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Editorial

What if history actually *did* end with the fall of communism and the end of the cold war, as Fukuyama claimed, and we are now enjoying some kind paradise of liberal democracy with no better political framework to strive towards? Or, what if a recognition of exploitation and social inequities actually *is* leading to a massive workers' revolution that *will* reclaim the means of production and lead to a more equal distribution of resources and power—whether Marxist, democratic, or otherwise? Indeed, we are unsure whether we are still inside of an idea of progressive social emancipation and human self-realization that defined the modern era, or whether we have truly, actually surpassed these questions. The popular uprisings of 2011 only complicate the issue further with their ability to mobilize massive social movements with a near-total absence of political ideology in any traditional sense. It almost seems as if the entire world got the gist of all the postmodern and postcolonial ideas that came after 1968 to theorize an era of dreary political prospects.

What is clear is that, in spite of an enormous amount of action and movement, we remain unable to think in terms of totality—whether collectively, socially, or ontologically. And it remains hard to say whether this is because we choose not to, for fear of authoritarian implications, or because something much larger has seized us and rendered us too frightened or simply incapable of thinking and dreaming on such a scale. In her essay in this issue of *e-flux journal*, Elizabeth Povinelli advances a fascinating proposal that, because we are all "trapped in an enclosure" of a single system now more than ever before, any sensuous modes of being to be found within this system are tied precisely to negotiating its horizon. Furthermore, in this issue Boris Groys interrogates the contemporary artist's reliance on critical theory to explain what is to be done, how to do it, and why, and he relates this to a privileging of action hardwired within the ethos of critical theory itself. In place of philosophical contemplation, theory animates life and performs the fact that one is alive and full of energy. In place of a rationality that could extend beyond the self to become total and universal, theory confronts us with the finiteness of our lives, and thus with a paradoxical urgency to act now, before it is too late.

—Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, Anton Vidokle

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Elizabeth A. Povinelli

After the Last Man: Images and Ethics of Becoming Otherwise

> Politics and art, like forms of knowledge, construct "fictions," that is to say *material* rearrangements of signs and images, relationships between what is seen and what is said, between what is done and what can be done ... They draft maps of the visible, trajectories between the visible and the sayable, relationships between modes of being, modes of saying, and modes of doing and making.
> —Jacques Rancière, *The Distribution of the Sensible*[1]

Huddled within one of the most influential theories of human desire and the destiny of democracy is an image of history and its future. This image is of a horizon. In lectures delivered at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes from 1933 to 1939, Alexandre Kojève argued that the horizon of universal human recognition ("democracy") was already in the nature of human desire but, paradoxically, had to be achieved through concrete struggles that intensified political life. These struggles were dependent on and waged against the background of human finitude. Yet, at the end of these battles, when the horizon had been breached, the world and the humans within it would be a form of the undead.

What *was* the future of this image? And what is its future now? Is it "huddled within," or is it the architectural framework on which affective and institutional futures were built and now face us? What other imagistic architecture of human being and politics might have made an alternative history and future of political action? Here I extend a set of thoughts first published in a previous essay on a very different image and grammar of social and political life—the bag and embagination.[2]What would happen if we replaced the transcendental architecture of the horizon with the immanent architecture of embagination? And how is embagination not replacing other images of immanent becoming—the fold and the rhizome—but rather confronting them.

1.

We can begin with the fall of a wall and a set of proclamations that followed. That is, the difference between the fall of the Berlin Wall and claims about the meaning of this material collapse. Who better to illustrate this difference than Francis Fukuyama? In *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), Fukuyama asserted that the fall of the Berlin Wall demonstrated that "a remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal democracy

Hiroshi Sugimoto,Tyrrhenian Sea, Conca, 1994.

as a system of government had emerged throughout the world over the past few years, as it conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently communism."[3] For Fukuyama, liberal democracy—we might also say "neoliberal capitalism"—constituted the "end point of mankind's ideological evolution" and the "final form of human government."[4] As such, it marked the "end of history" and the emergence of "the last man."

Fukuyama was a student of Allan Bloom and a disciple of Leo Strauss, two prominent intellectual leaders of the neoconservative movement in the US. But to understand what is at stake in Fukuyama's proclamation about the "end of history," we must travel across the Atlantic and back in time. Fukuyama's reading of this material collapse depends on the philosopher Alexandre Kojève's reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*.[5] Interpreting Hegel through Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, Kojève argued that the history of humankind would come to an end when equal recognition had been universalized in the form of liberal democracy. Why? Because the desire for recognition is what differentiates human and nonhuman animals—what defines the human *qua* human—and constitutes the motive force of history.

Much depends on the difference between animal and human desire. The animal—and the animal part of man—becomes aware of itself as it experiences a desire, such as the desire for food, which is the consequence of finding itself in a state of hunger. This state of hunger creates in the animal a sentiment of self, a rudimentary "I" that says, "I am hungry." In this sense, desire is empty: desire is the experience of lack. This experience of emptiness is, however, a positive force, for it rouses and disquiets being, moving it from passivity into action. In other words, desire creates in human and nonhuman animals a "sentiment of self": an awareness of the existence of the self as an "I" at the moment when the emptiness of desire asserts itself over being.

But whereas animal desire satisfies itself merely by consuming what is in the world, human desire looks beyond what is already at hand. For Kojève, the differentiating mark of the human—what makes man a *human* animal; his "anthropological machinery," to paraphrase Agamben—is that his desire doesn't seek something that already exists in the world but something that doesn't *yet* exist. [6] Human desire is doubly empty. It is awakened by the experience of a lack, but the form of satisfaction it seeks goes beyond the given world of things, forms, affects, and so forth. What might this nonexistent object of desire be? According to Kojève, it can only be another human's desire, equally as empty and as ravenous for satisfaction. This is the atomic kernel of the battle for recognition: the desire is to be the object of another's desire. I want to be what you want. What I want is to have you want "me." And "me" is what I desire to be in the world, my vision of the world. You want me to do the same, and thus there is a battle over whose vision will prevail. It is this duel between the ravenous empty dualities of desire that leads to the intensification of politics and is the motive force of human history.

From this simple diagram of desire and recognition comes the material dialectical unfolding of the world of liberal democracy—or neoliberal capitalism—which begins in the confrontation that produces the master-slave relationship and ends in the universalization of equal recognition. The battle of recognition, which is a battle to be the object of the other's desire, is what for Kojève intensifies political and social life and thrusts the human being towards the horizon to which human history has always been leading—namely, a form of governance in which recognition is mutual and universal. Most importantly, Kojève did what Kojève theorized. He put his theory into practice through specific bureaucratic battles to institutionally shape the political and economic world of Europe and the US.[7] Kojève *materialized* a theoretical image (imaginary) by seducing others into thinking his desire was their desire—and that this desire was the truth of the future in the present and not merely one image among many of human being and history.

But if the dominant image of this theory of desire and democracy begins as a horizon, it ends as something very different. If liberal democracy is the *horizon* of desire already inscribed in the fight for recognition (the orientation and end of human becoming, and thus the end of history itself), then when liberal democracy has been universally achieved, human historical becoming collapses into a satisfied human state of being. The horizon then becomes what I will call a *surround*, a form of enclosure without a wall or gate. The surround is without an opening. It is an infinity of homogeneous space and time. It is an "everywhere at the same time" and a "nowhere else." One can go here or there in the surround

but it really makes no difference because there are no meaningful distinctions left to orient oneself—to determine where one goes or what one believes or holds true. To paraphrase Nietzsche, there is no shepherd or herd in the surround. Everyone wants the same because they are the same. Even the hope of the madhouse, as the place where difference is interned, is lost because difference no longer exists.[8]

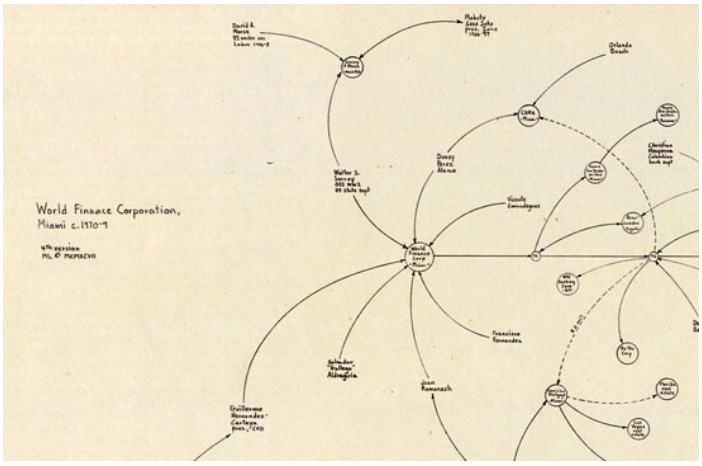
But when I say "the human in the surround," I misspeak. When humankind finally reaches the horizon it has been producing through the battle for recognition, the thing that emerges is not the same thing that had created it. What had distinguished humans from nonhuman animals changes. The thing that inhabits the surround is not an animal. But it is also not human. The Last Man is the end of Man. The surround is inhabited by what Agamben calls a "nonhuman human," something that seems quite similar to the contemporary televisual obsession with the undead—a kind of being which is deceased and yet behaves as if it were alive. Kojève and his students understood this. In losing the horizon of desire, man became a kind of post-man. When the wall falls and the horizon collapses, man receives the package he had sent himself when first starting out on his journey. But the recipient is as foreign to the human who sent the package as the human was from the animal.

In debating what was the sensuous and affective nature of the last man left in history's wake, Kojève and his students demonstrated how thoroughly they themselves had become dominated by their own dominant image. Kojève described the affect of the Last Man as satisfaction, which he distinguished absolutely from enjoyment. Raymond Queneau tried to capture the existential state of satisfaction in his novels, and Georges Bataille attempted to find some way of intensifying life in the surround of satisfaction through blood and sacrifice, entrails and excrement. But rather than determining the sensuous affect of this state of being in the surround, Kojève, his bureaucratic colleagues, and his students used theory, literature, and bureaucratic practice to materialize the image as a circuitry connecting institutions, significations, and affects in such a way that they produce hopes and expectations, disappointments and rage—and perhaps most important of all for a critical politics—senses of justice and the good. And lest we think our political imaginaries have transcended this image, we can turn to Lee Edelman's scathing critique of the film *Children of Men*, which assumes that without the future as a horizon of being, figured in the promissory note of the child, all pleasure and drive would collapse like so much air in a punctured balloon.[9]

And here I think we can see how a dominant image of human history, and human *political intensification* in particular, has come to dominate human becoming. It does not matter whether the horizon is out there in a reachable or unreachable form. It does not matter whether the horizon is there before we start our journey or is constituted from the activity of walking. It does not matter whether the horizon is figured as a wall, a frontier, a checkpoint, or a fence. The human production of an image of human becoming and being as a future in which a limit—or condition—has been achieved has led to a reduction of our capacity to imagine alternative images of human becoming. While we might not agree with Rancière's aesthetic periodizations, his understanding of the politics of aesthetics as the entanglements of power and visibility and of sensuous embodiment, of affects and energies, is right. Images of history have a habituated *feeling* to them.

The habituated affects of the image of a horizon were on full display in two material collapses that occurred decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Dominated by the image of the horizon of history, what wonder then that 9/11 and 2008 were *exciting*, not merely *dangerous*, moments? Perhaps history had not ended, perhaps a limit, a front, a back, a horizon, and a border had miraculously appeared in the "clash of civilizations" and the crash of the financial markets, and with them an opening, a gate, a direction, a movement of becoming. Perhaps universal recognition either had not arrived in the form of Western democracy, or this system had a radical new context in which to unfurl its form, meaning, and legitimacy. Maybe we were not in a *surround* but were instead surrounded by something that could be overcome. Maybe something could still be done. Note how these questions do not disturb the political imaginary of recognition so much as they merely change its clock.

Events since 9/11 and 2008 have not supported this hope. Being remains enclosed, if not by a political form of government (democracy), then by an economic form of compulsion. Celebrations of democratic spring across the Arab world were soon followed by the installation of technocratic rulers in Italy and Greece, with global pundits celebrating the ability to bypass the democratic function. And in China, the supposed inevitable conjoint of liberal market and government remains a receding horizon as the country's economic power seems ceaselessly to expand. Rather than neoliberal finance unveiling its internal limits in a global market, democracy has all but given way throughout Europe and has never seemed to be needed in China. If democracy is the back of history, there seems to be no front to neoliberal being. How do we think about the sources of the political otherwise when being seems trapped in an enclosure rather than having a front or a back? Where are the sensuous modes of becoming within the global circulations of being that have defined modern politics and markets, if not in a *horizon*?



Detail of Mark Lombardi, World Finance Corporation and Associates, ca. 1970-84: Miami, Ajman, and Bogota-Caracas, 1999.

2.

For some time now scholars have been thinking about the concept of circulation in relationship to the making and extinguishing of social worlds. Why do some forms move or get moved along? What are the formal/figurative demands placed on forms as the condition of their circulation in and across social space? What are the materialities of form that emerge from, and brace, these movements, and that make "things" palpable and recognizable inside the contexts into which they are inserted? And finally, how is social space itself the effect of competing forms and formations of circulation?

Given the profound influence of my indigenous colleagues and friends on my thinking, it is no surprise that the dominant image of circulation I have is of a stringbag, or *wargarthi* in Emiyenggel, an indigenous language of the northwest coast of Australia. A stringbag is formed through a reflexive, dense to semi-dense weave. It is capable of dynamic expansion and contraction and has a load-sensitive shaping. The stringbag has a formal mouth but the body is composed of openings that can anchor new weavings or ensnare objects. (The same basic weave and technology is used to make fishnets.) And, depending on their material composition, these bags are likely to decompose in different ways under different conditions. In other words, the stringbag is a mode of circulation insofar as it is a *reflexive form* with *figurative material force* that constitutes and obligates everything in and between it, and yet it is shaped by that which it tries to contain and can be reshaped by tying new strings and anchors into its body. It is the stringbag I see in Tomas Saraceno's architectural environments and Mark Lombardi's drawings of the social networks that compose modern power.

But bags are only experienced as bags—as something capable of holding something else—when the things that fit into them fit in a more or less compatible way. Thus we might think of the functionality of bags as dependent on the things that will enter them. But what if we thought of embagination as the process by which things themselves come into being and then come to have a residence, a domicile? What if the formations of a specific form of reflexive movement were the conditions in which new life forms emerged and found domicile—though at the price of extinguishing other forms?

In his *Playing and Reality*, the British psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott describes the case of a young boy of seven who had "become obsessed with everything to do with string."[10] Not string per se, but what string seemed to allow him to overcome—the separation of objects due to a diminution of the forces that had previously held them together. Whenever his parents would enter a room, "they were liable to find that he had joined together chairs and tables; and they might find a cushion, for instance, with string joining it to the fireplace." The parents only became disturbed, rather than simply bemused, when a "new feature" of his tethering practices emerged. "He had recently tied a string around his sister's neck."[11]

For Winnicott, these elaborate webs were "transitional objects" that manifested the young boy's denial of maternal separation.[12] His patient used string to reintegrate material that was on the threshold of disintegration and to confine the forces responsible for the disintegration. Thus the string tied around his baby sister, the object that posed the first serious threat to his bond with his mother.[13]

Winnicott first became aware of the psychic side of the boy's obsession during a "squiggle game." In his work with children, Winnicott would draw a squiggle and ask the child to complete the drawing. In the represented space of Winnicott's notebook, the young boy's creations looked like webs, but in the lived space of the boy's home the webs were more like badly constructed bags. He *embagged* space as he wove together new object forms and dependencies, hoping to save a world he had already lost. In the process he conditioned how things could move in and through this new world; how things—such as himself—could be held in it; and whether things—such as himself or his sister—could exist in it. What resulted was neither what had been nor what currently was. Nothing he did could undo the damage done by the arrival of his sister. But in trying, the boy created new habitations, new ways of being held. He did not mean to do this, but his refusal was a creative act. It provided an environment for alternative possibilities of life. Cushions were no longer able to be manipulated, visibly or tangibly, independent of the fireplace. The fireplace now had the cushions as one of its internal organs. The cushions had the bricks. Winnicott's job was to normalize these possible trajectories—impose on them the proper image of singularities, difference, and development.

The thresholds of being and separation that the boy saw and the new thresholds of being he created are the same thresholds that many adults come to forget, repress, or attempt to destroy—or perhaps they give them a clinical diagnostic such as the persistent denial of reality. Adults accept a given assemblage as natural to the world, and experience this assemblage as a pre-existing collection of objects and subjects independent of the embagged space that has created it. As such, it is little wonder that many adults see these object/subjects as the anchor around which other things are tied. But the boy had an intuition, or an irritation, that the cushion and fireplace were not there first, nor the string after, but are themselves effects of a kind of tethering whose conditions he does not understand and whose immanent undoing he is equally at a loss to explain. The boy knows that the world he has inhabited—which has securely held him—will no longer be habitable if the underlying woven pattern takes on a new form. So he uses string as a form of communication in an older sense of *inter* course—a *reflexive form* with *figurative force* that mutually constitutes and obligates everything in and between it. His sister probably experienced this intercourse as a kind of stranglehold. But the boy finds himself in a bind. From his perspective, her arrival has created a new circuit of care that is suffocating him. He knows it takes force to hold something in place. The boy sees his options as either to strangle or be suffocated.

