spaces that extend themselves along myriad of individualities, all equally important, equally illuminated, yet haunted by the dark. And only though Kafka and Nakata, the noir doubles of Ikku's Yaji and Kita, are these synergistic relations situated.

Yet this story folds back and forth through alternating chapters in which either Kafka (the uneven chapters) or Nakata (the even chapters) is at center stage. They cannot meet one another, rather they function as "anothernesses" to one another in that they are present in each other's story and real in all their consequences. At the same time, however, also because they seem to be pursuing their journey so differently, their stories have nothing to do with one another. In short: the doubled chapters per/form a different mode of being, and yet they are one. They are each other's unforeseen.

It is important to note that the doubled story, as it evolves, develops matter as a "form-taking activity immanent to the event of taking-form" (Massumi 2009: 43). In the string of events, in the new and unexplored spaces offered nothings exists. All comes into existence through Kafka (and Nakata)/Nakata (and Kafka). Kafka Tumura, also known as 'The Boy Named Crow,' (Kafka means 'crow' in Czech) flies through the air, quickly moving from one place to the other in straight lines, always in a rush to get inside and to stay inside: from the inside of the library to the inside of the house in the forest and back again, always in search for a place to shelter. Throughout the book, he always desires to create a 'new home', to create a safe environment in which "the function of the real and the function of the unreal are made to co-operate" (1969: xxxi), as Gaston Bachelard phrased it. For it is this non-cooperation that actually frightens (him) to death. It is acceptable, then, that the home allows for the living spirits, the ikiryō as the Japanese call them, to come about. In fact it is especially for that reason that Kafka searches for the new home, as, again, Bachelard concludes: "the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace" (1969: 60).

Kafka's journey makes up the major plot; his urge to shelter makes up for the dominant 'progress narrative' of the whole book, both in terms of how his fears originate and in how he solves his paranoia. As could be expected, the abusive father and the loved mother play a key role in this trip (mazakon is actually a famous Japanese concept for Oedipus complex, coming from the English the "mother com(plex)"). Written between these two poles (in other words, it is only halfway through the book that the poles are fold out) this Oedipal history and this idealist future sediment themselves in the plot (the critical taking-form of the present) as Kafka (the medium) creates both the (historical) problem (the dark father) and its future solution (the enlightened mother) at the same time.

Kafka's way to deal with these problems is that he starts to discuss matters with what is then still his omniscient superego, 'The Boy Named Crow'. Starting from the first page of the book in which he packs his bags to leave the house that he considered always already dead, his insecurity is expressed through these internal conflicts which he overcomes more and more in his traveling, when moving further away from this dark past and finding the ultimate shelter in the womb of Miss Saeki, who is herself both a 15 year old living spirit and a woman in her fifties whom Kafka believes to be his mother. It is in this schizoid peaceful interior dark space –the womb of Miss Saeki- that

Kafka finally finds his peace. His little death –petite mort in Freudian terms- gives him this place which is "stable, unmoving, intangible, untouched and almost untouchable, unchanging, deeprooted" (Perec 1999: 91)

The second main character, Saturo Nakata, known for his ability to talk to cats, crawls his way through the city. With Nakata, Murakami makes reference to Natsume Soseki's 1905 fantasy I Am a Cat, and whereas Kafka is in many ways a crow, the medium Nakata time and again proves himself to be is a cat. Thus, when Kafka flies away from home, from the city of Takamatsu because he needs to take shelter from the unimaginable dark, Nakata on the other hand, drawn by instinct and movement, crawls further and further away from the city of Nakano not because he flees but because he is always already hunting for "an important thing on the right place" which he actually finds near the end of the book. This important thing turns out to be "the entrance stone," with which he learns to talk. We find out that the entrapment of Kafka (on this side) and of Nakata (on the other side) thus coincides with the entrance stone. After Nakata turned it, free movement between "this side" and the "other side" presumably liberates them both.

The capture of Nakata (on the other side) is explained in top secret files of the US Department of Defense, in the beginning of the book. They tell us that Nakata as a child has experienced the "unimaginable light." In 1944, a group of 16 schoolchildren inexplicably "lost consciousness" during an outing (picking mushrooms) in a rural mountain area and only Nakata never really got over it, never returned to the city where he came from and presumably got his government sub-city, as he calls it himself, as a consequence of this "accident". Later in the book the teacher tells different stories which seem to hint at a Freudian explanation again (saying that domestic violence caused Nakata to act differently from her other pupils).

It is tempting to conclude that the way in which spaces appear within one another, happens in a Freudian way. Murakami has read Freud and definitely has great sympathy for psychoanalysis, but since his "pairs" (Kafka and Nakata, the real and the unreal) rather happen within one another, are a-causal yet extremely meaningful cross-connections, his world comes closer to what C.G. Jung (1960) has called "synchronicity" as Murakami himself has also noted (see Murakami 2011: 382). Also Jung's emphasis on archetypical demons and spirits that we have inherited from our ancestors and that keep haunting us, seems to have inspired Murakami. Yet the crucial difference with Murakami is that whereas psychoanalysis, and Jung's ideas in particular, work with historicisms, Murakami's philosophy seems much more speculative, much more in search of what is yet to come.

Contrary then to the dominant reading of his work (see for instance Kawai 2004: 90), Murakami's (later) plots never historicize themselves, which one would expect, if they truly engaged with psychoanalysis. The travels of Kafka and Nakata do not proceed through the psychoanalytic (re)discovery of the traumatic past. A history is sometimes reassembled again, but never in order to trace the cause of what happens. Rather, history is a consequence of yet another unknown space. History is a means to explain space being formed. History is what Keiji Nishitani would refer to as "recovery"(1982: 65): it restores what was already there (it actively assembles what made the space in the first place) while it once again covers up the world (necessarily creating a new narrative that thickens the body of the earth).

The therapy that Kafka and Nakata follow (towards their liberation, their capture on either side of the Entrance Stone as we find out later) is always aimed at what is to come, which equals the completely unreal, "because all the activities of man become manifest as themselves only in unison with absolute nothingness. And yet precisely at this point they are seen to be the most real of realities because they are nothing other than the manifestation of absolute selfhood" (Nishitani 1982: 73). For that reason they recover cities, forests, but most of all outskirts and backstreets of cities like Takamatsu where the damned seem to rule. Here they are bound to meet strange, dreamlike and vicious characters such as Colonel Sanders and Johnny Walker, who seem to step out so naturally from their environment that they can pop up anywhere. And they will. As the (pimp) Colonel Sanders ensures us: "I am not a person, okay? How many times do I have to tell you that?.. Pimping's just a means of getting you here... I don't have any form... I don't have substance. I'm an abstract concept" (Murakami 2005: 285: italics in original).

The alternating chapters, then, do not take "different routes" towards this Health materialized in the form of a stone. The doubled chapters practice a doubled recovery which is a recovery of perversions that, as always, have an equal amount of "real" and "unreal" in them, as Murakami himself put it (in Gabriel: 122). Similarly, both chapters travel both conscious and unconscious paths. As it works with the entrance stone, upon which the spaces of both "this side" and the "other side" are at work, all spaces open up from an intensive topological surface upon which inside and outside, city and countryside, Kafka and Nakata, make up one morphogenesis in which what happens always bypasses the possible, as it was already inscribed within the laws of nature, opening them, instead, onto a spectrality where there is no respect whatsoever for any binary, dualist, parallel, or representationalist organization

of the real. This is the noir of (im)possibility, a kind of a absolute Jungian collectivity at work which does not only include the possible whole of mankind, but all that is in the process of being formed. In Murakami's Genesis there is no intrinsic difference between the light and the dark; in chiaroscuro the diagrammatical relations between the clear and the obscure come into being.