Winnicott may have thought his young patient was using his strings to slowly reconcile himself to the natural progression of maturation. But the young boy intuited that demanding environments are not held in place by the natural order of things. They are historical arrangements (*agencements*) that depend on a host of historically formed interlocking concepts, materials, and forces that include human and nonhuman agencies and concepts. Because we are merely one mode of being in one location of being, we cannot and will never be able to understand or explain the conditions that make up our world or what causes its immanent undoing. Thus, as we try to secure it—or to remake it—we create and extinguish. And, like this young boy, the reflexive movements shaping space nonetheless have a figurative force. Our spaces sag, impede, irritate, or scare others.

In other words, in trying to secure or disturb a world, we also do two additional things. On the one hand, we mark the itinerary of our desire as an obligation to something rather than a battle for recognition for something, as a composition and decomposition, but without the dominating image of a horizon. On the other hand, we extinguish one world in the very act of trying to keep another world in place, to return to this place, or to create new places. And this second point is crucial: the topologies we compose to hold and give domicile always have the figure of the sister as their ethical counterpoint.

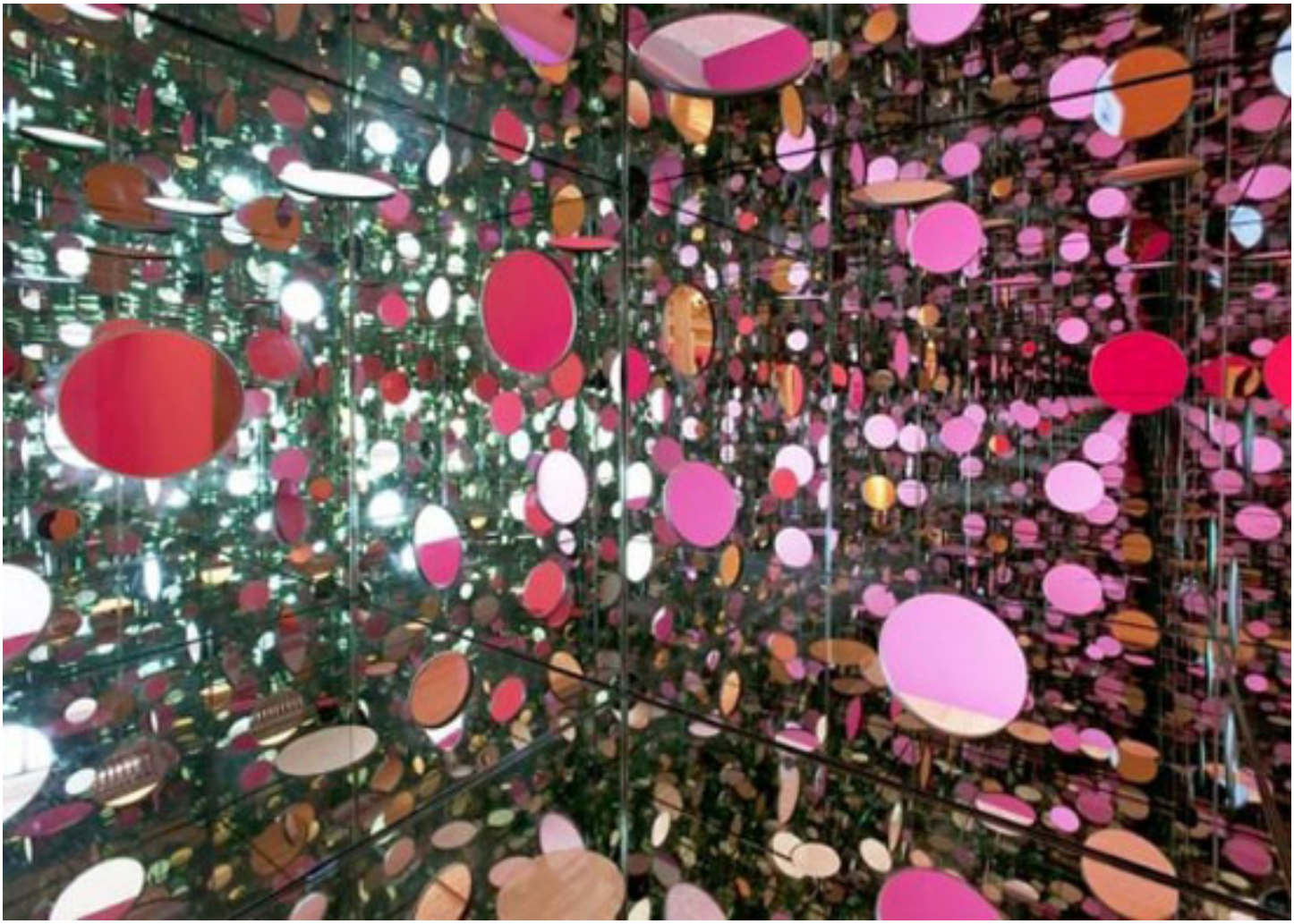
3.

Since the late 1960s a number of images have challenged the dominance of the dialectical horizon—especially Deleuze's image of the fold and Guattari's image of the rhizome. Deleuze saw the image of the fold as combating a model of subjectivity and being that contrasted forms of interiority and exteriority, or placed them in dialectical tension. For Deleuze, the interior of being does not come up to an edge, border, or frontier that defines what is outside itself. Rather, interiority is itself complexly composed of "forces of the outside." All interiority can be understood as *extimite* ("extimité"), a term Lacan coined in order to describe the intimate exterior.[14] Deleuze extends the concept of the extimite outside human subjectivity, making it a general condition of all entities. In other words, at the heart of an assemblage—the subject-objects that the parents of Winnicott's patient assumed to preexist their child's string play, or the subject-objects that will emerge from it—is this folding of the external into the intimate internal. In some way the rhizome simply provides an organic foundation to, and elaboration of, the image of the fold.

Unlike arboreal images, a rhizome can be severed and yet still be productive. But most importantly for Deleuze and Guattari, the rhizome represents radical potentiality existing on the plane of pure immanence. "Unlike the graphic arts, drawing, or photography, unlike tracings, the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entranceways and exits and its own lines of flight."[15] There is no horizon simultaneously within the rhizome and towards which it inexorably moves.

Insofar as this image conjures the hope for a radical potentiality that exists on the plane of pure immanence, it is in line with Deleuze's long engagement with Spinoza—more specifically, his reworking of Spinoza's concepts of *conatus* and *affectus*. Deleuze is not the only one who has reevaluated these key concepts of Spinoza. Weaving together the writings of Deleuze and Irigaray, Rosie Braidotti has noted the "implicit positivity" of the "notion of desire as *conatus*," and through it a new form of politics.[16] For Deleuze and Guattari, this implicit positivity dwells not merely in all actual things, but also in all potential things—the body with organs and the body-without-organs within every organic arrangement.[17] And in his effort to develop a positive form of biopower, Roberto Esposito has recently linked Spinoza's notion of *conatus* to his claim in the *Political Treatise* that "every natural thing has as much right from Nature as it has power to exist and to act."[18]

It is exactly here that the image of the fold and rhizome have lost their political nerve and we return to our little boy madly tying together various pieces of his domicile in a perhaps desperate attempt to return it to its previous form and in that form find a dwelling. Note that Esposito places



Detail of Yayoi Kusama, The Passing Winter, 2005.

the emphasis on "the intrinsic modality that life assumes in the expression of its own unrestrainable power to exist" rather than on what might be a more Nietzschean reading, namely, the relative power that *restrains* the existence and actions of various bioformations in a given field of often opposing striving actors (actants).[19] What if one striving potentiating meets and opposes another? Can progressive politics avoid this question—and thus the problem of extinguishment? How would the sign "progressive" read if it were understood as always actively maintaining, producing, and *extinguishing* worlds? In its refusal of the repressive hypothesis, how has progressive politics avoided the politics of its own practice's extinguishment, and in avoiding these politics, lost its ethical depth?

The problem is especially acute if we do not return to the image of the horizon already within us that nonetheless necessitates a building. This image of the horizon elevates into transcendental truth a kind of affect (a combative desire for the desire of the other), a form of life (universal recognition), and a shape of governance (liberal democracy). All is adjudicated from the perspective of these cardinal measures. The fold and rhizome were meant as a politics and ethics grounded on radical immanence—the becoming community—in which "immanence is no longer immanence to anything other than itself."[20] Pure immanence is a life—not to life or the life. All forms of life are immanent in this sense and all life is a form of life. This is what Winnicott's patient intuited and desired: *a* life, not life. But his sister sat to one side. From her side of the room, his attempt to potentiate a life threatened her own, or more precisely, the form of life that was her life at that point. How much more intense might the conflicting embaginations be when the life that is a life is more fully formed, elaborated, self-aware? When the girl is the boy become a man? When the seedling is the plant that becomes the rainforest that my friend dreams of finding amid a growing web of deforestation from multinational mining?

What are the ethical grounds of these conflicting forces of embagination against a background of finitude that is without transcendental value? In my previous essay on

routes and worlds I tried to suggest how the material heterogeneity within any one sphere, and passing between any two spheres, allows new worlds to emerge and new networks to be added. This heterogeneity emerges in part because of the excesses and deficits arising from incommensurate and often competing interests within any given social space. But these heterogeneities and their "interests" press materiality toward different fabricated futures. How can we imagine pure immanence and radical potentiality without becoming blind to the extinguishments of forms of life that every actual world entails?

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1
Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* , trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 39.

2
See Elizabeth A. Povinelli, "Routes/Worlds," *e-flux journal* 27 (September 2011), http://pdf.e-flux-systems.com/journal/routesworlds/ .

3
Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993), xi.

4
Ibid., xi.

5
Alexandre Kojève, *An Introduction to a Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* , trans. James H. Nichols (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University press, 1980).

6
Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* , trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

7
After the Second World War, Kojève left his position at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and took up a position in the French Ministry of Economic Affairs, where he was one of the chief ideologues for the European Common Market, the bureaucratic predecessor of the European Union. See Dominique Auffret, *Alexander Kojève, La Philosophie, l'état, la fin de l'Histoire* (Paris: Grasset, 1993).

8
Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* , trans. Adrian Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Given Fukuyama's mutual admiration of Kojève and Leo Strauss, it is important to note that these two disagreed about the inherent difference between philosophy and politics and the goal of mutual recognition. See Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

9
Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

10
Donald W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1982), 17.

11
Ibid.

12
Donald W. Winnicott, "Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 34 (1953): 89-97.

13
Playing and Reality , 19.

14
In an essay on the extimite, Jacques-Alain Miller describes the intimate as parasitical on the externality of the Other. See Jacques-Alain Miller, "Extimity," *The Symptom* 9 (2008).

15
Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* , trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 21.

16
Rosie Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (London: Polity Press, 2006), 150.

17
Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

18
Roberto Esposito, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy* , trans. Timothy Campbell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 185.

19
Ibid., 185-6.

20
Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life* , trans Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 27.

Bilal Khbeiz

Dubai: A City Manufactured by Curiosity

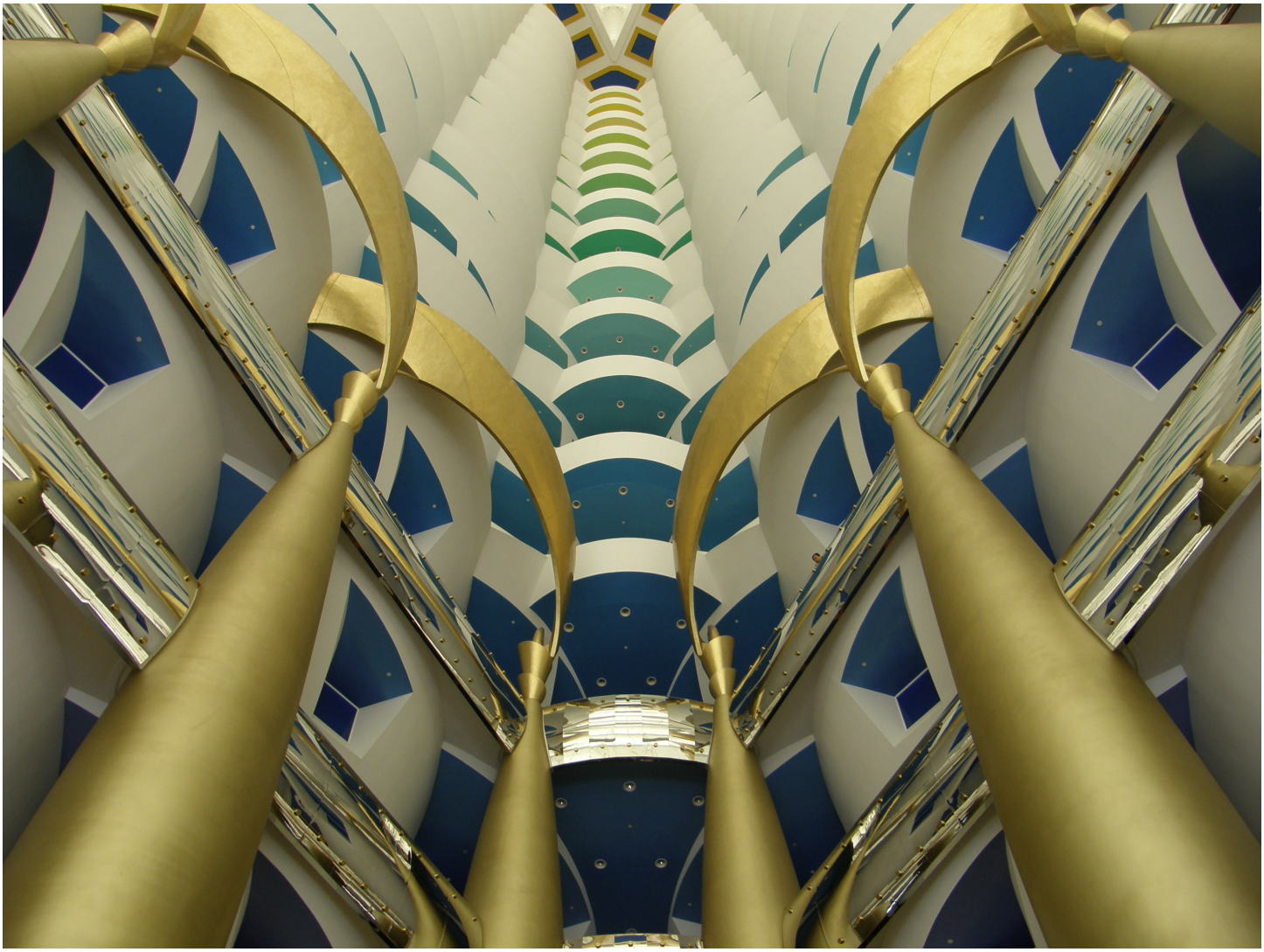
It is hard to distinguish individuals in a crowd. Citizens of the Gulf states appear to the visitor as crowds, with their identities as individuals momentarily suspended. Such a crowd is slightly different from the kind described by Elias Canetti. This is a crowd perceived as such by a visitor conscious of his individuality against the multitude. The crowd exerts no control over this visitor, nor does it repress his personality. Rather, this visitor exerts a form of authority—engaging in an exchange of power with the crowd. For him, the citizen is imprisoned within the crowd, incapable of assuming the authority of an individual.

Visual encounters between citizens and visitors take place primarily in neutral public spaces where the visitor's behavior is less restricted. By entering a hotel lobby, for instance, the citizen declines the possibility of establishing authority and becomes helpless. The citizen can be neither a soldier nor a noble person, but is also incapable of becoming a barbarian, an indistinguishable part of a great multitude—a grain of sand along the seashore, as Ernest Renan described barbarians. Barbarians for Renan are numberless; they tirelessly procreate despite the numerous deaths they suffer. Furthermore, their deaths complement their procreation, which is why they appear countless to Renan and other nineteenth-century European racialist thinkers.

But this is not how the visitor perceives the citizen of the United Arab Emirates; this citizen is part of an absent crowd. In public he appears isolated and weak—lonesome in a colonized land. The citizen appears to be performing the role of an individual, summoning a display of mannerisms in the hope of finding a place for the national costume in public space. This "uniform" is a national disposition, or perhaps an assertion of loyalty to an identity in spite of knowing it is restrictive. It is a form of reconciliation between a constructed identity and a possible connection to a formalistic modernity. The modernity experienced in hotels is superficial, and this citizen seems to imply that his costume is but one extra mask in a stage full of masks.

We can think of the national costume as a veil—not the veil that allows fundamentalists to retain their individuality, but a veil that elevates identity above intermingling. As a social necessity that is very costly to the individual, it marks a restrictive obsession with identity. It appears to instigate a challenge to visual identity, to provoke a deeper form of intimacy that transcends this outer veil. It suggests a form of intimacy requiring an effort in order to be earned. The costume then becomes a form of authority that allows people to see without being seen. By blending into the crowds, the citizen disappears from view, but can still observe the others wearing their masks in public.

Let's take a closer look at this form of authority that the costume grants the citizen over the visitor. There is a legal aspect, but also a moral one that presupposes that the citizen always has the last word on any matter—and these



A view of the interior of Burj Al Arab Hotel Lobby, Dubai.

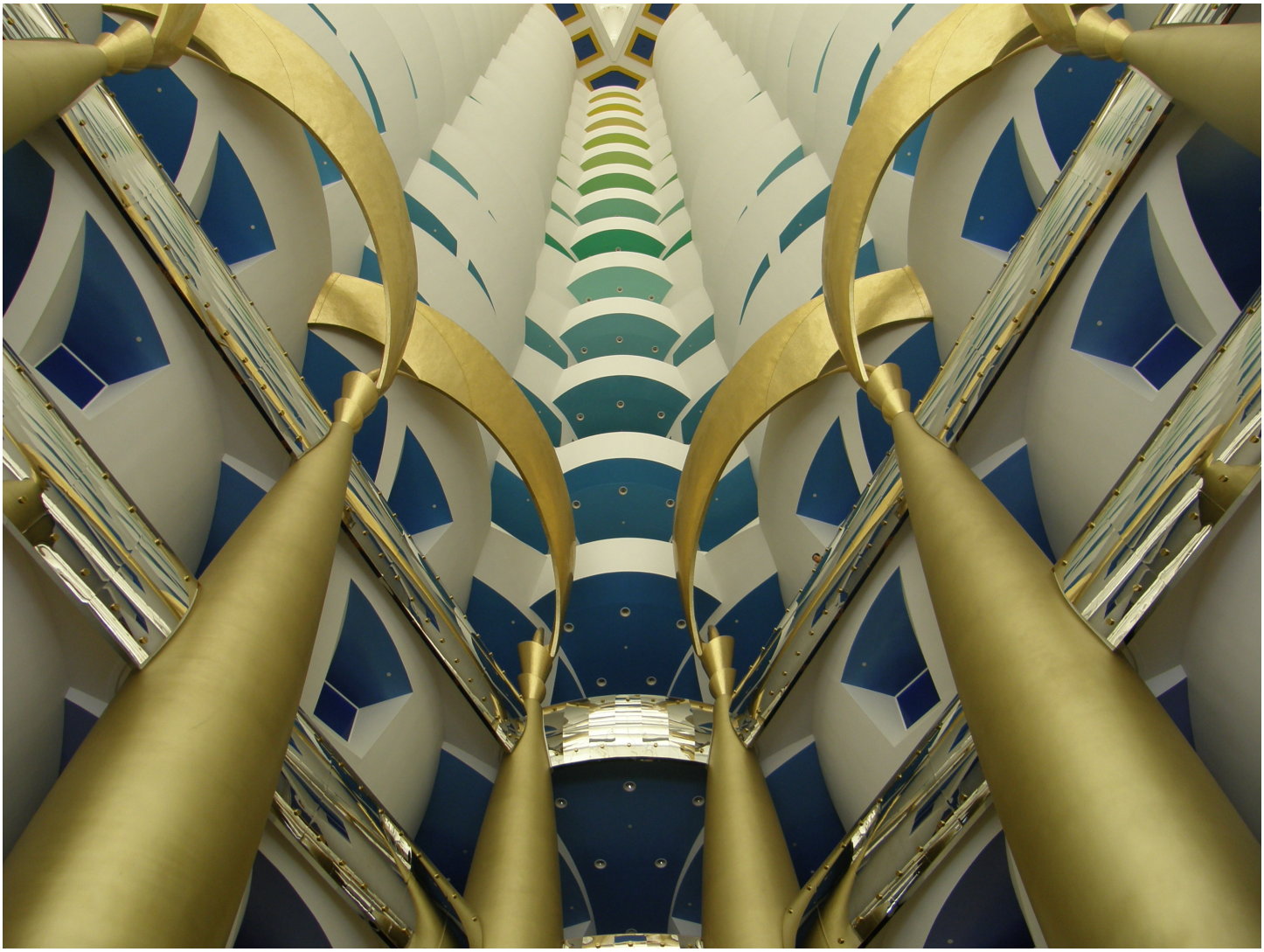
mask a more complex condition.

In legal terms, the citizen can master geography through the rights of property ownership. But this is a fragile mastery that can instantly turn the geography into a desert. The citizen has the right to die. His entitlement to death and burial is geographic—he is free to mate and procreate, but always in the deep sand that the entire place is made of. Let's propose this equation: the citizen is entitled to be buried in the sand, while the guest is entitled to live there. These are not equal entitlements, for it is the guest who turns the virginal geography into a semblance of a city. The citizen meanwhile shuns the ease of life in the city, leaving this life to the visitors. But it is a life lived transiently, as if for one night. The masters of geography live there forever.

Morally speaking, it appears that the citizen's loyalty to his costume and identity grants him the authority to shun different ways of living. Through his tolerance and compassion, he allows others to live without infringing upon the lightness of their existence with his decisive authority. But there remains a dichotomy that forces a choice between a more noble and elevated sense of entitlement and an easy life, a lightness of being that favors a loss of roots extending deep into the sand.

And while the citizen has the uncontested right to rule decisively on any matter, this is a right that is seldom practiced. Exercising this authority confronts the citizen with death, and so it is an authority that is predicated by its infrequent use.

Petrol in this land flows pure as gold. Oil is the indisputable pillar on which this country has transformed itself. This precious substance played a substantial role in three generations of social transformation. The generation of the 1950s and early 60s established the basis for the country's relationship with the outside world, with its leaders striving to connect their societies to modernity



A view of the interior of Burj Al Arab Hotel Lobby, Dubai.

without betraying their heritage and traditions. The people of that generation traveled around the world, experiencing it as individuals. There were giant leaps between these three generations that would have never been possible without the proceeds of oil trading, and the third generation discovered suddenly that the modern world could not justify its presumptuousness. They immersed themselves in knowledge and exploration, accelerating the pace of their development in an astounding manner. The people of this land can always surprise you—they conceal themselves and hide their charms from transient eyes. But real interaction with them remains perplexing. Within three generations, they went a long way towards establishing their identity and the basis of their relationship to the Other, but later experienced challenges to this identity abroad and the dichotomies of being suspended between two civilizations. They encountered confrontations with the Other that made it necessary to summon arguments to prove the strength of their identity.

The oil boom allowed this country to develop at record speeds, overcoming challenges that in other countries led to disaster. But oil's curse is no secret. These rapid achievements, massive public works, and grandiose projects only widened the generational gap, and dialogue between the different generations has only been further suppressed. The outside observer does not detect this tension, but to those concerned these differences appear to be insurmountable. Identity appears to be suspended by an invisible wire, which wants to disappear completely but still remain intact. Everything here is judged through touch and experience—the eye is ineffectual because it only sees the surface.

Thus, the people of this land try to conceal the cracks that could be noticed by the visitor. Many visitors are shocked by the presence of poor neighborhoods in some cities. The Gulf states are under scrutiny, and poverty there is a concern for others. News of poverty and unemployment in Saudi Arabia are greeted with shock, for the country is

Dubai's skyscrapers seen from the 85th floor of Burj Hotel.

expected to eradicate poverty.

The Ferrari World Theme Park at Abu Dhabi on Yas Island.

The second generation of citizens in the UAE enjoyed positive relations with the West. However, this relationship demanded that they sever their links with their history. They inherited their image from their predecessors, but were required to deny its roots in order to attain knowledge and satisfy their curiosities in the West. Sharing knowledge and communicating with the Other are difficult tasks, and they dictate a single driving desire: a curiosity that voids the self and renders it ready to accept anything that promises fulfillment.

For these reasons, the passion for monuments in the Gulf remains a curiosity, because the monuments are made to conceal an identity. There is an ongoing spectacle of modern music, high-end retail, fashion designers, expensive hotels, luxury cars, all of which comprise a compensatory escape act—a resistance to the feeling of confronting death, but by way of a frantic level of activity, that is, through exhaustion. The meeting of exhaustion and vitality in one body makes death simultaneously tangible and distant. They allow one to invite death so as to escape its clutches.

Encountering the Other, and attempting to interrogate and recreate the Other's experience, requires a form of betrayal. Immersion in another's experience is a self-deprecating exercise. There is an instantaneous confusion: a strong identity and known lineage must be renounced. This renounced self becomes proof of the Other's loyalty to his own identity, as well as of the possibility of its denial.

Countries allow us to belong when they have the resources at their disposal to secure a stable future. Oil then becomes very important as the medium through which we and the Others collude to anticipate our future. In international trade, oil also promises a stable future, but it is a leased future, manufactured through a chain of intermediaries. It is a future built by mercenaries, and it is through them that this country is allowed to be distinctive in its modernity.

It is a form of betrayal to seek to attract such a high volume of skilled labor, for the architects and designers who unleash their creativity onto the desert develop a sense of custodianship towards the cities they build. To employ engineers, educators, and doctors as the makers of the future, is to transform them into artists—and they will defend their products like valuable works of art. In the meantime, the citizen becomes a viewer, watching his or her country on a screen rather than living in it. Rather than emigrating abroad, the citizens immigrate inwards, as if into a secret. As they do this, they cease to be visible, yet they can always see the masterpiece their land has become. They watch it from the inside out, as if they lived in the belly of a statue.

Sketch of a fountain monument for Dubai.

X

Translated from the Arabic by Karl Sharro.

Bilal Khbeiz (1963, Kfarchouba) is a poet, essayist, and journalist. He regularly contributes to the newspapers *Beirut Al Masa'*, *Al Nahar*, and to *Future Television Beirut*, among other publications and networks. Published poetry and books on cultural theory include *Fi Annal jassad Khatia' Wa Khalas* (That the Body is Sin and Deliverance), *Globalisation and the Manufacture of Transient Events*, *The Enduring Image and the Vanishing World*, and *Tragedy in the Moment of Vision*.

Boris Groys

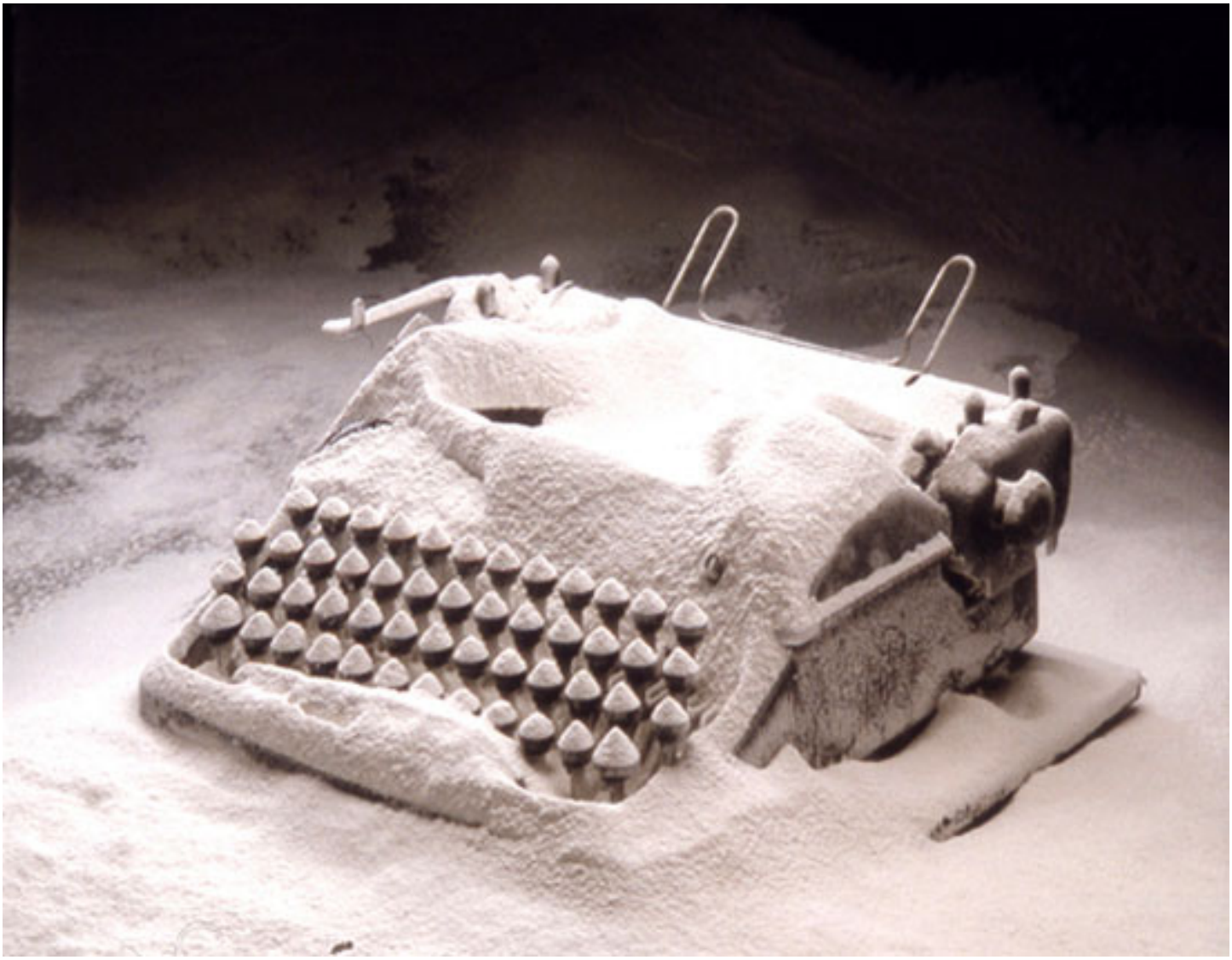
Under the Gaze of Theory

From the start of modernity art began to manifest a certain dependence on theory. At that time—and even much later—art's "need of explanation" (*Kommentarbeduerftigkeit*), as Arnold Gehlen characterized this hunger for theory was, in its turn, explained by the fact that modern art is "difficult"—inaccessible for the greater public.[1] According to this view, theory plays a role of propaganda—or, rather, advertising: the theorist comes after the artwork is produced, and explains this artwork to a surprised and skeptical audience. As we know, many artists have mixed feelings about the theoretical mobilization of their own art. They are grateful to the theorist for promoting and legitimizing their work, but irritated by the fact that their art is presented to the public with a certain theoretical perspective that, as a rule, seems to the artists to be too narrow, dogmatic, even intimidating. Artists are looking for a greater audience, but the number of theoretically-informed spectators is rather small—in fact, even smaller than the audience for contemporary art. Thus, theoretical discourse reveals itself as a counterproductive form of advertisement: it narrows the audience instead of widening it. And this is true now more than ever before. Since the beginning of modernity the general public has made its grudging peace with the art of its time. Today's public accepts contemporary art even when it does not always have a feeling that it "understands" this art. The need for a theoretical explanation of art thus seems definitively passé.

However, theory was never so central for art as it is now. So the question arises: Why is this the case? I would suggest that today artists need a theory to explain what they are doing—not to others, but to themselves. In this respect they are not alone. Every contemporary subject constantly asks these two questions: What has to be done? And even more importantly: How can I explain to myself what I am already doing? The urgency of these questions results from the acute collapse of tradition that we experience today. Let us again take art as an example. In earlier times, to make art meant to practice—in ever-modified form—what previous generations of artists had done. During modernity to make art meant to protest against what these previous generations did. But in both cases it was more or less clear what that tradition looked like—and, accordingly, what form a protest against this tradition could take. Today, we are confronted with thousands of traditions floating around the globe—and with thousands of different forms of protest against them. Thus, if somebody now wants to become an artist and to make art, it is not immediately clear to him or her what art actually is, and what the artist is supposed to do. In order to start making art, one needs a theory that explains what art is. And such a theory gives an artist the possibility to universalize, globalize their art. A recourse to theory liberates artists from their cultural identities—from the danger that their art would be perceived only as a local curiosity. Theory opens a perspective for art to become universal. That is the main reason for the rise of theory in

our globalized world. Here the theory—the theoretical, explanatory discourse—precedes art instead of coming after art.

traditionally understood to include logic, mathematics, moral and civil laws, ideas of good and right, systems of state governance—all the methods and techniques that regulate and underlie society. All these ideas could be



Rodney Graham, Rheinmetall/Victoria 8, 2003, Installation, 35mm film, color, silent.

However, one question remains unresolved. If we live in a time when every activity has to begin with a theoretical explanation of what this activity is, then one can draw the conclusion that we live after the end of art, because art was traditionally opposed to reason, rationality, logic—covering, it was said, the domain of the irrational, emotional, theoretically unpredictable and unexplainable.