As already mentioned, Kafka's desire/fear to get in equals Nakata's desire /curiosity to break out. Their synchronicity reveals us two modes of the same breath (to come). Or in Milan Kundera's terms (1985): Kafka is the one (the bird) has to become the one who perpetually falls inside (heaviness, the darkness) whereas Nakata (the cat) has to become the one who has to climb out, towards the light, never afraid of falling (lightness). This is expressed by Kafka's fear to be united with his own shadow, which is what happens when you eventually "fall". At the same moment, Nakata is pushed to stop searching for lost cats (with which he, at the start of the novel, makes some extra money) and start a search for the other half of his shadow.

But, of course, there are many more personae, masks through which landscapes are recovered and vitalized, that are haunted by mere shadows, and by characters that have lost theirs. Perhaps, in a Spinozist, Deleuzo-Guattarian way (also echoing Colonel Sanders) the media (as we labeled Kafka and Nakata before) have by now turned into "conceptual personae" that "serve to crystallize and orient the creation of concepts" (Hallward 2006: 183), that make up the various directions of movement in which the fear, the violence, and the real horrorshow are all materialized. These conceptual personae, these conceptual spirits, have no qualities, no essence, but rather combine particular ways to accelerate, and thus to reveal and vitalize all possible worlds.

Let me give an example of how these conceptual personae enact what we might call an "event" central to the book: the death of Johnny Walker. Johnny Walker performs vivisection on cats. After quite a journey in which Nakata is lured into the darkest and most obscure backstreets of the city, Walker confronts Nakata (the cat) with his gruesome slicing open of cats and the eating of their hearts. Walker then demands Nakata to kill him, as this is the only way he can be stopped. Nakata knives him two times, after saying "I don't feel like myself" (2005: 136). Covered in blood, Nakata falls asleep, but when he wakes up the blood is gone. The blood seems, however, to have continued its journey for at the same time, Kafka, in the city of Takamatsu, awakens for no apparent reason drenched in blood (2005: 64-5). Later in the book, the blood shows similar powers when Kafka states: "I spread my fingers apart and stare at the palms of both hands, looking for bloodstains. There aren't any. No scent of blood, no stiffness. The blood must have already, in its own silent way, seeped inside" (2005: 210).

Taking the travels of the blood as only one example, we can see that this story does not start with two contrasting individuations that take similar routes, but actually of a whole series of dimensionalities through which, for instance, the blood take place. There are not two, but many levels of reality/unreality/irreality/surreality that continuously resonate within one another. The intensive quanta that thus stretch themselves all over these planes (the blood, the flying, the crawling, the inside, the outside) cause the dividuals, as Simondon would call them, to be formed and reformed in most remarkable ways. This is what Henri Michaux summarizes when he states in his reading of schizophrenia: "The lines follow each other almost without stopping. Faces slide over them, outlines of faces (usually in profile) are caught in the moving line, are stretched and contorted like the heads of aviators subjected to too much pressure that kneads their cheeks and foreheads like rubber" (2002: 122-3). It is in this first moment of being in which the principles of individuation are always already at work, molding the individuals named by the book, that Murakami frightens us the most.

It is not the unconscious of the existing person, but the fear of not becoming individualized as a (stretched and contorted) person that haunts the dark spaces to be recovered, that moves the life of Kafka/Nakata. It is the fear that this internal resonance as it takes place before the moment of individuation, as Simondon would put it, is being disturbed. The pre-individual fear makes them one. It is the fear for a mentality not to emerge and the knowledge that this mentality, this individuation, is always already too late, that it cannot anticipate this fear, which causes Kafka to hide himself. This, then, is a human all too human fear. It is the fear that Nishitani (inspired by Buddhism and Heidegger) warns us against the most; this self-centered or logos-centered dogma of a modernism that fears the unforeseen, that is blind to the mechanology. Only when moving towards what he calls an "absolute nothingness": "Everything is now truly empty, and this means that all things make themselves present here and now, just as they are, in their original reality. They present themselves in their suchness, their tathatā. This is non-attachment" (Nishitani 1982: 34).

Then, whereas the metaphysical spaces in which Kafka happens, reveal to us the plot of the book, the pragmatic spaces of Nakata, in which there is such a strong focus upon the senses, sensitivity, sensuality, reveal how the future

starts acting upon the present. Nakata ,the cat, has no idea what is about to happen, but he does not fear it. He prehends it, as Whitehead would say, in such a way that his emergence has already turned several discontinuous energetic fields into an emergent continuity. That is why Nakata never feels 'like himself'. He feels space, the city, the environment. He feels the multifunctionalities that are not yet here, but here to come.

Nakata is the leap into operative self-solidarity, as Massumi (after Simondon) calls it. Nakata is the unforeseen. This constantly takes place in his own chapters where, for instance, the truck driver Hoshina, normally confined by his usual routes and orders from above, through Nakata enters into new spaces, new environments and –never fearful- becomes inspired by the new spaces to come.

It is not, however, only in his own chapters that Nakata puts the multidimensionality of noir to work in its most unforeseen ways, for Kafka also, and mysteriously through Nakata's turning of the stone, finds his home in Miss Saeki and thereby comes to his end. By turning the stone the specters meet the spirit as Nakata immanently produces the magic formula that "what is interior is also exterior" (Simondon in Deleuze: 89). By travelling, by feeling his way through the shadows, Nakata recovers the noir that displays both itself and the light; that, in its resonances with Kafka, unfolds the danger of both the dark and the bright, thereby opening up life and death as one and feeling the futures yet to come.

Nakata's noir geoaesthetics holds great promises for thought. Spinoza (the monist) claimed that "Light displays both itself and darkness" (EII, P43, Schol). Heidegger recovered the dark under the spell of the light claiming that everywhere one sees a shadow that "is a manifest, though impenetrable, testimony to the concealed emitting of light" (1977: 154). Murakami himself, in 1q84, already went further defining the dark and the light as equals concluding that "Where there is light, there has to be shadow, and where there is shadow, there has to be light. There is no shadow without light, nor light without shadow." But it is with Nakata that the true liberation of the dark takes place. For Nakata, the cat that crawls, that touches the earth with its stomach, that desires to feel the power of the dark matter, feels the ethics it includes. Nakata feels that it is not light that creates life (organic and an-organic and non-organic), but that it is in the earth that powers come to being. All forms evolve only from the dark.

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Diseasing the City: Colonial Noir and the Ruins of Modernity

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Allegory in a Time of Waiting

Writing during the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Susan Buck-Morss reflected on the demise of what, borrowing from Walter Benjamin, she termed the dreamworlds of industrial modernity. Twentieth-century political ideologies, be they socialist, capitalist or fascist, had striven to transform and transcend the natural world through material power by building mass utopias. Although they claimed "to rule in the name of the masses," in fact, they had constructed an undomesticated "wild zone of arbitrary, violent power," obscured from public scrutiny (Buck-Morss 2002: 4). The challenge for Buck-Morss was to consider, not the political effects of post-Cold War fragmentation, but rather "the fundamental shift in the historical map [which] shattered an entire conception of the world" (2002: x).

A decade – two since the collapse of the USSR – may be the right critical distance from which to reassess the shattered remnants of modernity's dreamworlds that continue to haunt contemporary culture in the blown-out cityscapes of disaster movies, such as the remake of Richard Matheson's 1954 novel I Am Legend (2007). There, disease is a symptom of – and a catalyst for – the city's ruin and restoration. The future resembles a pre-modern past in which the hunter-gatherer protagonist stalks and is stalked through the wild canyons of Manhattan, paradoxically recuperating, in the midst of the shattered metropolis, indigenous meanings buried in the toponym: 'the island of hills.'

It may be time, too, to reconnect neo-noir visions of wrecked cityscapes with earlier responses to catastrophes and in so doing to resituate discussions of noir within the fragmented territory of industrial modernity, in the ruins of the colonial city. Noir, at least as a genre of political engagement, took shape in a world that had experienced the Nazi blitzkrieg, the holocaust, occupation, and the disintegration of empire – as well as the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which, as Albert Camus noted, marked "the end of ideologies" (Camus 1989: 53). In this post-war environment, history no longer appeared to furnish a framework for elucidating the present, nor did it provide guideposts for the future.

In Jean-Paul Sartre's words, the post-WWII present resembled "a labyrinth of hallways, doors, and stairways that lead nowhere, innumerable signposts that dot routes and signify nothing" (Quoted in Polan 1986: 252). Or as Sartre noted in his reflections on Henri Cartier-Bresson's photographs taken between 1948 and 1949 as China passed from old world to revolutionary republic: an "intermediate phase, a gelatinous duration equally distant from History and repetition: the time of waiting" (Sartre 2001: 26). Noir can perhaps best be understood, in this context, as a form of allegory in the sense identified by Benjamin in his account of baroque tragedy (1928); a form preoccupied with death, anguish and alienation:

> The baroque writer and the modern writer are both anti-romantic in their pessimistic conviction that meaning has fled from the earth and left behind only the 'signs' of things unreadable – a script we can no longer decipher with confident clarity (Kearney 1988: 156).

Noir, then, as allegory in a time of waiting; as a means of "[coming] to terms with dreamworlds at the moment of their passing" (Buck-Morss 2002: x).

The Ruined Future

In August 1946, Nino Frank remarked that a new generation of Hollywood auteurs was eschewing "museum objects" in favour of grittier, criminal adventures or "films 'noirs'" (Naremore 1998: 15-16). In the same year, Sartre returned to the US, writing about his experiences of urban cityscapes in a series of essays including 'American Cities,' published in Le Figaro, and 'New York, Colonial City,' originally published in Town and Country. Sartre's reactions were contradictory: in part, he celebrated the newness and freedom of the American urban life; in part, he bemoaned the uniformity of planning and the conformity of American suburban life. Contemplating the Empire State and the Chrysler Building in Manhattan, Sartre observed: "…suddenly it occurs to me New York is on the point of acquiring a history and that it already has its ruins" (2008: 133). For Sartre, looking upon this "landscape of modernity" (Ward and Zunz 1992), the future appeared ruined before it had begun, whilst the past was still waiting to happen. Or, to quote from William Faulkner's 1951 Requiem for a Nun – a writer whose work had influenced Sartre's own (Sartre 1946) – "The past is never dead. It isn't past."

New York, for Sartre, of all US cities, seemed to carry the seeds of its own destruction. It was an idea of self-annihilation amplified by E. B. White in his short but evocative book Here is New York (1949), which reverberates uncannily in the aftermath of the September 11 2001 attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center:

> A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions... All dwellers in cities must live with the stubborn fact of annihilation (Quoted in Dimendberg 2004: 43).

The strength of the city – its very gridiron, rational orderliness and its engineered foundations – appeared constructed as a vehicle for destruction. Similarly, the city felt to Sartre, at times, like a concentration camp (in 1940 Sartre had been captured by the Germans and transferred to Stalag 12D), planned expressly to annihilate and be annihilated.

What should one make of these reflections? The vision of a dreamworld ruined before it has lived. A future that is past before the past is past. New York as ground zero, where the "evil" heat "crashes down on the city like an atomic bomb" (Sartre 2008: 128). An answer may lie in Sartre's characterization of New York as "a colonial city" – "an immense, malevolent space":

> Even in the depths of my apartment, I suffer the depredations of a hostile, muffled, mysterious Nature. I have the impression of camping in the heart of a jungle teeming with insects. There is the moaning of the wind, the electric shocks I get each time I touch a doorknob or shake a friend's hand, the cockroaches running round my kitchen, the elevators that make my stomach heave, the inextinguishable thirst that rages from morning till night. New York is a colonial city, a camp site (Sartre 2008: 128).

Sartre's colonial city can be read within the broader context of his life-long interest in racism and colonial politics, including the wars in Morocco, Algeria and China (Lamouchi 1996; Smith 2009). For Sartre, American cities reflected their origins as European 'encampments' or colonial 'outposts' in a vast, uncharted continent:

> As for the Americans, it was not their cruelty or pessimism which moved us. We recognized in them men who had been swamped, lost in too large a continent, as we were in history, and who tried, without traditions, with the means available, to render their stupor and forlornness in the midst of incomprehensible events (Sartre 1966: 156).

It was this swamping by the hinterland, according to Sartre, which, in spite of all their architectural monumentality, gave US cities a sense of contingency or provisionality. By the same token, the modernity of New York with its grid-like, inorganic uniformity, served to heighten, rather than to diminish, the 'natural' forces ranged against it. It was not "the shock of the new" so much as the shock of raw electricity or "hostile nature" attacking through the chinks of the techno-dreamworld. At the same time, the city diseased. There was, Sartre observed, such a condition as "'New York sickness,' akin to sea sickness, air sickness or altitude sickness" (2008: 121). The city made Sartre "nauseous" and wracked him with "inextinguishable thirst," not unlike the "sweetish sickness" that afflicts the historian Antoine Roquentin in La Nausée (1938). Indeed, illness, for Sartre, was a concomitant of writing – of modern writing: "The language of poetry rises from the ruins of prose" he declared in a footnote to his essay 'What is Writing?' (Sartre 2000: 115). Or as Raymond Borde and Étienne Chaumeton expressed it in Panorama of American Film Noir: "In this incoherent brutality, there is the feeling of a dream" (1955/2002: 10-11).

Sartre was not alone in his sickness. On 25 March 1946 another French writer docked at New York on a tour of the northeastern US and Canada, under the auspices of the Cultural Relations Section of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Albert Camus. By coincidence, the head of French Cultural Services in New York was the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (Lottman 1979: 378). In fact, it had been Camus who, at the helm of the magazine Combat, had supported Sartre's first trip to the US in 1944-5 (Reid 1997: 615). Approaching the harbor in the freight ship Oregon, Camus was struck by New York's 'inhumanity': "The order, the strength, the economic power" which emitted a "perfume of iron and cement." Everyone, he noted, "looks like they've stepped out of a B-film" (Camus 1989: 32-33). As for Sartre, so too for Camus, New York made him ill: he toured the city in a feverish state. In 1946 Camus had good reason to have disease on his mind, having been working on La Peste (published in 1947): a novel by a pied-noir about a colonial city overcome by bubonic plague – la peste noire – another kind of blackness. His New York journal is punctuated with reflections on the book, as when he compares the recent US bombing of imperial Japan (Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945) with the plague-ravaged colonial city of Oran, the setting of his novel: "In the American newspapers: A weapon more frightening than the atomic bomb. 'In certain places in the Middle Ages the black plague killed 60% of the population'" (Camus 1989: 49). As Camus noted in a letter of June 1946 to Janine and Michel Gallimard, New York reminded him of Oran and the Americans resembled the Algerian colonists with whom he could no longer live: [Les Américains] ressemblent tant à nos colons d'Algérie, mais je ne plus vivre avec eux (Quoted in Todd 1996: 411).

As for Sartre, so too for Camus, New York seemed to be over before it had begun and its hyper-modernity felt strangely antiquated:

> Manhattan. Sometimes from beyond the skyscrapers, across the hundreds of thousands of high walls, the cry of a tugboat finds you in your insomnia in the middle of the night, and you remember that this desert of iron and cement is an island (1989: 51).

Watching workmen excavating foundations between skyscrapers, Camus was filled with an overwhelming "feeling of something prehistoric." The skyscrapers were "monoliths" that rose up in the grey haze "whitened like the immense sepulchers of this city inhabited by the dead. Through the rain one sees the sepulchers sway on their foundations" (Camus 1989: 52). In the same way, Sartre could not think of skyscrapers "without melancholy." They were "historical monuments, witnesses to a bygone age" and as such they belonged to the architecture of the past, rather than to the future (Sartre 2008: 132-133).