Indeed, from its very start, Western philosophy was extremely critical of art and rejected art outright as nothing other than a machine for the production of fictions and illusions. For Plato, to understand the world—to achieve the truth of the world—one has to follow not one's imagination, but one's reason. The sphere of reason was

understood by human reason, but they cannot be represented by any artistic practice because they are invisible. Thus, the philosopher was expected to turn from the external world of phenomena towards the internal reality of his own thinking—to investigate this thinking, to analyze the logic of the thinking process as such. Only in this way would the philosopher reach the condition of reason as the universal mode of thinking that unites all reasonable subjects, including, as Edmund Husserl said, gods, angels, demons, and humans. Therefore, the rejection of art can be understood as the originary gesture that constitutes the philosophical attitude as such. The opposition between philosophy—understood as love of

truth—and art (construed as the production of lies and illusions) informs the whole history of Western culture. Additionally, the negative attitude toward art was maintained by the traditional alliance between art and religion. Art functioned as a didactic medium in which the transcendent, ungraspable, irrational authority of religion presented itself to humans: art represented gods and God, made them accessible to the human gaze. Religious art functioned as an object of trust—one believed that temples, statues, icons, religious poems and ritual performance were the spaces of divine presence. When Hegel said in the 1820s that art was a thing of the past, he meant that art had ceased to be a medium of (religious) truth. After the Enlightenment, nobody should or could be deceived by art any longer, for the evidence of reason was finally substituted for seduction through art. Philosophy taught us to distrust religion and art, to trust our own reason instead. The man of the Enlightenment despised art, believing only in himself, in the evidences of his own reason.

However, modern and contemporary critical theory is nothing other than a critique of reason, rationality, and traditional logic. Here I mean not only this or that particular theory, but critical thinking in general as it has developed since the second half of the nineteenth century—following the decline of Hegelian philosophy.

We all know the names of the early and paradigmatic theoreticians. Karl Marx started modern critical discourse by interpreting the autonomy of reason as an illusion produced by the class structure of traditional societies—including bourgeois society. The impersonator of reason was understood by Marx as a member of the dominant class, and was therefore relieved from manual work and the necessity to participate in economic activity. For Marx, philosophers could make themselves immune to worldly seductions only because their basic needs were already satisfied, whereas underprivileged manual laborers were consumed by a struggle for survival that left no chance to practice disinterested philosophical contemplation, to impersonate pure reason.

On the other hand, Nietzsche explained philosophy's love of reason and truth as a symptom of the philosopher's underprivileged position in real life. He viewed the will to truth as an effect of the philosopher overcompensating for a lack of vitality and real power by fantasizing about the universal power of reason. For Nietzsche, philosophers are immune to the seduction of art simply because they are too weak, too "decadent" to seduce and be seduced. Nietzsche denies the peaceful, purely contemplative nature of the philosophical attitude. For him, this attitude is merely a cover used by the weak to achieve success in the struggle for power and domination. Behind the apparent absence of vital interests the theoretician discovers a hidden presence of the "decadent," or "sick" will to power. According to Nietzsche, reason and its alleged instruments are designed only to subjugate other, non-philosophically inclined—that is, passionate, vital—characters. It is this great theme of Nietzschean philosophy that was later developed by Michel Foucault.

Thus, theory starts to see the figure of the meditating philosopher and its own position in the world from a perspective of, as it were, a normal, profane, external gaze. Theory sees the living body of the philosopher through aspects that are not available to direct vision. This is something that the philosopher, like any other subject, necessarily overlooks: we cannot see our own body, its positions in the world and the material processes that take place inside and outside it (physical and chemical, but also economical, biopolitical, sexual, and so on). This means that we cannot truly practice self-reflection in the spirit of the philosophical dictum, "know yourself." And what is even more important: we cannot have an inner experience of the limitations of our temporal and spatial existence. We are not present at our birth—and we will be not present at our death. That is why all the philosophers who practiced self-reflection came to the conclusion that the spirit, the soul, and reason are immortal. Indeed, in analyzing my own thinking process, I can never find any evidence of its finitude. To discover the limitations of my existence in space and time I need the gaze of the Other. I read my death in the eyes of Others. That is why Lacan says that the eye of the Other is always an evil eye, and Sartre says that "Hell is other people." Only through the profane gaze of Others may I discover that I do not only think and feel—but also was born, live, and will die.

Descartes famously said "I think, therefore I am." But an external and critically-theoretically minded spectator would say about Descartes: he thinks because he lives. Here my self-knowledge is radically undermined. Maybe I do know what I think. But I do not know how I live—I don't even know I'm alive. Because I never experienced myself as dead, I cannot experience myself as being alive. I have to ask others if and how I live—and that means I must also ask what I actually think, because my thinking is now seen as being determined by my life. To live is to be exposed as living (and not as dead) to the gaze of the others. Now it becomes irrelevant what we think, plan, or hope—what becomes relevant is how our bodies are moving in space under the gaze of Others. It is in this way that theory knows me better than I know myself. The proud, enlightened subject of philosophy is dead. I am left with my body—and delivered to the gaze of the Other. Before the Enlightenment, man was subject to the gaze of God. But following that era, we are subject to the gaze of critical theory.

At first glance, the rehabilitation of the profane gaze also entails a rehabilitation of art: in art the human being becomes an image that can be seen and analyzed by the Other. But things are not so simple. Critical theory criticizes not only philosophical contemplation—but any kind of contemplation, including aesthetic contemplation. For critical theory, to think or contemplate is the same as

Joos van Craesbeeck, The Temptation of St. Anthony, 1650.

being dead. In the gaze of the Other, if a body does not move it can only be a corpse. Philosophy privileges contemplation. Theory privileges action and practice—and hates passivity. If I cease to move, I fall off theory's radar—and theory does not like it. Every secular, post-idealistic theory is a call for action. Every critical theory creates a state of urgency—even a state of emergency. Theory tells us: we are merely mortal, material organisms—and we have little time at our disposal. Thus, we cannot waste our time with contemplation. Rather, we must act here and now. Time does not wait and we do not have enough time for further delay. And while it is of course true that every theory offers a certain overview and explanation of the world (or explanation of why the world cannot be explained), these theoretical descriptions and scenarios have only an instrumental and transitory role. The true goal of every theory is to define the field of action we are called to undertake.

This is where theory demonstrates its solidarity with the general mood of our times. In earlier times, recreation meant passive contemplation. In their free time, people went to theatres, cinemas, museums, or stayed home to read books or watch TV. Guy Debord described this as the society of spectacle—a society in which freedom took the form of free time associated with passivity and escape. But today's society is unlike that spectacular society. In their free time, people work—they travel, play sports, and exercise. They don't read books, but write for Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. They do not look at art but take photos, make videos, and send them to their relatives and friends. People have become very active indeed. They design their free time by doing many kinds of work. And while this activation of humans correlates with the major forms of media of the era dominated by moving images (whether film or video), one cannot represent the movement of thought or the state of contemplation through these media. One cannot represent this movement even through the traditional arts; Rodin's famous statue of the *Thinker* actually presents a guy resting after working out at a gym. The movement of thought is invisible. Thus, it cannot be represented by a contemporary culture oriented to visually transmittable information. So one can say that theory's unknowable call to action fits very well within the contemporary media environment.

But, of course, theory does not merely call us to take

action towards any specific goal. Rather, theory calls for action that would perform—and extend—the condition of theory itself. Indeed, every critical theory is not merely informative but also transformative. The scene of theoretical discourse is one of conversion that exceeds the terms of communication. Communication itself does not change the subjects of the communicative exchange: I have transmitted information to somebody, and someone else has transmitted some information to me. Both participants remain self-identical during and after this exchange. But critical theoretical discourse is not simply an informative discourse, for it does not only transmit certain knowledge. Rather, it asks questions concerning the meaning of knowledge. What does it mean that I have a certain new piece of knowledge? How has this new knowledge transformed me, how it has influenced my general attitude towards the world? How has this knowledge changed my personality, modified my way of life? To answer these questions one has to perform theory—to show how certain knowledge transforms one's behavior. In this respect, theoretical discourse is similar to religious and philosophical discourses. Religion describes the world, but it is not satisfied with this descriptive role alone. It also calls us to believe this description and to demonstrate this faith, to act on our faith. Philosophy also calls us not only to believe in the power of reason but also to act reasonably, rationally. Now theory not only wants us to believe that we are primarily finite, living bodies, but also demonstrate this belief. Under the regime of theory it is not enough to live: one must also demonstrate that one lives, one should perform one's being alive. And now I would argue that in our culture it is art that performs this knowledge of being alive.

Indeed, the main goal of art is to show, expose, and exhibit modes of life. Accordingly, art has often played the role of performing knowledge, of showing what it means to live with and through a certain knowledge. It is well known that, as Kandinsky would explain his abstract art by referring to the conversion of mass into energy in Einstein's theory of relativity, he saw his art as the manifestation of this potential at an individual level. The elaboration of life with and through the techniques of modernization were similarly manifested by Constructivism. The economic determination of human existence thematized by Marxism was reflected in the Russian avant-garde. Surrealism articulated the discovery of the subconscious that accompanied this economic determination. Somewhat later, conceptual art attended to the closer control of human thinking and behavior through the control of language.

Of course, one can ask: Who is the subject of such an artistic performance of knowledge? By now, we have heard of the many deaths of the subject, the author, the speaker, and so forth. But all these obituaries concerned the subject of philosophical reflection and self-reflection—but also the voluntary subject of desire and vital energy. In contrast, the performative subject is constituted by the call to act, to demonstrate oneself as alive. I know myself as addressee of this call, and it tells me: change yourself, show your knowledge, manifest your life, take transformative action, transform the world, and so on. This call is directed toward *me*. That is how I know that I can, and must, answer it.

And, by the way, the call to act is not made by a divine caller. The theorist is also a human being, and I have no reason to completely trust his or her intention. The Enlightenment taught us, as I have already mentioned, to not trust the gaze of the Other—to suspect Others (priests and so forth) of pursuing their own agenda, hidden behind their appellative discourse. And theory taught us not to trust ourselves, and the evidence of our own reason. In this sense, every performance of a theory is at the same time a performance of the distrust of this theory. We perform the image of life to demonstrate ourselves as living to the others—but also to shield ourselves from the evil eye of the theorist, to hide behind our image. And this, in fact, is precisely what theory wants from us. After all, theory also distrusts itself. As Theodor Adorno said, the whole is false and there is no true life in the false.[2]

[figure fullpage 2012_05_Reading-Position-for-Second-Degree-Burn-1970-.jpg Dennis Oppenheim, *Reading Position for Second Degree Burn*, 1970. Book, skin, solar energy. Exposure time: 5 hours. Jones Beach, New York.
]

Having said this, one should also take into consideration the fact that the artist can adopt another perspective: the critical perspective of theory. Artists can, and indeed do, adopt this in many cases; they see themselves not as performers of theoretical knowledge using human action to ask about the meaning of this knowledge, but as messengers and propagandists of this knowledge. These artists do not perform, but rather join the transformative call. Instead of performing theory they call others to do it; instead of becoming active they want to activate others. And they become critical in the sense that theory is exclusive towards anyone who does not answer its call. Here, art takes on an illustrative, didactic, educational role—comparable to the didactic role of the artist in the framework of, let say, Christian faith. In other words, the artist makes secular propaganda (comparable to religious propaganda). I am not critical of this propagandistic turn. It has produced many interesting works in the course of the twentieth century and remains productive now. However, artists who practice this type of propaganda often speak about the ineffectiveness of art—as if everybody can and should be persuaded by art even if he or she is not persuaded by theory itself. Propaganda art is not specifically inefficient—it simply shares the successes and failures of the theory that it propagates.

These two artistic attitudes, the performance of theory and theory as propaganda, are not only different but also conflicting, even incompatible interpretations of theory's

Detail of Ad Reinhardt's cartoons from the book How to Look at art.

"call." This incompatibility produced many conflicts, even tragedies, within art on the left—and indeed on the right—during the course of the twentieth century. This incompatibility therefore deserves an attentive discussion for being the main conflict. Critical theory—from its beginnings in the work of Marx and Nietzsche—sees the human being as a finite, material body, devoid of ontological access to the eternal or metaphysical. That means that there is no ontological, metaphysical guarantee of success for any human action—just as there is also no guarantee of failure. Any human action can be at any moment interrupted by death. The event of death is radically heterogeneous in relationship to any teleological construction of history. From the perspective of living theory, death does not have to coincide with fulfillment. The end of the world does not have to necessarily be apocalyptic and reveal the truth of human existence. Rather, we know life as non-teleological, as having no unifying divine or historical plan that we could contemplate and upon which we could rely. Indeed, we know ourselves to be involved in an uncontrollable play of material forces that makes every action contingent. We watch the permanent change of fashions. We watch the irreversible advance of technology that eventually makes any experience obsolete. Thus we are called, continually, to abandon our skills, our knowledge, and our plans for being out of date. Whatever we see, we expect its disappearance sooner rather than later. Whatever we plan to do today, we expect to change tomorrow.

In other words, theory confronts us with the paradox of urgency. The basic image that theory offers to us is the image of our own death—an image of our mortality, of radical finitude and lack of time. By offering us this image, theory produces in us the feeling of urgency—a feeling that impels us to answer its call for action now rather than later. But, at the same time, this feeling of urgency and lack of time prevents us from making long-term projects; from basing our actions on long-term planning; from having great personal and historical expectations concerning the results of our actions.

A good example of this performance of urgency can be seen in Lars von Trier's film *Melancholia*. Two sisters see their approaching death in form of the planet Melancholia as it draws closer to the earth, about to annihilate it. Planet Melancholia looks on them, and they read their death in the planet's neutral, objectifying gaze. It is a good metaphor for the gaze of theory—and the two sisters are called by this gaze to react to it. Here we find a typical modern, secular case of extreme urgency—inescapable, yet at the same time purely contingent. The slow approach of Melancholia is a call for action. But what kind of action? One sister tries to escape this image—to save herself and her child. It is a reference to the typical Hollywood apocalyptic movie in which an attempt to escape a world catastrophe always succeeds. But the other sister welcomes the death—and becomes seduced by this image of death to the point of orgasm. Rather than spend the rest of her life warding off death, she performs a welcoming ritual—one that activates and excites her within life. Here we find a good model of two opposing ways to react to the feeling of urgency and lack of time.

Indeed, the same urgency, the same lack of time that pushes us to act suggests that our actions will probably not achieve any goals or produce any results. It is an insight that was well described by Walter Benjamin in his famous parable using Klee's *Angelus Novus*: if we look towards the future we see only promises, while if we look

Inscription on the tomb of Marcel Duchamp, as requested by the artist before his death.

towards the past we can see only the ruins of these promises.[3] This image was interpreted by Benjamin's readers as being mostly pessimistic. But it is in fact optimistic—in a certain way, this image reproduces a thematic from a much earlier essay in which Benjamin distinguishes between two types of violence: divine and mythical.[4] Mythical violence produces destruction that leads from an old order to new orders. Divine violence only destroys—without establishing any new order. This divine destruction is permanent (similar to Trotsky's idea of permanent revolution). But today, a reader of Benjamin's essay on violence inevitably asks how divine violence can be eternally inflicted if it is only destructive? At some point, everything would be destroyed and divine violence itself will become impossible. Indeed, if God has created the world out of nothingness, he can also destroy it completely—leaving no traces.

But the point is precisely this: Benjamin uses the image of *Angelus Novus* in the context of his materialist concept of history in which divine violence becomes material violence. Thus, it becomes clear why Benjamin does not believe in the possibility of total destruction. Indeed, if God is dead, the material world becomes indestructible. In the secular, purely material world, destruction can be only material destruction, produced by material forces. But any material destruction remains only partially successful. It always leaves ruins, traces, vestiges behind—precisely as described by Benjamin in his parable. In other words, if we cannot totally destroy the world, the world also cannot totally destroy us. Total success is impossible, but so is total failure. The materialist vision of the world opens a zone beyond success and failure, conservation and annihilation, acquisition and loss. Now, this is precisely the zone in which art operates if it wants to perform its knowledge of the materiality of the world—and of life as a material process. And while the art of the historic avant-gardes has also been accused often of being nihilistic and destructive, the destructiveness of avant-garde art was motivated by its belief in the impossibility of total destruction. One can say that the avant-garde, looking towards the future, saw precisely the same image that Benjamin's *Angelus Novus* saw when looking towards the past.

From the outset, modern and contemporary art integrates the possibilities of failure, historical irrelevance, and destruction within its own activities. Thus, art cannot be shocked by what it sees in the rear window of progress. The avant-garde's *Angelus Novus* always sees the same thing, whether it looks into the future or into the past. Here life is understood as a non-teleological, purely material process. To practice life means to be aware of the possibility of its interruption at any moment by death—and thus to avoid pursuing any definite goals and objectives because such pursuits can be interrupted by death at any moment. In this sense, life is radically heterogeneous with regard to any concept of History that can be narrated only as disparate instances of success and failure.