Sickness and the Locus of Noir

In perhaps one of his most well-known formulations Anthony King in Global Cities suggested that: "Colonial cities can be viewed as the forerunner of what the contemporary capitalist world city would eventually become." For King, colonial cities were the places where the "representatives and institutions of industrial capitalism confronted ethnically, racially and culturally different pre-industrial and pre-capitalist societies at any significant scale" (King 1990: 38).

It is in these ethnically and racial mixed 'colonial' cities where material power strives to transform the natural world, but where the capitalist matrix sits imperfectly on a pre-capitalist society, that Buck-Morss' undomesticated terrain of "arbitrary and absolute" power becomes visible. This is the locus of noir: junks against a crenellated backdrop of skyscrapers; slum shacks beside walls of glass, steel and concrete; teeming markets alongside floodlit corporate headquarters. As Poshek Fu and David Desser inquire: "Hong Kong: East or West, Chinese or British, traditional or modern, colonial or postcolonial? Issues of identity continue to plague the territory…" (2000: 9). In this "wild zone" of power, identity is recast as pathology: the colonial city is always and ineluctably plagued.

Of course, the diseased colonial city features in classic noir. In Elia Kazan's Panic in the Streets (1950), for example, set in New Orleans where the autopsy of a man murdered by a gangster ('Blackie') in a gambling scuffle establishes that he is infected with a deadly disease: pneumonic plague. The protagonist, Dr. Clinton Reed, is a US Public Health Service officer on the hunt to trace the killer who threatens to spark a deadly epidemic. Or in Earl McEvoy's The Killer that Stalked New York (1950), where a jewel thief imports smallpox to the city from Cuba.

What connects these plague movies with Sartre and Camus? For one, disease in these narratives of urban infection can be read as a political allegory. In La Peste disease functioned, at least on one level, as a metaphor for

fascism in Vichy France. As Camus wrote in his essay 'Contagion,' published in Combat, racism was a form of lethal infection (Camus 1965: 321-323). Moreover, for Sartre, 'illness' was "the only form of life possible in capitalism," a "shared contraction" consequent upon the atomizing forces of industrial modernity as he expressed it in the 1972 preface to Wolfgang Huber's Socialist Patients' Collective: Turn Illness into a Weapon (Sartre 1987).

In Kazan, disease suggests the witch-hunts against communists in McCarthy America, with the pneumonic plague expressive of latent fears about ideological infection and the correlative race to contain disease. By the early 1950s, McCarthyist hysteria had spread across the US, with Congress passing restrictive laws, including the Internal Security Act of 1950, which prohibited the entry or settlement of communist (or former communist) immigrants. As J. Edgar Hoover asserted in 1947:

> It [Communism] reveals a condition akin to disease that spreads like an epidemic and like an epidemic a quarantine is necessary to keep it from infecting the Nation (Quoted in Wald 2007: 175).

Significantly, disembarking at New York, a feverish Camus was himself interrogated by immigration inspectors for his links with the Communist Party (Lottman 1997: 399).

Conclusion: Black Rain

The diseasing city; the colonial encampment; the ruins of a future; the colonial city pushed to the extremes of rationality where coherence tips into incoherence; the uniform but culturally-mixed metropolis (Camus was fascinated by the noirs: black bars and black music and, in Manhattan, the boisterous clubs of the Bowery). These elements, explored by both Sartre and Camus in their forays to New York in 1946 were and remain crucial to noir.

Much has been written about Camus' partial descriptions of colonial Algeria. Edward Said has argued that in Camus' writing the French colonial presence is assumed to be enduring, whilst the indigenous Algerian population is stripped of its humanity and reduced to a cipher (Said 1993: 169-185). But as David Reid has argued, there are continuities between Camus' vision of colonial New York and his descriptions of the ruins at Tipasa and Djemila in Algeria (Reid 1997). There, too, clambering among the ancient remains, Camus glimpsed the inevitability of every empire's ruin.

Camus' journal entries and letters of his visit to New York, later written up as 'The Rains of New York' (1947), evoke this sense of entrapment and stifling repetition, which are underscored by the relentless downpour:

> Rain on New York. It flows untiringly between the high cement walls. The taxi's rapid and monotone windshield wipers sweep a water which is incessantly reborn – bizarre feeling of remoteness. Impression of being trapped in this city, that I could escape from the monoliths that surround me and run for hours without finding anything but new cement prisons, without the hope of a hill, a real tree, or a bewildering face (Camus 1989: 51-52).

This sodden evocation of New York, described in terms of both its ancient-ness ('monoliths') and its newness ('concrete') anticipates Camus' essay 'Return to Tipasa' (1953), a town on the Algerian coast famous for its Roman ruins, which Camus wandered around in the rain, watching ancient sarcophaguses fill with black water – les sarcophages pleins d'eau noire. As in his early visit to the ruins of Djemila in 1936, at the very moment that Benito Mussolini was constructing his version of a mass utopia that drew on the glories of Rome, Camus was acutely aware of the futility of such worldly claims to power. As the tour guide invoked a 'conventional' history of the site, Camus reflected on the paradox: "the ruins of their civilization are the very negation of their ideal." Or as he concluded: "The world always finishes by conquering history" (Quoted in Reid 1997: 611).

The language of the future past and the shattered afterlife of a dreamworld driven to catastrophe, where the feverish narrator struggles to recuperate elusive meaning: this is one contribution of wartime and post-war French philosophy to the discourse of noir as it developed, particularly from the 1970s, working its way back into the plagued cities of late twentieth-century and early twenty-first century neo-noir where the future coexists with its ruins. Furthermore, this French politico-philosophical noir persists in Mike Davis' urban excavations of the future, for example, and in his accounts of the slum-cities of the contemporary world with their suppurating "ecologies of fear" (Davis 1990, 1998, 2005, 2006; Davis and Monk 2007). Global cities are today haunted by the specter of pandemics – deadly infections produced by a reconfigured capitalism, which may be making visible another terrain of post-colonial noir.

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Macau Noir: Criminal Brotherhoods, Casino Capitalism, and the Case of the Post-Socialist Chinese Consumer

Tim Simpson

The Hong Kong film Casino is a gritty urban crime noir set in the Portuguese enclave of Macau in 1991, eight years before Portugal handed the territory back to the People's Republic of China. The Cantonese language film follows the rising fortunes of fictional Macau triad leader "Giant Wan" and his bitter conflict with rival gangster "Lo Ping." The film's opening scene depicts a lone, dark sedan slowly approaching the driveway of the Harbor Century Hotel and Casino. Three of Giant's henchman lean out of the car brandishing machine guns and collectively blast away the glass façade of the hotel entrance, showering security guards and unfortunate bystanders with bullets and shattered glass before squealing away.

The ostensible subject of the film is Giant, played by handsome Hong Kong leading man Simon Yam, but the film's motif is "representation." The film depicts Giant's rise in Macau's criminal underworld through the voice, eyes, and camera of a female television journalist who tells his story. We see Giant's face framed by the viewfinder of the journalist's video camera as he matter-of-factly relates the realities of survival on the streets and in the casinos of Macau. The journalist is both attracted to this tough, principled, "righteous and bold" gang leader who does not smoke or drink and cares for his mother, and repelled by his compulsive competitive instinct and his decision to resolve every dispute with brutal violence. But in her final news report at the film's conclusion she declares to the public that Giant must be understood as a type of "hero," a man for his difficult times.