For a very long time, man was ontologically situated between God and animals. At that time, it seemed to be more prestigious to be placed nearer to God, and further from the animal. Within modernity and our present time, we tend to situate man between the animal and the machine. In this new order, it would seem that it is better to be an animal than a machine. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but also today, there was a tendency to present life as a deviation from a certain program—as the difference only between a living body and a machine. Increasingly, however, as the machinic paradigm was assimilated, the contemporary human being can be seen as an animal acting as a machine—an industrial machine or a computer. If we accept this Foucauldian perspective, the living human body—human animality—does indeed manifest itself through deviation from the program, through error, through madness, chaos, and unpredictability. That is why contemporary art often tends to thematize deviation and error—everything that breaks away from the norm and disturbs the established social program.

Here it is important to note that the classical avant-garde placed itself more on the side of the machine than on the side of the human animal. Radical avant-gardists, from Malevich and Mondrian to Sol LeWitt and Donald Judd, practiced their art according to machine-like programs in which deviation and variance were contained by the generative laws of their respective projects. However, these programs were internally different from any "real" program because they were neither utilitarian nor instrumentalizing. Our real social, political, and technical programs are oriented towards achieving a certain goal—and they are judged according to their efficiency or ability to achieve this goal. Art programs and machines, however, are not teleologically oriented. They have no definite goal; they simply go on and on. At the same time, these programs include the possibility of being interrupted at any moment without losing their integrity. Here art reacts to the paradox of urgency produced by materialist theory and its call to action. On the one hand, our finiteness, our ontological lack of time compels us to abandon the state of contemplation and passivity and begin to act. And yet, this same lack of time dictates an action that is not directed towards any particular goal—and can be interrupted at any moment. Such an action is conceived from the beginning as having no

specific ending—unlike an action that ends when its goal is achieved. Thus artistic action becomes infinitely continuable and/or repeatable. Here the lack of time is transformed into a surplus of time—in fact, an infinite surplus of time.

[figure partialpage 2012_05_dyn009_original_406_480_jpeg_20344_2e27cfef1b901e7edf9ff571df08b4c3.jpg
Richard Artschwager, *Live in your head*, 2002.
]

It is characteristic that the operation of the so-called aestheticization of reality is effectuated precisely by this shift from a teleological to a non-teleological interpretation of historical action. For example, it is not accidental that Che Guevara became the aesthetic symbol of revolutionary movement: all revolutionary undertakings by Che Guevara ended in failures. But that is precisely why the attention of the spectator shifts from the goal of revolutionary action to the life of a revolutionary hero failing to achieve his goals. This life then reveals itself as brilliant and fascinating—with no regard for practical results. Such examples can, of course, be multiplied.

In the same sense, one can argue that the performance of theory by art also implies the aestheticization of theory. Surrealism can be interpreted as the aestheticization of psychoanalysis. In his First Manifesto of Surrealism, Andre Breton famously proposed a technique of automatic writing. The idea was to write so fast that neither consciousness nor unconsciousness could catch up with the writing process. Here the psychoanalytical practice of free association is imitated—but detached from its normative goal. Later, after reading Marx, Breton exhorted readers of the Second Manifesto to pull out a revolver and fire randomly into the crowd—again the revolutionary action becomes non-purposeful. Even earlier, Dadaists practiced discourse beyond meaning and coherence—a discourse that could be interrupted at every moment without losing its consistency. The same can be said, in fact, about the speeches of Joseph Beuys: they were excessively long but could be interrupted at any moment because they were not subjected to the goal of making an argument. And the same can be said about many other contemporary artistic practices: they can be interrupted or reactivated at any moment. Failure thus becomes impossible because the criteria of success are absent. Now, many people in the art world deplore the fact that that art is not and cannot be successful in "real life." Here real life is understood as history—and success as historical success. Earlier I showed that the notion of history does not coincide with the notion of life—in particular with the notion of "real life"—for history is an ideological construction based on a concept of progressive movement toward a certain telos. This teleological model of progressive history has roots in Christian theology. It does not correspond to the post-Christian, post-philosophical, materialist view of the world. Art is emancipatory. Art changes the world and liberates us. But it is does so precisely by liberating us from history—by liberating life from history.

Classical philosophy was emancipatory because it protested against the religious and aristocratic, military rule that suppressed reason—and the individual human being as bearer of reason. The Enlightenment wanted to change the world through the liberation of reason. Today, after Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze, and many others, we tend to believe that reason does not liberate, but rather suppresses us. Now we want to change the world to liberate life—which has increasingly become a more fundamental condition of human existence than reason. In fact, life seems to us to be subjected and oppressed by the same institutions that proclaim themselves to be models of rational progress, with the promotion of life as their goal. To liberate ourselves from the power of these institutions means rejecting their universal claims based on older precepts of reason.

Thus, theory calls us to change not merely this or that aspect of the world, but the world as a whole. But here the question arises: Is such a total, revolutionary, and not only gradual, particular, evolutionary change possible? Theory believes that every transformative action can be effectuated because there is no metaphysical, ontological guarantee of the status quo, of a dominating order, of existing realities. But at the same time, there is also no ontological guarantee of a successful total change (no divine providence, power of nature or reason, direction of history, or other determinable outcome). If classical Marxism still proclaimed faith in a guarantee of total change (in the form of productive forces that will explode social structures), or Nietzsche believed in the power of desire that will explode all civilized conventions, today we have difficulty in believing in the collaboration of such infinite powers. Once we rejected the infinity of the spirit, it seems improbable to substitute it with a theology of production or desire. But if we are mortal and finite, how can we successfully change the world? As I have already suggested, the criteria of success and failure are precisely what defines the world in its totality. So if we change—or, even better, abolish—these criteria, we do indeed change the world in its totality. And, as I have tried to show, art can do it—and in fact has already done it.

But, of course, one can further ask: What is the social relevance of such a non-instrumental, non-teleological, artistic performance of life? I would suggest that it is the production of the social as such. Indeed, we should not think that the social is always already there. Society is an area of equality and similarity: originally, society, or *politeia* emerged in Athens—as a society of the equal and similar. Ancient Greek societies—which are a model for every modern society—were based on commonalities, such as upbringing, aesthetic taste, language. Their members were effectively interchangeable through the physical and cultural realization of established values. Every member of a Greek society could do what the others

Peter Hujar, Thek Working on the Tomb Figure, 1967-2010. Pigmented ink print.

could also do in the fields of sport, rhetoric, or war. But traditional societies based on given commonalities no longer exist.

Today we are living not in a society of similarity, but rather in a society of difference. And the society of difference is not a *politeia* but a market economy. If I live in a society in which everyone is specialized, and has his or her specific cultural identity, then I offer to others what I have and can do—and receive from them what they have or can do. These networks of exchange also function as networks of communication, as a rhizome. Freedom of communication is only a special case for the free market. Now, theory and art that performs theory, produce similarity beyond the differences that are induced by the market economy—and, therefore, theory and art compensate for the absence of traditional commonalities. It is not accidental that the call to human solidarity is almost always accompanied in our time not by an appeal to common origins, common sense and reason, or the commonality of human nature, but to the danger of common death through nuclear war or global warming, for example. We are different in our modes of existence—but similar due to our mortality.

In earlier times, philosophers and artists wanted to be (and understood themselves as being) exceptional human beings capable of creating exceptional ideas and things. But today, theorists and artists do not want to be exceptional—rather, they want to be like everybody else. Their preferred topic is everyday life. They want to be typical, non-specific, non-identifiable, non-recognizable in a crowd. And they want to do what everybody else does: prepare food (Rirkrit Tiravanija) or kick an ice block along the road (Francis Alÿs). Kant already contended that art is not a thing of truth, but of taste, and that it can and should be discussed by everyone. The discussion of art is open to everyone because by definition no one can be a specialist in art—only a dilettante. That means that art is from its beginnings social—and becomes democratic if one abolishes the boundaries of high society (still a model of society for Kant). However, from the time of the avant-garde onwards, art became not only an object of a discussion, free from the criteria of truth, but a universal, non-specific, non-productive, generally accessible activity free from any criteria of success. Advanced contemporary art is basically art production without a product. It is an activity in which everyone can participate, that is all-inclusive and truly egalitarian.

In saying all this, I do not have something like relational aesthetics in mind. I also do not believe that art, if understood in this way, can be truly participatory or democratic. And now I will try to explain why. Our understanding of democracy is based on a conception of the national state. We do not have a framework of universal democracy transcending national borders—and we never had such a democracy in the past. So we cannot say what a truly universal, egalitarian democracy would look like. In addition, democracy is traditionally understood as the rule of a majority, and of course we can imagine democracy as not excluding any minority and operating by consensus—but still this consensus will necessarily include only "normal, reasonable" people. It will never include "mad" people, children, and so forth.

It will also not include animals. It will not include birds. But, as we know, St. Francis also gave sermons to animals and birds. It will also not include stones—and we know from Freud that there is a drive in us that compels us to become stones. It will also not include machines—even if many artists and theorists wanted to become machines. In other words, an artist is somebody who is not merely social, but super-social, to use the term coined by Gabriel Tarde in the framework of his theory of imitation.[5] The artist imitates and establishes himself or herself as similar and equal to too many organisms, figures, objects, and phenomena that will never become a part of any democratic process. To use a very precise phrase by Orwell, some artists, are, indeed, more equal than others. While contemporary art is often criticized for being too elitist, not social enough, actually the contrary is the case: art and artists are super-social. And, as Gabriel Tarde rightly remarks: to become truly super-social one has to isolate oneself from the society.

X

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Public.

1
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2
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4
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Sotirios Bahtsetzis

Eikonomia: Notes on Economy and the Labor of Art

Much has been said about the dangerous impact of a superficial, lifestyle-based, money-oriented culture: it has often been invoked as the explanation for why people become passive, docile, and easy to manipulate irrespective of how disadvantageous their economic conditions are. Following the illustrative critique of two eminent proponents of this criticism, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, the culture of our times is endangered by the uncontrollable expansion of the culture industry into higher artistic production—manipulating the masses into passivity and cultivating false needs.[1] "Art" that produces standardized cultural goods reflects a peculiar type of aestheticization of the everyday world: a dream-like immersion into mass-produced commodities. This immersion is equivalent to the adoption of behavioral stereotypes and tastes linked to a continuously advertised petit-bourgeois phantasmagoria, and also reflects the advanced commodification of social life.

Furthermore, this conviction has had an enormous impact on the current understanding of art as derivative of a monopolized market which functions on the same terms as the general financial market, a view that experts in art business share. What is at stake in the contemporary art field, according to so many of its critics, is that the art market, as formed in the nineteenth century, was replaced by art business in the mid-1980s, not only reflecting the fact that contemporary art has become a serious signifier of wealth, but also making visible the devastating influence of neoliberal financial doctrines and uncontrollable fiscal policies formulated by pirate capitalists and corporate lobbyists on an art system that now runs on the basis of speculation and self-promotion.[2]

But is art's relation to money so transparent that it can be seen solely as an heroic struggle of art against its subjection to commodification, an attempt to assert its aesthetic autonomy? The implied dialectic of the autonomy of art, a central concept in Adorno's critique, refers to a complex condition that can only be understood through a more dialectical critique. As Peter Osborne observes, the integration of autonomous art into the culture industry is "a new systemic functionalization of autonomy itself—a new affirmative culture"—that promotes "art's uselessness" for its own sake.[3] Ultimately, the self-legislated "laws of form" in pure art—autonomous meaning production by the work—are an illusion. "Works of art are thus autonomous to the extent to which they produce the illusion of their autonomy. Art is self-conscious illusion."[4]

Let us concentrate on this point, as it allows for a further meditation on the connection between the art system, post-capitalist economic power, and official, mainstream politics. Considering how politics work, we witness first that the systemic "functionalization of autonomy" observed by Osborne can also be seen as the grounding force of the post-democratic forms of hyper-capitalism. In other words, it appears that contemporary art's usefulness offers to contemporary politics a model of moral

Bernardette Corporation, Is Everybody on the Floor, 2009. Digital inkjet print.

justification, as art, in itself, becomes synonymous with the absolute autonomization and aestheticization of both commercial pragmatism and political functionality. Art does not expose its uselessness for its own sake, but rather reflects the uselessness of neoliberal administration and, by extension, of a post-capitalist market.

Post-capitalist economics and neoliberal politics mime art's claim of autonomy as one of the grounding ethical values of Western civilization. In other words, the alibi of autonomy, which was the main assertion and declaration of modernism during its constitution in the historical avant-garde, works today for the benefit of politics and the market of commodities, which act in disguise as (modern) art. For example, Andy Warhol's conflation of art and business attacks the culture industry by adopting its rules. On the other hand, this same culture industry attacks Warhol's subjective liberalism by adopting his artfulness. From this standpoint, art must reflectively incorporate neoliberal politics and the post-capitalist market into its procedures, not in order to remain contemporary (neo-modern, postmodern, or "alter-modern"), but in order to continue offering ontological proof for the contemporaneity, by necessity, of both market and politics. By contrast, of course, the market and politics guarantee the contemporaneity and validity of art within a given system. This is a win-win situation. Every artwork produced today that doesn't comply with this system of mutual recognition is automatically ostracized and disappears from global media and therefore from the public consciousness.

But what exactly does this systemic functionalization of autonomy at work in both art and politics mean, in economic terms? What is the material cause of such an interdependence of art labor, fiscal games, and artful politics as seems to monopolize art discourse today? Isn't the debate of autonomy versus heteronomy a veiled way of talking about the fetishism of the commodity—one of

the major concepts of Marxian analysis—and by extension, aren't the onto-theological conditions of a functionalization of autonomy best described by the term "capital"?

In Marx's concept of commodity fetishism, capitalist exchange value is constituted at the level of social labor as a measure of abstract labor. It is not the materiality of an object, which assumes the object's fetishistic nature, but the commodification of labor that determines the value of "objective" commodities.[5]Although fetishism is immanent to the commodity form, it conceals not simply the exchange value of the commodity, but also the exchange value of abstract labor that stands for the product of labor.[6] Based on that Marxian observation, by linking it to the concept of the functionalization of autonomy described above, we can view the fetishistic character of commodities as a form of aesthetization of pragmatic human activity and autonomization, a disjoining of human action from any moral or social realm. In this regard, individuality and morality are evaluated in terms of their materialistic creditability. The condition of alienation in modernity demands this level of sophisticated abstraction between labor and value. Isn't this the real reason why we keep buying our Nikes even though we are fully cognizant of the unbearable exploitation of humans in their production? Nike as "golden calf" is the emblem of commodity fetishism that sustains, in a sensuous way, our alienated understanding of our inter-subjective relation to others: a totally crude form of paganism that also illustrates the theological nature of Marx's early socio-economical thinking.

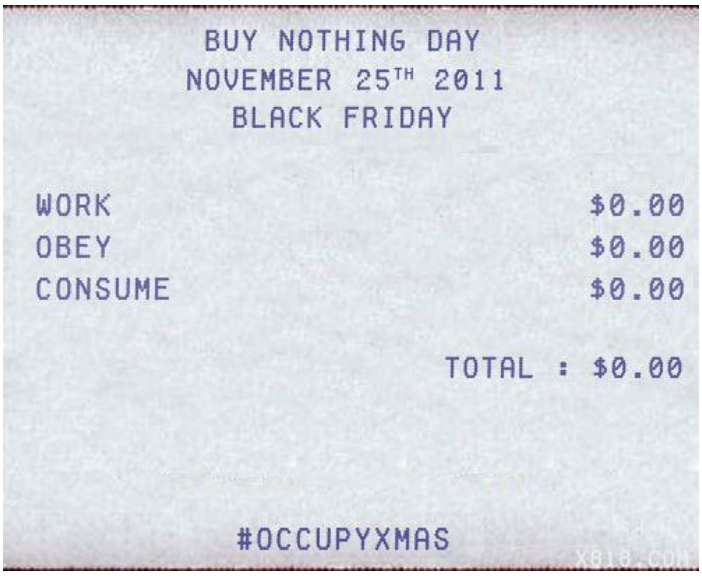

Image from Ad Buster's 2011 "Buy nothing day" campaign.

Does art occupy a particular status quo within this theoretical edifice? Drawing on Marx's seminal concepts of labor, alienation, and objectified species-being (*Gattungswesen*) of being human as described in the *Manuscripts* of 1844, we can argue that an artwork represents a specific type of product of human labor.[7] It is not outside the human condition and social-being (*das gesellschaftliche Wesen*), which means that it partakes in humankind's universal sense of alienation, which is an inevitable intermediate stage in the so-called socio-historical process. However, the product of human labor as a sovereign and self-contained force (*unabhängige Macht*) independent from its producer, potentially entails the means to overcome the alienated stage of current social-being.

Radicalizing this Marxian analysis, we can then offer a more refined description of autonomous art. Artworks are, in any case, a product like any other and thus a part of the capitalist exchange system. However, they are defined by a special type of resistance; not a resistance to being subjected to their capitalist commodification, but by another type of immunity. They tend to refuse commodity's own raw fetishization, which, when unconcealed—that can happen at any time—simply exposes its uselessness, drawing attention directly to the masked social constitution of capitalist exchange. It might be easy to see behind any simple commodity as fetish and expose the exchange value structure that sustains it. It becomes, however, very difficult to look behind an artwork as it constantly negates its capitalist exchange value while preserving the concealment of abstract labor assigned to it.

Drawing on the above consequences, we can argue that art is somehow different from all other types of commodities. Above all, the debate between the autonomy and heteronomy of art, or the fiscalization of art and the aestheticization of the everyday world, does not take place between the value of "pure" or autonomous art and its exchange value as a commodity, but is rather a combat between two forms of fetishistic character. In this regard, the artwork (either as pure, commercial, or even anti-artwork) is a second-order fetish commodity: an *intensified fetish.* The functionalization of autonomy can be seen as this second fetish character of art, constituting a notion of fetish the reverse of that described by Marx. This is a category immanent only to the artwork. It conceals not only the exchange value of the product, but, most significantly, the generic fetish character of commodities or capital in general, and, therefore, the commodification of labor, which constitutes the value of "objective" commodities.

The work of art comes to be an *acheiropoieton*— not handmade—and thus theologized. This term is used in Byzantine theology to describe icons, which are alleged to have come into existence miraculously (not created by a human painter). According to Alain Besançon's reading of Hegel's *Aesthetics*, the notion of modern art is closed to such a concept of the icon.[8] One might assume that, even after the Hegelian proclamation of "the end of art," the

Joseph Kosuth, One and Three Boxes, 1965.

concept of art as an *acheiropoieton* prevails, transcending art's demise despite its continuous secularization and humanization. If art's function was once to make the divine visible (as in ancient Greece), its function in the modern era is to make the visible divine. In other words, over and above the common phantasmagoria of the commodity (Adorno's position), we have also the "asceticism" of the work of art. In this regard, an *acheiropoieton* appears to be outside human nature and the social order, possibly following another disposition or system—in other words, it creates an illusion of autonomy from the (human) labor from which it arises and to which it belongs. An artwork has the tendency to reside outside the normal mechanisms of the market, to exist as something that cannot be sold, as something that resists exchange, thus creating the illusion of a non-alienated social-being, although it is in fact located at the very heart of neoliberal speculation.

Let me give you a banal example from the everyday world of art business as evidence for such a paradoxical thesis. We can honestly say that the reason for the hostility with which galleries face the mercantile practices of auction houses can be traced back to this double nature of the artwork. By simply offering an artwork for open sale, an auction house degrades the artwork to a mere commodity with an exchange value. In this case, the artwork appears to be an interchangeable equity, like real estate or stock market shares, stripped of mystification and negating its character as *intensified fetish*, as an *acheiropoieton*. Usually we experience only the negative results of this double bind between the economy of commodity and the economy of the *intensified fetish*. The practice of an auction house poses a potential threat to the controlled pricing and validation policy of a gallery; it transforms an artist's career into a speculative bubble, with the attendant precipitous drop in price due to uncontrolled

manipulations. Suddenly, the artwork loses its value; it becomes a nothing, a useless plaything—or, looking at it from another perspective—a non-alienated product of human labor! On the other hand, galleries, through their preferences for particular buyers (collectors and museums), often try to protect the symbolic and "universal" value of the artwork as something that can't be sold. Having enough cash doesn't make someone automatically eligible to buy art. And this false exclusivity is not simply a matter of the "conspiracy of art," or the privilege of insider trading attached to art by its practitioners, as Jean Baudrillard remarks, but an inherent quality of the artwork. In other words, the conspiracy of art lies precisely within this paradox: the artwork's unreachable nature in fact guarantees the commodity's disposability.[9]

It can be argued that the artwork's double nature has enormous consequences for a capitalist market system. Actually, its character as an *intensified fetish* safeguards *any* commodity's struggle to be presented as an *acheiropoieton*, which can thus be disguised and sold as a "pure" artwork. The new systemic functionalization of autonomy itself—a new "affirmative culture"—is a coy description of this fact. Such a belief is gloriously performed in the contemporary culture industry, which produces commodities that must be sold, however frivolous, unnecessary, or even impossible (like Japanese gadgets) they are. They only manage to circulate if they can be masked with the aura of freedom that stands in for the allegedly autonomous artwork. The culture of logos, luxury goods, and cult objects benefits from this almost theological dimension of the work of art. This fact should be seen also as the true reason why contemporary art is so valuable to the financial market and political business today, and not necessarily the other way around.

Can we go even further and argue that contemporary art's innate tendency to replace the general fetishism of commodity with the "particular economy of the artwork" is the model for any and every semblance of societal pragmatism today? In light of such a comment, and if we ignore the fact that the art system is actually subjected to the dominant social relations of capitalist exchange as argued above, every wealthy collector appears to be a radical trickster, idealizing himself as a romantic hero and spiritual Parsifal, as some collectors indeed claim to be. Indeed, they might represent a kind of hero if we consider the fact that one can easily earn more investing in the stock market and currencies, instead of buying art. Investing in art is simply not as lucrative. If we take this statement seriously, the choice between the two forms of investment is actually a combat between two forms of commodity fetishism: labor versus the intensified fetish. Both types of investment are potentially unstable and they demand the readiness of the investor to take risks. But only the second can safeguard capital's ontological foundation.

Rem Koolhaas and Cecil Balmond's 2006 Serpentine Pavilion conceived as a hot air ballon.

We can expand this discussion and argue that a work of art in times of economic crisis, as in the current crisis, actually represents the ideological means for capital's own survival. Economic crisis is linked to the fluctuation of "fictitious capital" to which credit and speculation capital belong.[10]According to Norbert Trenkle's analysis of the late-2000s financial crisis, "the growth of fictitious capital not only provides an alternative choice for investors, but also constitutes, when viewed on the macroeconomic level, a deferral of the outbreak of crisis," which is inherent to the capitalist system. (Such a crisis is a crisis of over-accumulation, or, to phrase it in the vocabulary of contemporary macroeconomics, a crisis of "over-investment." In this case, a proportion of capital becomes excessive—measured according to its own abstract rationality as an end in itself—and is, therefore, threatened by devalorization.) The outbreak of a series of capitalist crises from the 1970s to today has demonstrated the extreme unreliability of credit and speculation capital; they threaten always to translate a particular crisis of

devalorization into a genuine global-market crisis. Credit and speculation capital grow too fast because of electronic transactions—digitally automated—and, as a result, create virtually instantaneous financial bubbles, always ready to burst.

Art as intensified fetish always masks its own existence as fictitious capital, eliminating in this way any moral consideration regarding its speculative nature. We can then assume that art's fictitious capital represents the best possibility for a continuous deferral of the outbreak of an unavoidable capitalist crisis, and, for that reason, view art on the macroeconomic level as the best option for safeguarding the system, deflecting a crisis of over-investment. Compared to the credit and speculation capital of digitally multiplied finance, art represents in this regard a *slow* type of fictitious capital. It requires its own investment time. This would make art the perfect defense mechanism, an optimal deferral of the possible outbreak of systemic crisis inherent to a capitalist system. Art would combat the stagnation of the valorization of capital in the real economy. If so, collectors are indeed the heroes of macroeconomic planning.

Claire Fontaine's neon sign at restaurant Grill Royal, Berlin.

This is indeed true. However, in search of a better understanding of the current status quo, it is important to choose an alternative perspective. In the current state of hyper-capitalism, human labor guarantees both the over-productivity and the accumulation, not of goods, but of information-commodities. As Franco "Bifo" Berardi notes, for post-operaist thought (Paolo Virno, Maurizio Lazzarato, Christian Marazzi),

> social labor is the endless recombination of myriad fragments producing, elaborating, distributing, and decoding signs and informational units of all kinds. Every semiotic segment produced by the information worker must meet and match innumerable other semiotic segments in order to form the combinatory frame of the info-commodity, semiocapital.[11]

If commodity fetishism conceals the exchange value of abstract labor (according to Marx), then labor today stands for the attentive and affective time we produce and consume. Labor today is both a semiotic generator and a creator of organic time (of attention, memory, and imagination) to be produced and consumed. Let me give you a simple example. Television advertisers purchase advertising time slots. The question is, from whom do they buy this time? Aren't the millions of spectators who offer their attention, cognitive engagement, and time while watching commercials the actual creditors of media and creative industries? This is modernity's *credo*. However, one must add that information theory does not consider the importance of the message, or its meaning—those are matters of the quality of data, rather than of its quantity and readability. In this regard, the message quality distributed through the television is of no importance. Semiocapital pays no attention to the importance of distributed messages. Such a disjuncture between informational quantity and the quality of communication finds its equivalence in the economic system. Ever since the abandonment of the gold parity rule, the value of monetary currency is determined according to its "informational" value, its exchangeability in stock markets.

In addition to that, today's extreme acceleration of production and distribution of semiocapital has reached capacity, so that "deep, intense elaboration becomes impossible, when the stimulus is too fast."[12] What if the present-day crisis of capitalism, which has obviously reached the critical moment of "an overwhelming supply of attention-demanding goods," is a crisis of goods that cannot be consumed? What if the current crisis is not a financial crisis, but a crisis of governance and distribution of semio-time? What alternative to this condition can art offer?

Art represents a very particular type of semiocapital. In contrast to the accelerated and digitally self-multiplied capital of the global financial system, the semio-time produced and consumed within the system of art is slow and personal. You need some ninety minutes to watch a film, but only seconds to consume a TV commercial. With modifications, the same applies to the reading of a painting or a book of poetry. Furthermore, art deals primarily with the importance of distributed messages, not with its informational quantity. In this regard, quality equals the intellectual labor and cognitive activity invested by the production of art workers and the reception of connoisseurs of art. It is the deceleration of intellectual labor and cognitive activity offered by art that makes the difference. Deceleration means to focus on the creation of deeper, slower, and *intensified* time, to concentrate on

Sylvie Fleury, C'est la vie, 1990. Collezione Leggeri, Bergamo.

the production and reception of meaning—ideally the maximum quantity of infinite and, for that reason, inconsumable meaning! (This might be another way to describe what Adorno has called art's "muteness"; for Adorno art is critical insofar as it is mute, insofar as what it communicates is its muteness.)

What if the present-day crisis of semiocapitalism is at the same time a crisis of the current political order? In order to elucidate this last thesis, I would like to link the notion of the work of art with the notion of *oikonomia* as analyzed by Giorgio Agamben. The theological doctrine of *oikonomia*— originally meaning "stewardship," or wise and responsible management or administration of domestic life—was first developed by early Christians to interpret the divine intervention of a personal God into the world. This concept was introduced in order to reconcile monotheism as an emerging state religion with the doctrine of the divine nature of the Son (within the Trinity), and thus explain and justify the intervention of God's house, the Church, into the earthly world. The extremely sophisticated Byzantine discourse of *oikonomia* is directly linked to an elaborate conceptualization of the icon (mainly that of Jesus and, by extension, of all imagery) as being part of both the heavenly and the earthly realms.[13] Understanding *oikonomia* (or *dispositio*, in Latin) as a Foucauldian project, Agamben interprets it as a general theological genealogy of modern economy and governmentality. Modern political and economic doctrines, such as the invisible hand of liberalism over a self-regulated market and society, go back to these early Christian theological concepts, which refer to God's activity in the world. Such a genealogy of economy—meaning of a government of men and things—is pertinent to a critical re-orientation of thinking concerning key socioeconomic concepts such as the capitalist ethics of work (according to Max Weber) or the fetishism of commodities, alienation, and human labor (as per Marx). Not only various political concepts, but also the triumph of financial thinking over every other aspect of life in our times, testifies to this close connection between modernity and the secularized version of the theological concept of economy and governance. The novelty of Agamben's claim—echoing both Walter Benjamin's ideas of capitalism as religion and Carl Schmitt's famous thesis about the modern theory of state as a secularized theological concept—is that modern power is inherent not only in political and financial administration, but also in

Glory (*doxa*), meaning the ceremonial, liturgical acclamatory apparatus that has always accompanied it. As Agamben puts it:

> The society of the spectacle—if we can call contemporary democracies by this name—is, from this point of view, a society in which power in its "glorious" aspect becomes indiscernible from *oikonomia* and government. To have completely integrated Glory with *oikonomia* in the acclamative form of consensus is, more specifically, the specific task carried out by contemporary democracies and their *government by consent*, whose original paradigm is not written in Thucydides' Greek, but in the dry Latin of medieval and baroque treaties on the divine government of the world.[14]

This is exactly the issue of what is perceived as the visual manifestation of power sustained by the semio-time offered by consumers-creditors of semiocapitalism, which allows mediation regarding art's current state and future role. In view of capitalism's tendency to commercialize everything as part of global financial speculation, could art—understood as affective and sensuous time—offer an alternative? If economy alongside bio-politics is the secularized pendant to *oikonomia*, and the technological spectacle produced by modern industries of the imaginary is the equivalent to Glory, then the following question arises: If the work of art as a dispositif of *acheiropoieton* can be turned back against the doctrines, what caused human labor to appear as a commodity at the very beginning, and what caused current society to look like a network simply of fiscalized info-producers?

It is pertinent to us that art permanently assumes its position as *acheiropoieton*—a slow and mute icon—offering the impression that it is situated outside the world of labor (semio-time) as part of a particular economy. In this regard, the economy of the artwork might be the hidden equivalent of both the governmental machinery and the economic control power within our alienated society. Because of this, art strives to infiltrate current society with the ascetic notion of the *acheiropoieton* and to hijack the secret center of power: capitalism's political and financial mechanisms and the spectacular "glory" that sustains them. *Eikonomia*,[15] an economy of the work of art, can serve as a Trojan horse against the appealing and seductive deluge of accelerated information produced by "creative" investment managers, film producers, software developers, and corporate advertisers, who sustain commodity fetishism and direct consensual political decision-making. Such an alternative economy does not exist outside the given system of hyper-capitalism. It simply works outside the given informational parameters of the system. It produces an inconsumable and intensified semiocapital, slowing down affective and cognitive time—or, in the words of Lazzarato, it creates novel "time-crystallization-machines."[16] This is its hidden surplus value in view of a future society in which labor is not a commodity, but the production and consumption of content-time.

It is indeed difficult to imagine a world in which the economy of the artwork will have a stronger influence on the global distribution of images, stock market courses, and the bio-politics of labor, and will be able to establish a paradigmatic shift in society. But even if such a world remains utopian at the moment, art's double nature, which intervenes both in cycles of financial speculation and in the actual productive economy of affective time, still offers options for working within the structures of managerial, economic, and political control. Beyond any romantic ideas of a revolution that would end the evils of capitalism, the marketability of art should not be seen as its handicap, but as its safeguarding screen—a *trompe-l'œil* until a universal economy of the artwork can be established. This might not cancel out the condition of alienation inherent to the human condition and create a society free of conflicts—the romantic dream of all social revolutions—but it might be able to suspend its force to destroy our inherent social-being. The price to be paid is often very high: present-day impoverishment and precarization of intellectual labor, which makes artists (as well as inventors, philosophers, therapists, and educators) appear simply as ornamental accessories of the economy. Indeed, present-day "immaterial" and creative workers belong to the most exploited part of the labor society. Not so, though, if we evaluate this labor not according to economic, but *eikonomic* criteria. Nevertheless, in a futuristic post-human scenario, in which semiocapital is not only produced but is also consumed by those who are able to deal with its endless acceleration—meaning by "intelligent" machines—and in which humanity exists only as a beautiful, viral bubble within a gigantic technological, informational, and fiscal *Gestell* (the beginning of which might be the so-called Internet of Things), the intensified, non-fiscalized, and creative time offered by art would be our only recourses. Focusing more on labor as *praxis*, as a bringing-forth that takes into account human labor's product as an *acheiropoieton* and its specific *oikonomia,* might offer us some solutions: worshiping less the golden calf of semiocapital and creating invisible dispositifs of intensified time! This project will require its own economists, theorists, and workers. Even if, for now, leading a life that is as creatively intense as it is economically effective shouldn't be regarded as taboo, one should also urge: Be careful whom you offer credit to!

X

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1
Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1976), 121.

2
Interestingly, the moral justification of this neoliberal cult coincides with the phenomenon of the artist as superstar, which actually commences with the so-called third phase of contemporary art—art since the mid-1980s—and should be seen as symptomatic of an equivalent transformation in society. As Olav Velthuis remarks in his insightful sociological analysis of the art market, 1980 was the first year that the highest price paid for a work of art was for a work by a living artist, $1 million for the painting *Three Flags* by Jasper Johns. What is more significant, however, than the winner-take-all economic model that began to inform the art market, is the so-called superstar circuit that emerged in the New York art world of the 1980s. According to Velthuis, Julian Schnabel is the representative case of an artist whose work saw a rapid rise of price level (and equally fast decline), and is characteristic of the new market's mentality and "aggressive superstar pricing strategy." (In a period of less than seven years, Schnabel prices soared from $3,000 to $300,000, improving the "symbolic" and financial position of the artist, his dealers, and his collectors.) Warranted or not, this mixture of show business and stock-market mentality linked to prospective financial success has, since then, infiltrated the art world and produced a Darwinian network of success or burn-out. Olav Velthuis, *Talking Prices: Symbolic Meaning of Prices on the Market for Contemporary Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2005), 145.