The film's sympathetic portrayal of Giant can be attributed to the fact that the film is actually an autobiographical story produced by Broken Tooth Koi, a prominent Macau gangster whose penchant for fame and notoriety led to

features and interviews in Time and Newsweek and eventually to bankrolling the film based on his own life. The cinematic rivalry between Giant and Lo Ping presented in Casino mirrored the real-life conflict between Broken Tooth, leader of Macau's 14K triad, and his nemesis Market Wai of the Sun Yee On gang. Their public battles in Macau were brought to life again by the characters in the film, produced by Broken Tooth, and shot illegally in the streets, restaurants, apartments, and hotels of the city.

The film was released in 1999, the year of Portugal's handover of Macau to the PRC, at the height of a wave of violent crime that Macau experienced leading up to that event, much of it attributed to Broken Tooth and his gang.1 For 40 years Macau's local casino monopoly had been controlled by Hong Kong billionaire Stanley Ho who operated primarily out of his flagship Lisboa Casino. Ho's opportunistic business relationships with Chinese triads who controlled private gaming rooms in some Macau casinos, extending credit to high-stakes gamblers and collecting debts, had fostered increasing problems in the 1990s. As the date of Macau's return to the PRC crept closer, local gangsters perpetrated a series of increasingly violent acts in efforts to claim their shares of proceeds from lone sharking, extortion, smuggling, drugs, prostitution, and other vices in the colony before the Chinese authorities took over. Newspapers regularly reported lurid tales of arson, explosions, fire bombings of cars and motorcycles, shootouts between rival gang members (sometimes inside casinos), and targeted assassinations of government officials and gaming industry regulators. Yet no matter how brazen the actions of Broken Tooth and his criminal brotherhood, the Portuguese administration proved powerless to address the violence, punish the perpetrators, or maintain any semblance of law and order. The inability of the Portuguese state to properly administer even tiny Macau, the last remaining colony in its once substantial imperial archipelago, made many local Chinese anxious for the pending return of Macau to the authority and protection of the "motherland," and left Portuguese leaders scrambling to protect their nation's cultural and historical legacy in the territory as they prepared for decolonization.

Portugal controlled Macau for nearly 450 years, but the exact terms of the relationship were never clear. For several centuries Macau enjoyed an ambiguous status, never technically a European colony from the perspective of China, but at various times considered an "overseas territory" of Portugal and a "Chinese territory under Portuguese administration" (Goncalves, 2003). Cathryn Clayton (2010) refers to this liminal status as Macau's "sort-of sovereignty." Due to its marginal position and distance from the metropole, Macau long managed to serve a number of pragmatic ends for both Portugal and China. Because of Portugal's neutrality in World War II, Macau was free from wartime Japanese occupation and a haven for spies, gamblers, and drifters from all over the world. Wartime smugglers took advantage of the city's location to move goods from Macau into China. Ho himself made his first fortune smuggling food and luxury goods across the border (Studwell, 2008). Even after the communist revolution in China, Macau maintained its status as an entrepot and a hub for business and trade carried out secretly by the PRC. Portugal's refusal to sign the Bretton Woods Agreement that controlled the sale of gold on the world market facilitated a thriving gold trade in Macau that was largely controlled by the Communist party. During the Korean War, the city allegedly served as a conduit for smuggling weapons into China in an effort to circumvent UN mandates (Dicks, 1984). However, by the 1990s this laissez-faire approach to governance that had served both countries well was tested by the waves of violent triad crime that rocked the city and that were depicted in the film Casino.

The Benefits of Macanese Porosity

Macau's "sort-of sovereignty" has been enhanced by the city-state's "porosity," a quality that affects its borders, cityscape and cultural life. In his meditation on the Italian city of Naples, Walter Benjamin (1978b) identified "porosity" as the quality that best characterized the Mediterranean Neapolitan urban environment. "Porosity refers to a lack of clear boundaries around phenomena, a permeation of one thing by another" (Gilloch, 1997, p. 25). Benjamin referred to the porous nature of Naples' architectural and social borders that might otherwise separate inside and outside, private and public, sacred and profane, past and present, work and leisure, day and night. We might say the same about Macau. Though geographically Iberian, Portugal nevertheless retains some Mediterranean characteristics, perhaps reflected in the notorious notion of "lusotropicalism" that Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre (1946) identified as key to Portugal's maritime and colonial achievements. Freyre referred to a Portuguese quality that he thought emanated from a constellation of culture, geography, history, and climate and made the Portuguese more interculturally adaptable than other European colonial masters and therefore prone to produce cultural adulterations and ethnic hybrids in its colonies. The Portuguese brought a Mediterranean lifestyle to Macau

four and a half centuries ago, fashioning an ambiguous and permeable territory, which was perhaps both the key to the country's success and ultimately the reason for its inability to control the violence at the close of the 20th century. The Mediterranean has played an important role in the world historical development of capitalism, first defined by the rising fortunes of Venice, Genoa, and Spain in the 16th century, and the opportunistic and symbiotic relationships among monarchies and state authorities on one hand, and pirates and privateers on the other (Braudel, 1992). The latter were often used as proxy navies to advance state maritime interests. Similar relations between state and non-state actors in Macau have served mutual benefits for centuries, and continue to do so today.

Macau's Remarkable Recent Transformation

Though Chinese triads still operate in the city and play an important role in the casino economy, today violent crime is virtually absent from the everyday life of Macau citizens. In an astounding reversal of fortunes, the tiny enclave is now the world's most lucrative site of casino gambling revenue. Following the handover, casino operators from North America and Australia entered the territory to compete with Stanley Ho for gambling revenues. The central government dismantled Ho's monopoly as part of a strategy to develop the industry and economy and to help establish law and order (Lo, 2005). Gritty and seedy locally-owned casino hotels now sit adjacent to opulent and phantasmagoric themed foreign structures like Sands, Venetian, MGM, Crown, Galaxy, and City of Dreams. North American gambling magnates Sheldon Adelson, Steve Wynn, and Kirk Kerkorian have raked in billions of dollars from Chinese gamblers in Macau's casinos over the past five years. When Adelson opened his Sands property in Macau – the first foreign casino in the territory after the handover – he recouped his initial $260 million investment in ten months; Forbes estimated that from 2004-2006 Adelson earned $1 million per hour from his investments (Forbes 400, 2007). Wynn doubled his personal fortune in one year to $3.4 billion from casino profits (Macau Daily Times, 2007, p. 3). In 2010, Macau's total casino revenues of $24 billion tripled those of the Las Vegas strip (Master, 2011). The engine driving this seemingly "occult" (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000) level of growth is the economy of the PRC: nearly half of the 26 million tourists who visited Macau in 2010 traveled from the mainland. Comprehending this remarkable transformation of the city and its economy in such a compressed time requires tracking the clue of "porosity" that disappears and reappears in Macau's cityscape and cultural life. By attention to the design of Macau's casinos and cityscape – and the motif of "representation" introduced in the film Casino – I hope to reveal the functional role the built environment of Macau plays in China's economic development via subjection of Chinese consumers. Fredric Jameson (1998) observes that the "emblematic significance" of contemporary architecture "lies in its immediacy to the social, in the 'seam it shares with the economic,'" (p. 26) and it is within the immediacy of this seam or juncture that the post-socialist Chinese subject emerges.

Casino Architecture in Macau

> "This is how architecture, the most binding part of the communal rhythm, comes into being here: civilized, private, and ordered only in the great hotel and warehouse buildings on the quays; anarchical, embroiled, villagelike in the center, into which large networks of streets were hacked only forty years ago." — Walter Benjamin, "Naples"

To understand Macau a decade after Portugal's return of the colony to the PRC, it is tempting to search for clues in its newly-iconic casinos – Sands, Venetian, Wynn, MGM. If anything connotes the transformation of the Macau skyline it is the architectural styles of these new resorts; the glass curtain walls of Wynn and MGM that tower above the outer harbor, the exquisitely-stylized Italian theme of the Venetian. The Venetian is the largest casino – and one of the largest buildings – in the world. But Venetian, MGM and their ilk really say more about Las Vegas than Macau, more about the logic of North American financial speculation than a Portuguese city-state in China. Insight about Macau today is perhaps best sought in the local imitations of these foreign constructions. Many local casino owners who operated low-end joints under Ho's license for a percentage of the profits chose to renovate their properties to emulate the new players who entered the city. These indigenous responses to the Las Vegas aesthetic style represent the seemingly spontaneous discourse that emerges in, and from, the city itself. The most typical of Macau's domestic themed structures is arguably the otherwise overlooked Greek Mythology Casino on Taipa island.

As themed architecture, Venetian Macau and the Greek Mythology are polar opposites. The Venetian draws global attention and accolades for its mega size and superlative style. The Venetian "integrated resort" is a self-contained world located far away from the daily life of Macau's residents near the airport on the reclaimed and otherwise inhospitable and uninhabited environment of Cotai. The Venetian anchors the so-called "Cotai Strip" that Adelson promised to construct if the local government granted him a casino license. The Venetian Macau, as Jean Baudrillard said of Venice itself, is the master of seduction. It captivates and distracts. Visitors disappear into this self-contained world, their movements captured by the cavernous interior, their gaze obstructed by window-less walls. The entire building executes a reversal as the outside environment of blue skies, promenades, city squares, and canals is mimicked under the roof. To paraphrase Benjamin, Macau's architecture is "Civilized, private, and ordered only in the great hotel and warehouse buildings on the quay." The pristine orderliness that draws international attention to the Venetian also identifies the structure as an interloper in the local scene.

On the other hand, the Greek Mythology Casino at the New Century Hotel attracts only derision. In concept, design, and execution it must be judged a failure. With a plaster statue of Poseidon surrounded by winged horses and a bevy of wide-eyed fish in the parking lot and Zeus guarding the casino entrance, the casino's aesthetic value is less the Venetian's middlebrow taste than accidental kitsch. However, tightly wedged between two bus stops, several apartment blocks, and the University of Macau, it is a quotidian feature for thousands of locals: students trudge past it on their way to the university; domestic workers steal free rides to the border gate on the casino's busses; and the large neon phoenix on the hotel's roof keeps watch over all. Indeed, although it borrows a theme from another

time and place, the Greek Mythology Casino reflects the indigenous architecture of Macau: "Anarchical, embroiled, villagelike in the center," much like Benjamin observed of Naples.

The Permeability of Porosity and Governance of Macau

The accessible Mediterranean porosity characteristic of Macau's indigenous architecture is repeated and writ large across the city's social and economic life. A certain susceptibility to loose boundaries is observable in the malleable status of Macau's gaming licenses that not only permitted Ho to lease out his license to cronies when he held the monopoly, but also allowed three post-handover concessions granted by the government to Ho, Wynn, and Lui Che Woo of Galaxy Entertainment Group to be transformed into six. A subsequent local government decision allowed each of the three original concessionaires to subdivide his license, thus doubling the total number of casino license holders. One new license went to MGM's Kerkorian in partnership with Ho's daughter Pansy Ho; another was awarded to Australian James Packer in the PBL/Melco partnership with Ho's son Lawrence Ho; and a third went to Adelson. Wynn profited $900 million simply by selling his subconcession to PBL/Melco, revenue the government would have presumably collected had it merely awarded the subconcession directly.

Porosity creates diaphanous distinctions among local businessmen, government officials, and gangsters. This, in turn, contributes to Macau's ambiguous gaming regulations that permit independent, non-licensed operators to manage the city's lucrative VIP trade, which accounted for more than 70% of casino revenue in 2010 (Master, 2011). Perhaps porosity contributes to the strange slippage in the uncertain Romanized spelling of Macau/o; the inconsistency of one country with two systems; and the gray areas that distinguish the nation, its Special Administrative Regions (SAR), and its Special Economic Zones (SEZ).2 Not least, the increasing porosity of the actual border between the Macau SAR and the Zhuhai SEZ is what helps generate such impressive tourist numbers. At the plebian level, the penetrable and paradoxical "international" border with the mainland feeds a daily business whereby Macau locals cross to the SEZ of Zhuhai to buy supplies of cigarettes, alcohol, meat, and canned goods in order to sell them to distributors in Macau for a small return (Brietung, 2007). In this way petty smuggling endures as a form of daily life. For those tourists from the PRC the border allows them to access a foreign territory with distinct economic and juridical regimes without actually leaving the nation. Such malleable membranes allow Macau to serve not only as a lucrative site of leisure for scores of tourists from the mainland but also to play a pedagogical role in transforming China's proletariat into capitalist speculators and consumers (Simpson 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2010). "Tourism is an arena in which the production of cultural discourse penetrates everyday consumption, one in which Chinese subjects self-consciously consume complex representations of culture and respond to them in quotidian activities," contends Nyiri (2006). "As such, it is a key sphere in which the reinvention of the Chinese subject takes place" (p. 97). This is the city's significance ten years after the Handover. The Greek Mythology Casino is ground zero in this project.

The Mimetic Language of Themes

In Travels in Hyperreality, perhaps the first serious meditation on themed attractions in the United States, Umberto Eco (1986) claimed that "the American imagination demands the real thing and to attain it, must fabricate the absolute fake." Nowhere is this peculiar American motivation better realized than in Las Vegas, with its resorts designed as three dimensional representations of New York and Paris, Egyptian pyramids and medieval castles. For Americans, according to Eco, "Knowledge can only be iconic, and iconism can only be absolute" (p. 53). When Las Vegas entrepreneurs like Adelson and Wynn entered Macau, they brought this iconic style to Macau – in fact, Venetian Macau and the Wynn Resort are each copies of their eponymous properties in Nevada. The American desire for the "absolute fake" is clearly evident in the Venetian Macau, with nearly life-size realizations of Piazza San Marco and the façade of Ducal Palace, statues of Adam and Eve and the winged lion of St. Marks, a digital reproduction of Veronesi's Venice Triumphant on the ceiling, and canals plied by Puccini-singing gondoliers.

The Venetian Macau is a marvel of what Benjamin (1978a) called our mimetic faculty, the innate human capacity to recognize and fashion resemblances among things: in this case, to recreate an entire city. More precisely, Venetian Macau is a copy of a copy of Venice; the "original" copy on which it is based is in Las Vegas. But in this case, the simulated Venetian has no relation to Macau. It is a relief map of some other place and time. It is impossible to even see Macau proper from the Venetian, and impossible to see outside at all from the casino, restaurants, or shopping mall. What appear to be windows on the façade of the building's base are revealed, at closer inspection, to be merely decorative fixtures through which no light may actually pass. The Venetian Macau has a Mediterranean motif but the design is not itself Mediterranean. That is, the structure is not porous or permeable like the indigenous architecture of Venice, Naples, or Macau. The Venetian has been designed for a global audience who will first glimpse the structure on a website or television program, and travel to its doors from the ferry terminal or airport by bus or taxi.

The Creation of the Greek Mythology Theme, or Why is Poseidon in Macau?

> "Here, too, there is interpenetration of day and night, noise and peace, outer light and inner darkness, street and home." - Walter Benjamin, "Naples"

As art or architecture, the Greek Mythology Casino fails to excite. Where the Venetian achieves a credible mimetic representation of Venice, the Greek Mythology appears more like a caricature. However, it is a mistake to judge the Greek Mythology on merely the veracity of the thematic elements or the execution of the theme. One should not view the Greek ideographs in the manner of Venetian, as attempts to faithfully recreate some already-existing architectural form. Rather, the casino's centaurs, maidens, and horse-bound gods are better understood as enigmatic hieroglyphs, burghal dreams, Freudian slips from the tongue of the city itself (Simpson, 2008b). The porous character of Macau's urban spaces – and of the Greek Mythology Casino specifically – suggests the possibility of revelation, that something hidden just beneath a surface or behind a façade might suddenly reveal itself to the careful observer. Therefore, the hopeful adept must be prepared for the theme's significance to reveal itself.