3
Peter Osborne, "Imaginary Radicalisms: Notes on the Libertarianism of Contemporary Art," in *Verksted* 8 (2006): 15.

4
Ibid., 18.

5
Stewart Martin, "Critique of Relational Aesthetics," in *Verksted* 8 (2006): 113.

6
Ibid., 106.

7
Karl Marx, *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2009), 195.

8
"The sensible rises toward the divine and enters art only at the state of ideality, of the abstract sensible. Art thus 'lies nearer to the spirit and its thinking than purely external spiritless nature does.' The matter it exerts itself on is 'a spiritualized sensible appearance or a sensible appearance of the spiritual.' "
Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 205.

9
Obviously, the conflict between galleries and action houses as presented here is a theoretical example. The reality is often simpler: Because auction houses not only often present the appearance of a free market, but also a powerful system of interdependencies between a gallery, an auction house, and a private or corporate collection, they control—and monopolize—prices and values.

10
As Norbert Trenkle explains, "credit and speculation capital are fictitious because they only apparently serve as capital. They yield high interest rates and speculative gains for investors in the relative absence of real valorization, which always presupposes that abstract labor is spent on the production of commodities and services and that a proportion of it is siphoned off as surplus value." See http://www.krisis.org/2009/tremors-on-the-global-market#more-3383 .

11
Franco "Bifo" Berardi, "Cognitarian Subjectivation," in *Are You Working Too Much? Post-Fordism, Precarity, and the Labor of Art* , ed. Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, and Anton Vidokle (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011), 135.

12
Ibid., 138.

13
See Marie-José Mondzain, *Image, icône, économie: Les sources Byzantines de l'imaginaire contemporain* (Paris: Seuil, 1996).

14
Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2011), xii. *Doxa* in Gr eek means both Glory and "common belief" or "popular opinion."

15
I freely use the term *eikonomia* in reference to theoretical debates during Byzantine iconoclasm. See Emanuel Alloa, "Bildökonomie. Von den theologischen Wurzeln eines streitbaren Begriffs," in *Image* 2 (2005): 13–24.

16
Maurizio Lazzarato, *Videophilosophie. Zeitwahrnehmung im Postfordismus* (Berlin: B-Books, 2002).

Irmgard Emmelhainz

Between Objective Engagement and Engaged Cinema: Jean-Luc Godard's "Militant Filmmaking" (1967–1974), Part II

→ *Continued from "Between Objective Engagement and Engaged Cinema: Jean-Luc Godard's 'Militant Filmmaking' (1967-1974), Part I" in issue 34.*

If the films Godard made with the Dziga Vertov Group (DVG) show the historical, political, and sociological actuality, in *Here and Elsewhere* Godard and Miéville carve out a discursive position from which to retrospectively analyze May '68 in France. They do this in 1974, concurrent with the Palestinian revolution.[1] DVG filmed some of the material for *Here and Elsewhere* in Palestinian training and refugee camps in 1970. The material was edited after the dissolution of the DVG, under the auspices of Sonimage, the production company Godard founded with Anne-Marie Miéville in 1974. *Here and Elsewhere* is usually interpreted as advancing a revisionist discourse that critiques DVG's "militant excesses," claiming self-repentance for erroneous engagement in the face of the Black September massacres of 1970 and the wave of terrorism that followed, events that allegedly made Godard and Gorin realize the limitations of their previous engagement and compelled them to take a "turn" in their work.[2] However, *Here and Elsewhere* does not differ drastically from other DVG films: it articulates an avant-garde point of view (here: the third-worldist or the militant abroad), uncovers the contradictions inherent to the situation it analyzes, and proceeds to self-critique. The difference is that instead of reflecting the political actuality, the film examines May '68 and its practical and theoretical consequences. Godard and Miéville analyze, from the point of view of 1974, the contemporary legacy of May '68 in Paris and Palestine. In the voiceover Godard declares:

> We did what many others were doing. We made images and *we turned the volume up too high*. With any image: Vietnam. Always the same sound, always too loud, Prague, Montevideo, May '68 in France, Italy, Chinese Cultural Revolution, strikes in Poland, torture in Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Chile, Palestine, the sound so loud that it ended up drowning out the voice that it wanted to get out of the image.[3]

Here Godard and Miéville address the predicament of May '68, framing the question "Who speaks, for whom, and how?" as a failure: the putative speaker's position is problematized because the supposedly self-critical intellectuals had spoken out too loud, drowning out the voice inside the images. Godard's statement can be compared to Jean-Pierre Le Goff's assessment of the failure of Maoism. Le Goff argues that the logic animating Maoists' denunciation of power was a practical "settling of accounts," denouncing oppression, exploitation, and racism by creating sensational media events. On this account, the Maoists failed due to an excess of dissent.[4] Similarly, the voiceover in *Here and Elsewhere* claims

that in spite of their self-criticism, the Maoists failed because their vociferous ideology drowned out the voice seeking expression through the filmed images. The intellectual's failure to engage with revolutionaries abroad is rendered analogous to the impending breakdown of activist practice at home. In the quote cited above, "sound" should be understood as militant ideology, and the image inside the sound as art. Art had been drowned out by politics. When Godard and Miéville say that "people always speak about the image and forget about the sound," they imply that the ideology that informed the discourse of political art-making overpowered the image. Images were thus *spoken* and not *seen*, obliterating the fact that sound had taken power over and defined them.

ask her father, "Did you find a job?" "No, I arrived too late," he answers. The father goes into the room to greet the girl, who asks him, "Can you explain to me dad? I don't understand." He answers while walking out: "No, I don't have time, we'll see later." The scene ends with the girl's sigh of frustration. *Guernica* is the icon par excellence of intellectual militant struggles. Condemned by Sartre (in *What is Literature?* [1947]) and championed by Adorno (in *Commitment* [1962]), the image's status as both an icon for militant struggles and a kitsch object, unlikely to be hanging in a working-class home, renders its presence in this scene ambiguous.[5] Here Godard and Miéville allegorize the putting-out-of-work of political representation, aligning it with the crisis of patriarchy. The father can neither work nor help, like the union delegate or

Still from Dziga Vertov Group and Sonimage's film, Here and Elsewhere, 1970-1974.

There is a scene in *Here and Elsewhere* that directly addresses matters of representativity. It takes place in the home of a working-class family, in a room where a young girl does her homework below a reproduction of *Guernica* that hangs from the wall. Off screen we hear her mother

the intellectual. Explaining and helping to understand, which are tasks for intellectuals, militants, and fathers, are deferred or put out of work. In addition, Godard and Miéville amalgamate patriarchal responsibility and the

revolutionary's responsibility to mobilize *at home* (as opposed to going abroad). Instead of answering the call, revolutionary action gets postponed indefinitely: "I don't have time, we'll see later." They critique through self-critique (which is the only means of problematization at this point) the intellectuals who went abroad and brought back materials to speak about the struggles of others without looking at what was happening at home, as Godard and Miéville lament having themselves done in the Middle East. The citation of *Guernica* and the (self-) indictment of "having spoken too loud" summon silence: Godard and Miéville call for silencing leftist ideology in the face of the failure of the Palestinian revolution, which embodies the failure of all revolutions. They are speechless.

When Godard declares in the voiceover that " *we turned the volume up too high*," he is positioning himself in relation to Sartre's concept of commitment. As we saw in Part I of this essay, Godard criticized Sartre for being unable to bridge his double position as writer and as intellectual. Godard himself sought to bridge this gap between art production and engaged activism in his practice of "militant filmmaking." By citing *Guernica* and stating that " *we turned the volume up too high*," Godard and Miéville contest Sartre's skepticism about the power of images as a medium for the denunciation of injustice—a skepticism exemplified by Sartre's dismissal of *Guernica*. For Sartre, insofar as images are mute, they are open receptacles of meaning and therefore invite ambiguous readings, as opposed to conveying a clear, unified message, like writing. Sartre claims that only literature can be successful as committed art because the writer guides his audience through a description, making them see the symbols of injustice and thereby provoking their indignation.[6] Opposing Sartre, Godard and Miéville invoke *Guernica*'s quiet, visual scream, making a plea in favor of a flight from the prison of language, from logocracy.[7]

The fact that *Guernica* is not a speech act is perhaps the reason why it became the epitome of an autonomous yet committed work of art. While it remains separate from the public sphere (the domain of opinion and speech), it lets the German culpability surface, and, at the same time, it does not have as its end Picasso's declaration of indignation.[8] While we can, with Sartre, doubt whether *Guernica* converted anyone to the Spanish cause, this painting, like much of Godard's work (a later example is his 1982 film *Passion*), posits a *reflexive* and *analogical* relationship between aesthetics and politics, as opposed to a *transitive link*. Transitivity is *the effect of an action on an object,* or *the application of something to an object*: here the application of politics to art, or vice versa. By contrast, an analogical relationship between art and politics implies a linking *via* aesthetics and ethics: if aesthetics is to ethics what art is to politics, it means that each term necessarily acts individually. A reflexive or analogical link between aesthetics and politics implies a relationship that acknowledges the presence of the other: they are separate, but aware of each other. Such a link presupposes film's autonomy as relying on its *having an end*, which is different from *being an end,* or being instrumental to a cause: art *appeals* to viewers, calling for judgment or consideration.[9]

As we have seen, Maoists, breaking from the model of the Leninist vanguard intellectual, labored in factories alongside workers, all the while imbued with a Christian sacrificial rhetoric that claimed to serve the people, rejecting what they considered the exteriority of discourse in favor of the interiority of practice, and believing in the workers' creative potential. Maoist struggles, however, were rendered obsolete by the self-managerial breakthrough at LIP, a watch factory in Besançon. In a 1973 interview with Maoists Philippe Gavin and Pierre Victor (the latter was Bernard-Henri Lévy's pseudonym), Sartre discusses the LIP strike at length in relation to how it evinced the limits of Maoist revolutionary practice. Posing again the question "Who speaks?," but now in humanist terms, Sartre, Gavin, and Victor sketch out the figure of the "New Political Man," a synthesis of Maoist activist, intellectual, and politician. The New Political Man's tools would be critical awareness, persuasion, and a renunciation of the superstructure. He would disseminate information in the public domain while remaining aware of the danger of becoming a "mediatic vedette."[10] A parallel figure—or perhaps an extension of the New Political Man—was the journalist: an intellectual who injected pressing debates into the public domain. After the dissolution of the Proletarian Left in 1973, it became necessary for the Maoists to reconceptualize engaged practice in order to further the politics of direct democracy. They publicly rejected their earlier Maoist activism, a gesture that went hand in hand with their critique of anti-totalitarianism. A new project, supported by Sartre and Foucault, was the founding of the daily newspaper *Libération* in the spring of 1973. Maoists demonstrated that they were increasingly media-savvy by producing a number of spectacular symbolic events covered by the media—therein the genealogy of "tactical media." Not surprisingly, they rearticulated the practice of revolutionary journalism in terms of a collective "public writer."[11] One of the key themes of the May '68 utopia was a society completely transparent to itself; this transparency was supposed to be achieved by the direct exchange of free speech without mediation, a theme that was then realized in *Libération'* s redefinition of mediation. The newspaper sought to democratically let all sides in a given conflict speak. Serge July defined the mission of the newspaper as the struggle for information under the direct and public control of the population, continuing the Maoist task of helping people to "capture speech," as in their slogan "Peuple prend la parole et garde-la."[12]

Libération' s impulse to democratize and to subvert content, to restore the "transparency of the code" by giving control of the information process to the people,

Still from Dziga Vertov Group and Sonimage's film, Here and Elsewhere, 1970-1974.

was an attempt to reverse the circuit of information by initiating debate, as well as an attempt to realize the classic position of the Left regarding the democratic potential of the mass media. Influenced by the mass media theories of Benjamin, Brecht, and Enzensberger, their argument was that capital had hijacked the means of communication to promote and realize ideology. In this account, the media is posited as intransitive because it produces non-communication. In other words, communication through the media is unilateral.[13] Ideally, the democratic potential of the media could be realized by breaking through this intransitivity and revolutionizing the apparatus and its content.[14]

As discussed above, for Godard and Miéville the leftist voice incarnated in Maoist activism did not go far enough in its contestation of intellectuals' vanguardist position as the producers of common sense for the proletariat. Thus, in *Here and Elsewhere* they posed the new problem of the propagation of leftist doxa by the becoming-information of leftist discourse. Miéville and Godard would agree with Baudrillard's critique of a leftist utopian view of the media, which held that unlimited democratic exchange is possible through communication. Such a position overlooks the fact that in essence, the media is speech without response. Even if efforts are geared toward the problem of the idle, passive reader-consumer whose freedom is reduced (like the viewer of political films) to the acceptance or rejection of content, such efforts are fruitless. Mediatization entails the coding of information into "objective" messages which are transmitted from a distance and which, because of the very nature of the apparatus, never get feedback. As Baudrillard put it, with the media "speech is *expiring*." Baudrillard compares the media to voting, referendums, and polls. For him, all three share the logic of providing a coded state of affairs with which we must either agree or disagree, without having any agency over the content.[15] Godard and Miéville sought to break away from the dichotomies of producer/consumer, transmitter-broadcaster/receiver, addressing them as a matter of the transformation of knowledge and

communication into information (or codes), as a problem of cinematic voice and address.

Here and Elsewhere is, therefore, a film about utterances and visibilities gliding into one another in relation to cinematic voice, speech, discourse, expression, and their becoming-information, challenging the dominant forms of the shared sensible. Throughout the film, we see a multitude of open, speaking mouths: those of politicians, militants, and average people. We hear an array of sounds, speeches, and discourses: revolutionary songs and the sounds of war and the voices of the *fedayeen*, all from different discursive sites. Pointing out the discrepancies and the heterogeneous quality of the relationships between visibilities and utterances, Godard emphasizes the act of *seeing*, giving primacy to vision over discourse and speech; montage becomes the site of enunciation, shifting the problem from representation to matters of visibility, the visible, and the imageable. As he puts it in the voiceover: "Any everyday image is part of a vague and complicated system where the world comes in and out at each instant."[16]

Through montage Godard makes images appear (*comparaître*) before the viewer, "giving to see" (*donner à voir*) as opposed to rendering or making visible. *Here and Elsewhere* presents a mélange of images: those filmed by Godard and Gorin in the Middle East, images filmed in Sonimage's studio in Grenoble, images from journals and newscasts, and appropriated "historical" images and cartoons. The images appear in different formats or *dispositifs*: in television monitors, in filmed photographs, in video collages, in film footage, in slides, and in newspapers. Thus, the film is an *accumulative disjunction* of regimes of visibilities and discursivities embedded in their diverse material supports and channels of circulation. The regimes of visibilities can be divided into categories (slogan-images and trademark-images), genres (documentary, photojournalistic, pedagogic, epic), series (revolutionary additions, libidinal politics), and media (televisual screen, photography, and cinema). Sounds and sound-images are brought together through montage using the word "and" as the glue. For Godard, having been influenced by Walter Benjamin and André Breton, the actualization of an image is only possible through the conjunction of two others: "Film is not one image after another, it is an image PLUS another image forming a third—the third being formed by the viewer at the moment of viewing the film."[17] In *Here and Elsewhere* the conjunction/disjunction of the French working-class family and the *fedayeen* (who have the history of all revolutions in common) creates a fissure in the signifying chain of association in the film. The interstice between the "states of affairs" of the two (socio-historical) figures allows resemblances to be ranked, and a difference of potential is established between the two, producing a third.[18] Such difference of potential is lodged in the syncategoreme "and." The "and" is literally in between images, it is the re-creation of the interstice, bringing together the socio-historical figures along with the film's diverse materials of expression in a relation without a relationship. Godard differentiates images by de-chaining them from their commonsensical chains of signification and re-chaining (or recoding) them in such a way that their signifiers become heterogeneous. Such heterogeneity resists the formation of a visual discourse resonant with the commonsensical image of the Palestinian revolution found in photojournalistic and documentary images visible in the French mass media. Through *appropriation* and *repetition*, Godard produces a sort of mnemotechnics that allows us to memorize the images and thus link their signifiers in diverse contexts: the operations of disjunctive repetition and appropriation pull out what the signifiers lack or push out their excess. This assemblage of images and sound-images from diverse regimes of visibilities and discursivities, linked through the word "and," creates additional images, providing a multiplicity of points of view. Such an assemblage destroys the identities of images, insofar as "and" substitutes and takes over the ontological attribution of those images: their *"this is*," the *eidos* of images (their being-with, or Etre-ET).[19]

Privileging the act of *seeing* that underscores the distinction between speech and discourse in *Here and Elsewhere*, Godard and Miéville speak in the first person in the voiceover, calling for an ethics of enunciation that accounts for the intransitivity of mass media and undermines the code of objectivity proper to the media.[20] For Godard and Miéville, "objectivity" requires that images *hide* their own silence, a "silence that is deadly because it impedes the image from coming out alive." They thus work with the imperative to ask of images: "Who speaks?" And for them, *all images are always addressed to a third*: "Une image c'est un regard sur un autre regard présenté à un troisième regard."[21] Thus, images must be understood as immanent to an interlocutionary act, especially documentary and photojournalistic images, which, obliterating the mechanism of mediation, put forth objectivity as a discursive regime in which either "no one speaks," "it speaks," or "someone said." The ethico-political imperative becomes, therefore, to take enunciative responsibility, to *speak* images and acknowledge authorship over them, to make images speak and to restore the speech that has been taken away from them, accounting for the intentionality immanent to the act of speaking for and of others as an act of expression emphasizing direct address—absolutely foreign to confession or situated knowledge, in the manner of *écriture*.[22] By means of direct address, the subject of speech in *Here and Elsewhere* is located at the juncture of diffusing, receiving, emitting, and resending images and reflecting upon them. Godard and Miéville thereby become immanent to the videographic apparatus, speaking from an inter-media discursive site constituted by *video* passing in between television, cinema, photography, and print media.