Marx marveled at capitalism's ability to render the commodity as if by magic, divorced from the labor by which it was produced. At the Greek Mythology Casino, we must look beyond against such fetishism and ask instead, what series of events has brought Poseidon and Zeus to Macau? Reading backward from the Greek Mythology fountain we can find petrified in this palimpsest the story of the transformation of Macau over the past ten years. The trajectory of this tale moves from corrupt colonial casino capitalism to post-colonial, neoliberal global consumerism and it returns us to Casino's cinematic representation of the Macau nightlife.

In the pre-handover days of Macau the Greek Mythology property was called the New Century Hotel, and was the inspiration for the "Harbor Century Hotel," site of the shootout in the opening scene of Casino. The spectacular machine gun destruction of the hotel façade in the film mimicked an actual event, one violent episode in the long battle between Broken Tooth and Market Wai. Market Wai controlled the casino in the New Century Hotel using Stanley Ho's monopoly gaming license. Broken Tooth wanted people to believe that he controlled the city, and he made his point with both deadly violence and its gratuitous representation in his own autobiographical noir film.

By 1998 the actual violence in the city seemingly spun out of control. Residents and pundits alike could only shake their heads in disbelief when Macau's Undersecretary for Security remarked to the international press during

the height of the tensions that tourists need not fear the local violence because, "our triad gunmen are excellent marksmen" who "would not miss their targets and hit innocent bystanders" (Lintner, 2007, p. 23). His personal driver was assassinated one year later (Lintner, 2007). Events culminated in spectacular fashion when the unoccupied car of Macau's chief of police exploded in the driveway of his home. Several hours later the chief, accompanied by his men, arrested Broken Tooth at a private dining room in Ho's Lisboa Hotel. Two days after the arrest, Casino opened in theatres in Hong Kong (though it was banned in Macau).

Two lengthy trials ensued to prosecute different sets of charges against Broken Tooth and his cronies, but the procedures faced many delays and postponements as one judge resigned and abruptly returned to Portugal, and witnesses failed to remember events or even to appear in court. There was no physical evidence to link Broken Tooth to the bombing of the chief's car and he was not prosecuted for that crime. The final trial revolved around his association with triad organizations. At the conclusion of the testimony in the second trial, a three-judge tribunal who had heard the case left the courtroom to privately view Casino. Following the screening, they declared that the depiction of Broken Tooth's life as a mafia leader in the film was indeed an accurate representation. Broken Tooth was ultimately found guilty of being a member of a triad organization and sentenced to 15 years in prison; the apparent veracity of the cinematic representation, in a city where things are not always what they appear, proved his downfall.

With Broken Tooth behind bars in a specially-built wing of the prison on Coloane island, the government prepared for the handover. The PRC hoped to restore order in the colony and the government made a strategic decision to liberalize the gaming industry and invite participation by foreign companies. The officials hoped that the presence of such companies would increase stability in the city and contribute to law and order. The development of the Greek Mythology themed façade of the former New Century Hotel emerged from this local set of concerns.

The original modernist concrete slab New Century Hotel had no particular pretense. As Jameson (1990) has remarked about modernist architecture more generally, the New Century Hotel name alluded to temporality. "In effect, it is through the experience of time that the modern is apprehended," says Jameson. "The temporality of high modernist architecture would be the way in which through an older city you arrive at something that stands for the future and that is radically disjointed from the older kind of city fabric" (p. 32). The "new century" that was approaching at the turn of the millennium would turn out to belong to China, and Macau would play an important role in China's rise.

In the wake of the new investment from foreign entrepreneurs a new luxurious and themed empire commenced construction in Macau appropriate for the new millennium. With an initial agreement to collectively spend US$2 billion over ten years, the foreign gaming companies entered the city, subsequently exceeding their initial investment target ten fold. At the actual start of the 'new century,' the management of the New Century Hotel set about revitalizing the functionalist structure and designed the Greek Mythology theme, apparently determined that the structure would now represent something else than the famous gangland shootout.

During the grand opening week of the newly-decorated Greek Mythology Casino, which happens to sit directly adjacent to the University of Macau where I work, the casino's boosters claimed daily crowds of up to 30,000 guests (Ho, 2005). While this number is likely exaggerated, there is no doubt that enormous throngs of tourists descended on the hotel. The adjacent street was lined day and night by dozens of busses that brought the tourists from the China border gate, and even from interior cities on the mainland, and deposited them at the hotel door. My Chinese colleagues at the university often commented on the obscure dialects spoken by many of the initial tourists, many of whom were taking advantage of the PRC's newly-introduced Individual Visitation Scheme (IVS) to make their first trip outside the mainland. The IVS provides travel VISAs for tourists from select provinces and cities to travel to Macau and Hong Kong without having to join a pre-sanctioned tour group. A German professor from Dresden remarked that she recognized the eager expressions on the tourists' faces, reminiscent of East Germans venturing into the West for the first time after the fall of the Berlin Wall. In both cases, the proletariat venture tentatively across a newly-porous border to glimpse a capitalist phantasmagoria on the other side. The first stop for many novice tourists in Macau is the Greek Mythology Casino.

Gambling as Immaterial Labor

> "With the pawnshop and lotto the state holds the proletariat in a vice: what it advances to them in one it takes back in the other." — Walter Benjamin, "Naples"

The majority of Macau's casino revenues still derive from VIP gambling in private rooms. In the 1980s, Ho began sub-contracting such private gambling rooms in his casinos to agents who attract high-rollers from the region, bring them to Macau to gamble, and advance credit for gambling stakes (Siu, 2007). In Macau these agents are called "junket operators." Junket operators guarantee purchase of a certain quantity of chips from the casino each month, loan those chips as credit to gamblers, and later collect their earnings when the punters lose. The way this system operates in Macau is distinct from similar systems in other gaming jurisdictions like Nevada. Many of Macau's high rollers originate from China, and the PRC imposes complex restrictions on the amount of money travelers can move or carry out of the country. Therefore, high stakes play by gamblers from the mainland requires access to credit in Macau. Further, gambling debts are not legally enforceable under PRC law, so the creditor in Macau must be assured of his or her ability to entice losers to repay their debts after they have returned home. For this reason, junket operators need access not only to large amounts of cash, but to the ability to coerce extra-legal means of debt collection. The junket business is therefore synonymous with the triads and this is their foothold in Macau's gambling industry.

In its current incarnation, the Greek Mythology is the epitome of a grind casino, industry argot for a gaming facility aimed at the masses. The mass market is the opposite of the junket business. Grind casinos employ such strategies as low minimum bets on table games and ubiquitous low-priced slot machines to earn their daily "drop" off the spare change of construction workers, taxi drivers, and bored housewives. The Slot Director of Stanley Ho's gaming company notes that, where other Macau casinos only accept Hong Kong currency, "Our machines accept local coins."

> We are the only company to do that in Macau, which has been a great benefit to our customers as they can walk in off the street and use their spare change. I would say the customer profile is 50-50 between grind and mid-market. We have construction workers, quite a lot of housewives and [casino] industry people – mostly middle class [customers]. ("One Country...", p. 8)

While the majority of Macau's gaming revenue is derived from high-stakes VIP gambling, the Greek Mythology caters to a different type of punter. One Macau junket executive described the Greek Mythology Casino to me as "An insult to our industry," characterized by "low, low, low, low grind." The casino grind constitutes something akin to the "immaterial labor of gambling" (Lazzarato, 1996). Gambling, in turn, is a form of capitalist pedagogy (Simpson, 2011).

Overwhelmingly, tourists visit Macau to gamble. But gambling is not simply entertainment. Tourists from China visiting Macau's themed casino environments 'work' at being consumers. One characteristic that distinguishes Chinese gamblers from other groups of punters is the extent to which many of them approach gaming as a sort

of intensive and serious labor, rather than leisure (see Lam, 2008). For example, such players eschew the free alcohol given away in Las Vegas casinos because intoxication interferes with their concentration. Instead, Macau casinos distribute free tea, orange juice, and milk. Chinese gamblers are noted for the intensity at which they play. In response, Macau's casinos are developing novel hybrid gaming systems that integrate electronic terminals and human dealers, allowing croupiers to serve more gamblers per shift and increasing the speed of each hand as well as the number of hands gamblers can play simultaneously. Such players intently study the outcomes of the games. Gamblers playing baccarat, the most popular game in Macau's casinos, keep detailed records of each card played from the shoe, employing their innate mimetic faculties in an effort to delineate patterns that break from random probabilities. Players 'squeeze' the cards, folding over card corners to peek at the face value, and the cards are destroyed like raw materials in a manufacturing process. In this way, the casino operates like a factory of productive gambling work at which the players dutifully labor. As a result of these efforts, the Greek Mythology Casino's interior fittings, carpets, and the felt surfaces of gaming tables are threadbare and worn, carrying fossilized traces of this intensive activity. Thus even the relatively new decorations look old. Much like Benjamin said of Naples, "One can scarcely discern where building is still in progress and where dilapidation has already set in."

Gambling as Capitalist Pedagogy

> "Lotto, alluring and consuming as nowhere else in Italy, remains the archetype of business life." — Walter Benjamin, "Naples"

As a form of capitalist pedagogy, casino gaming provides the most exaggerated model of speculative investment, an ersatz stock market without commodities or quarterly reports. In Macau gambling mimics the market. Gamblers from mainland China engage in a pedagogical activity that serves as a tutorial for capitalism. The stock market in China is sometimes referred to as the 'slot machine' (dubo ji) (Barboza, 2007). If many Chinese labor at gambling, they (like their western counterparts) 'play' the market. 'Investing in the stock market [in Shanghai] is frequently referred to, as in English, by the verb "play," in contrast with "work"' (Hertz, 1998: 135). One journalist notes that Chinese 'Brokerage firms are set up like casinos. Investors drink tea, smoke and chat as they input trades on computers lined up like slot machines. Instead of dropping in coins, they swipe bank cards to pay for shares' (Areddy, 2007: 32). Commentators often remark on the lack of reliable information about corporate performance and governance in China's stock market, which leads market players to make investment decisions much like they might bet on baccarat.

> 'I don't know how to choose a stock,' says a 61-year-old retiree who gave her name as Miss Hou at a local brokerage house a few weeks ago. 'But I trust those technology companies. Maybe the names of some companies sound lucky to me, so I

choose to buy these stocks' (Barboza, 2007).

Like the stock market, gambling allows for economic return to be divorced from individual labor. 'The gambler as financial speculator does not resist capitalist prescriptions, but rather fundamentally embodies them,' writes Gilloch (1997). 'Capitalism formalizes the activity of the gambler and his desire to make money through the institution of the stock market' (p. 158). We might understand such casino gambling as a form of labor that mimics capitalist speculation and consumption, and the themed casino plays a productive role in this process. When Chinese tourists visit those casinos, their activities contribute to the development of the socialist-market economy on the mainland.

Themes, Athenaeums, and The Meaning of Macau's Mediterranean Motifs

Market Wai and the Greek Mythology Casino aside, the themed environments that proliferate throughout Macau today are consistent with similar themed structures in cities around the world. Van Melik, et. al. (2007) identify two tendencies characteristic of twentieth century urban design that are reflected in Macau's contemporary urban spaces: creating secured space in an effort to reduce urban fear, and creating themed space in an effort to induce fantasy. They argue, however, that these are not contradictory impulses but are rather "two aspects of the same tendency towards greater control over public space" (p. 25-26).

Macau's themed spaces are also part of the dialectic of fear and fantasy. It was in part the public perception of Macau as a dangerous haven of violent triads at war in the streets and casinos that motivated the city administration to end the gaming monopoly and invite investment from foreign companies. It was the representation of that violence in the media that scared tourists and frustrated residents. It was Broken Tooth's cinematic representation of this own life in Casino that proved his downfall by appearing too close to reality, by exposing the mimetic slippage between the original and the copy. Perhaps following Churchill's dictum that "we make our buildings, and then our buildings make us," the government's implicit strategy was to supplant Macau's porous and chaotic Mediterranean urban space and all that it represented with impermeable and comforting themed structures. The Sands Casino was the first such project. The largest casino in the world at the time it was built, the Sands' enormous, brightly-illuminated gaming floor was designed for maximum visibility. The stadium-style design allows the entire main floor to be observed by people standing on the open floors that circle above it, contrasting dramatically with the tiny, dark, and cramped basement areas and private rooms of what was then Ho's flagship Lisboa Casino. The Sands signaled a new era in Macau – not "gambling" but "gaming," a pure, wholesome, and safe form of play overseen by benevolent corporate stakeholders and financiers of the transnational capitalist class rather than by Broken Tooth and his gang. Even the perfumed air of the Sands provides an olfactory indication of an innocuous and controlled environment. The Venetian Macau, Adelson's encore to his Sand's debut, perfected this trend. It offers an entirely cloistered

"integrated" gaming and leisure environment, set apart from the city on Adelson's trademarked Cotai replication of the Las Vegas strip. The ultimate goal of all these efforts is impermeability – panopticism, transparency, contractual obligations, enforced regulations, controlled access, and privatized, pseudo-public space.

But there is another mimetic Macau beneath such pristine and perfected themed surfaces. Macau's significance is not measured merely in the veracity of its imitations. The cognoscente must approach themed reliefs like those of the Greek Mythology as portent runes and ciphers. To properly understand themed mimesis, a "mimetic" reading is necessary, "the divination of the secret from the surface" (Gilloch, 2002, p. 44). And what recondite secrets lurk among the Greek ideographs in the hotel? What disquieting events are witnessed by the centaur's wide-eyed stare?

The "motherland" is a vast exchequer of socialist workers each eager to glimpse fantastic, phantasmagoric alien worlds. The technocrats in the PRC devise realms those workers may visit – the SARs and SEZs – engineering exit VISA regulations, individual travel schemes, and Golden Week holidays to ensure a steady flow of tourists into Macau. The Greek Mythology Casino dutifully collects the tourists at the border by the busload, delivering them daily to labor on the well-worn gaming floor. But it could be said that the casino, as Benjamin said of the Neapolitan house, "is far less the refuge into which people retreat than the inexhaustible reservoir from which they flood out." It is here at the Greek Mythology Casino, in a ruinous and labyrinthine Portuguese city on the edge of the "middle kingdom," that those erstwhile Mediterranean gods grind China's socialist comrades, as if by alchemy, into post-socialist consumers. Macau's casinos earned $24 billion in revenues in 2010, and that number is projected to double by 2015 (Master, 2011). The profits derive from Chinese tourists who regularly retreat from socialism on the mainland to gamble in themed casinos across the border. The Greek Mythology casino does not aspire to be a seductive "absolute fake" like the Venetian. On the contrary, the seemingly idiosyncratic and incongruous Greek hieroglyphs in the casino are an unerring allegory of an irrational and mythic capitalism.

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Endnotes

1. For detailed accounts of this period of violent crime in Macau see Clayton (2011), Pina-Cabral (2002, 2005) and Regan (2011). My account of the period is derived from these sources.

2. Local government directives indicate that in official documents the city's name should be spelled "Macau" in Portuguese, and "Macao" in English, except in the name University of Macau/ Universidade de Macau" which retains the "u" regardless of the language. However, the spelling of the city name in everyday use seemingly follows no particular logic.

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