Godard's war of position between 1967 and 1974 can be summarized as the production of contradictory images and sounds that call viewers to produce meaning *with*

May 4, 1976, in the streets of Besançon, the Lip factory workers, after occupation protest in the streets bear a sign written "LIP will live."

the films, as opposed to consuming meaning. We can name it a politics of address, a "the(rr)orising" pedagogy, or Brechtian didacticism. Godard's collaborations with Gorin and Miéville create dissensus while calling for a radical way of hearing and seeing. In their work, the task of art is to separate and transform the continuum of image and sound meaning into a series of fragments, postcards, and lessons, outlining a tension between visuality and discourse. Evidently, for Sonimage the stakes in asking the question "Who speaks, for whom, and how?" had migrated from the realm of cinema into television and the communications media. This is due not only to the mediatization of intellectual mediation sketched out above, but most importantly, because of the ethical and political problems raised by the Palestinian footage in relation to militant engagement with Third World revolutionary movements and the pervasiveness of images of such movements in the media. For Godard and Miéville, it became pressing to articulate a regime of enunciation that would continue DVG's critique of *auteur* theory in film, while addressing in a pedagogical manner the discursive regime of mediatic information and the problem of the expiration of speech.

Still from Dziga Vertov Group and Sonimage's film, Here and Elsewhere, 1970-1974.

Still from Dziga Vertov Group and Sonimage's film, Here and Elsewhere, 1970-1974.

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1
For an analysis of Here and Elsewhere as it relates to the movement of Third Worldism and Godard's engagement with Palestine, see Irmgard Emmelhainz, "From Third Worldism to Empire: Jean-Luc Godard and the Palestine Question," Third Text 100 (September 2009), 100th Anniversary Special.

2
See Serge Daney, "Le thérrorisé (Pédagogie godardienne)," Cahiers du Cinéma nos. 262–263 (January 1976): 32–39; and Raymond Bellour, L'entre-images Photo. Cinéma. Vidéo. (Paris: La Différence, 1990).

3
"On a fait comme pas mal de gens. On a pris des images et on a mis le son trop fort. Avec n'importe quelle image: Vietnam. Toujours le même son, toujours trop fort, Prague, Montevideo, mai soixante-huit en France, Italie, révolution culturelle Chinoise, grèves en Pologne, torture en Espagne, Ireland, Portugal, Chili, Palestine, le son tellement fort qu'il a fini par noyer la voix qu'il a voulu faire sortir de l'image." Ici et ailleurs (Here and Elsewhere), 55 min, Chicago: Facets Video, 1995. Emphasis mine.

4
Jean-Pierre Le Goff, Mai 68, L'Héritage impossible (Paris: La Découverte, 1998), 201.

5
Adorno's Commitment was originally published in 1962 as both a radio address and a journal article. In 1968 a number of US protests against the war in Vietnam used Guernica as a peace symbol. A year earlier, some 400 artists and writers petitioned Picasso: "Please let the spirit of your painting be reasserted and its message once again felt, by withdrawing your painting from the United States for the duration of the war." In 1974, Toni Shafrazi spray-painted the words "Kill Lies All" on Picasso's iconic painting. See Picasso's Guernica, ed. Ellen C. Oppler (New York and London: Syracuse University Press, 1988). The symbolic power of Guernica was further highlighted in January 2003 when a reproduction of the painting in the UN headquarters was covered during Colin Powell's presentation of the case for invading Iraq to the Security Council. This blocked the production of images (by the press) of the Security Council with the reproduction in the background.

6
Jean-Paul Sartre, What is Literature?, trans. Bernard Frechtam (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1965), 4. First published in France in 1947.

7
See Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," New Left Review vol. 1, no. 62 (July–August 1970) 84-85. For Jacques Derrida, Guernica's denunciation of civilized barbarism occurs in a dead silence that allows one to hear the cry of moaning or accusation. This cry joins the screams of the children and the din of the bomber. See Derrida, "Racism's Last Word," Critical Inquiry 12 (Fall 1985), 290-301.

8
See Adorno, "Commitment," in Notes to Literature, Volume Two, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Shierry Weber-Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 76-94.

9
This is Adorno and Pierre Macherey's position regarding the relationship between aesthetics and politics. For Macherey, art has an end insofar it presupposes a subjective pact between viewer and author based on general trust: the author's word is to be believed, the receiver's is an act of faith. Before the work appears, there is an abstract space presupposing the possibility of the reception of the author's word. See Pierre Macherey, Pour une théorie de la production littéraire (Paris: François Maspero, 1966), 89-91. Thierry de Duve posits the problem of art as an end via Kant's aesthetic judgment, arguing that "the notion of artists speaking on behalf of us is essential to art as art, and its legitimacy does not hinge on the artist's purportedly universal mandate but rather on the artwork's universal address." (My emphasis) See Thierry de Duve, "Do Artists Speak on Behalf of All of Us?," in Voici -100 d'art contemporain (Brussels: Museum of Fine Arts, 2001).

10
Jean-Paul Sartre et al., On a raison de se révolter (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 288-340.

11
Kristin Ross, May '68 and its Afterlives, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 114-116.

12
"People seize speech and keep it."

13
See Jean Baudrillard, "Requiem for the Media" (1972), New Media Reader, ed. Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 280.

14
See Brecht's "The Radio as an Apparatus for Communication" (1932); Walter Benjamin's "The Author as Producer"; Hans Magnus Enzensberger's "Constituents of the Theory of the Media," in The Consciousness Industry (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 95-128; and Baudrillard's critique of this position in "Requiem for the Media," ibid.

15
Baudrillard, ibid.

16
"N'importe quelle image quotidienne fait partie d'un système vague et compliqué, où le monde entier entre et sort à chaque instant."

17
"Le cinéma ce n'est pas une image après l'autre, c'est une image plus une autre qui en forment une troisième, la troisieme étant du reste formée par le spectateur au moment où il voit le film." Godard in "Propos Rompus," Jean-Luc Godard par Jean-Luc Godard (Paris: L'Etoile et Cahiers du cinéma, 1985), 460.

18
See Gilles Deleuze, Cinema II: The Time-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 180.

19
Gilles Deleuze, "Trois questions sur Six fois deux: A propos de Sur et sous la communication," Cahiers du Cinéma 271 (November 1976).

20
Here I am taking after the linguist Oswald Ducrot who argues that the talking subject introduces sentences (in enunciation) that necessarily contain the responsibility of the utterer; in other words, in enunciation the speaker is committed to the semantic content. That is why for Ducrot, speech acts constitute expression. See Oswald Ducrot, Logique, structure, énonciation: Lecture sur le langage (Paris: Minuit, 1989); and Les mots du discours (Paris: Minuit, 1980).

21
From the voiceover in Here and Elsewhere.

22
According to Jacques Derrida, in the domain of écriture there is a movement in language at its origin, which conceals and erases itself in its own production. This means that in écriture the signified always already functions as a signifier. With écriture, Derrida undermines the Aristotelian idea of theLogos as the mediation of mental experience along with the movement of "exteriorization" of the mental experience as a sign of presence. The function ofécriture is, therefore, to conceptualize the dissolution of the signifier in the voice by splitting signified and voice: in écriture, the subject of a text is coherent with the text, becoming the object of écriture, displacing the signified from the author. See Derrida's Of Grammatology, corrected edition, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

John Miller

Politics of Hate in the USA, Part III: Posse Comitatus, Grassroots Rebellion, and Secret Societies

The following text, which is the final of three installments, traces back to a conversation I had with Mike Kelley in 1994, "Too Young to be a Hippy, Too Old to be a Punk."1 Christophe Tannert at Kunstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin had invited us to discuss underground political and aesthetic culture in the US for the first issue of Bethanien's Re Magazin. *One year later, I delivered a written narrative account and analysis of the subject, "Burying the Underground." Meanwhile, a series of sieges, armed standoffs, and bombings made Americans increasingly aware of a growing polarization between the US federal government and what was hardening into a grassroots militia movement: Ruby Ridge (1992), Waco (1993), Oklahoma City (1995) and Fort Davis, Texas (1997). I began to see this as a right-wing counterpart to militant leftism. In fact, the right seemed to be mirroring tactics that had previously belonged to the leftist underground. This led me to write a complementary essay, "Heil Hitler! Have a Nice Day!, the Politics of Hate in the USA" By 2001, the militia movement had run out of steam. When al-Qaeda terrorists staged the September 11 attacks, however, these so closely resembled events described in* The Turner Diaries *that I had initially suspected the radical right. Although unemployment and economic dislocation drove the militia movement, the Great Recession has not provoked a similar response. Instead of overturning—or seceding from—the federal government, the far right, now exemplified by the Tea Party, wants to work from within the political system by downsizing government and converting it to a states' rights model. This shift is evident in the current Republican debates leading up to the next presidential election, where candidates have tried to turn "moderate" into a pejorative term.*
—John Miller

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Posse Comitatus

> The Jew run banks and federal loan agencies are working hand-in-hand foreclosing on thousands of farms right now in America. They are in essence, nationalizing farms for the jews [sic], as the farmer becomes a tenant slave on the land he once owned....The farmers must prepare to defend their families and land with their lives, or surrender it all.
> —James Wickstrom,[1] Christian Identity minister and radio talk show host

Of all the far right factions, the Posse Comitatus may be the largest. A true grassroots movement, it is also the most amorphous and the hardest to pin down. James Ridgeway compares its organizational flexibility with that pioneered by the SDS, yet it also takes the anti-Federalist logic of states' rights to a topical extreme. "Posse Comitatus"

literally means "power of the county" in Latin. The name refers to the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 which forbids the use of US military and national guard forces as civilian police forces.[2] Congress passed this legislation after the Civil War to prevent President Grant from using soldiers to guard ballot boxes against election fraud in southern states.[3] The Posse Comitatus believes this law empowers a sheriff to call a posse into being or to disband it as necessary. A posse is simply "all the men that a sheriff may call to his assistance in the discharge of his official duty, as to quell a riot or to make an arrest."[4] The Posse Comitatus sees the law as a wellspring of radical decentralization, granting the sheriff ultimate authority. Accordingly, its members consider income tax, social security payments, drivers' licenses and even license plates as violations of the Constitution. The Posse claims that, when necessary, it may usurp even the sheriff's authority. According to a doctrine set forth by Christian Identity minister William Potter Gale, the Posse claims its authority comes straight from God.

Although the Posse Comitatus is freeform by definition, Lyman Tower Sargent traces its origin to the Citizens Law Enforcement and Research Committee, founded by former Silver Shirt and Identity Christian Henry L. Beach in 1969.[5] With the spate of family farm foreclosures beginning in the late 1970s, ranks of the Posse expanded as farmers withheld taxes and fought to save their property. Amidst the greater period recession, high interest rates combined with a severe drop in demand for crops to touch off a farm crisis. After a major US-Soviet grain deal fell through, rising inflation forced underdeveloped countries to redirect their budgets from grain purchases to debt maintenance. In the US, the small farmer was left holding the bag. What made the crisis even worse was farmland itself sometimes dropped to a third of its previous value. A congressional report estimated that almost half the nation's 2.2 million farmers would lose their farms by the end of the century.[6] Unable to make ends meet, some turned to community activism, some to alcohol and spousal abuse, and others to anti-Semitism. Just as Nazis once blamed Jews for the dislocations of modernization, bankrupt small farmers wanted to pin their troubles on a Jewish banking conspiracy. Few, however, bothered noting that Jews own none of the big, international banks.

The idea of the family farm as a wellspring of American identity runs deep in the United States. It derives in part from Thomas Jefferson, who viewed big cities with distaste and envisioned the United States as a vast array of independent farms:

> Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.
>
> They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests, by the most lasting bonds. [7]

Jefferson's philosophy reflected the political economy of the southern plantation system in which each plantation produced much or all of what it needed. (The autonomy of the plantation, of course, depended on slave labor.) Jefferson himself owned a Virginia plantation—though, ironically, a not very successful one. Unlike George Washington, he did not free his slaves after the Revolutionary War.[8] Conversely, Washington was a land speculator in the trans-Appalachian region and therefore less aligned with small property interests. Jefferson vigorously championed small farming yet, by establishing a liberal political culture within a capitalist economy, his policies paved the way for America's transition to industrial capitalism.

The small farmer's aspirations for independent production and land ownership constitute as much an ideal of civic virtue as they do a means of livelihood. Even so, the supposed autonomy of the small farm has always been tenuous at best, subject to the vagaries of good and bad crops, variable interest rates and supply and demand. In other words, the autonomy of the small farmer was always a relative state—one rested on a precarious economic foundation. During bad times, small farmers have often resorted to wage labor to keep their farms intact. Nonetheless, their aspirations mark them as petit-bourgeois and have rarely shown solidarity with labor movements. Moreover, they resent federal farm subsidy programs—not only because policy makers attach them to big agricultural conglomerates, but also because they render the small farmer a dependent consumer instead of a virtuous producer.[9] This tension is not new. Frontier farmers often found themselves at odds with a centralized government unwilling—or unable—to protect their interests. Rural vigilante justice and its attendant gun culture are legacies of that history. Taking the law into one's own hands thus survives as a cherished rural tradition. And yet that civic independence has been frustrated in recent years. American farmers have been forced into the painful admission that the small farm has become inefficient and wasteful relative to conglomerate "agribusinesses." Here, their sense of civic deprivation, plus very real material losses, goes back to a promise held out by homesteading: land ownership. James Corcoran has described its importance:

> Land doesn't only serve as a farmer's collateral for operations loans, the ability to buy the seed, fertilizer and chemicals to plant his fields—land is a farmer's identity. It is his connection to God; it is his religion, his nationality, his family's heritage, and his legacy to his children. Land is a farmer's way of life, and in the early 1980s he was losing it. Like the people he replaced on the land—the American Indian—the farmer became a modern exile, forced to migrate to strange cities and states in search of a new life.[10]

Driving people from the land is part of the process of long-range accumulation that Marx identified as a structural feature of capitalist development. The farmers' resistance to dispossession does raise the radical question of who is entitled to land ownership. But claiming a holy right to the land—as do the Posse and Identity Christians—is a self-serving ideology; not only does it justify the farmer's existence against abstract economic forces, it also represses the historical memory of how frontier farmers violently drove their predecessors, the Native Americans, off the very same soil. This manifest destiny of the small farmer simply transmutes the divine right of kings into the rural populist homestead. Even the ideal of independent production can, at times, undercut the small farmer's sense of social responsibility. Thus, to consider small farming an inalienable and God-given way of life entails reactionary identifications with blood and soil.

Alarmed by an anti-Semitic flare up in the farm belt, in 1986 the Anti-Defamation League commissioned the Lois Harris organization to poll Iowa and Nebraska residents on these issues. Seventy-five percent of the respondents blamed "big international bankers" for farm problems, with 13 percent specifically blaming Jews. 27 percent agreed, "Farmers have always been exploited by international Jewish bankers." Among people older than sixty-five, that number leapt to 45 percent.[11] The growth of the Posse closely followed this trend.

Typical Posse tactics include highly effective forms of "paper terrorism" such as tax resistance and filing nuisance liens and lawsuits, which tie up courts and make life miserable for Posse targets. When these fail, they sometimes turn to guns. In 1980, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) identified 17,222 individuals who, as a form of tax protest, either refused to file returns or filed and refused to pay what they owed. By 1983 that number jumped to 57,754 and subsequent efforts by a special IRS

task force have hardly made a dent in this figure.[12] In Wisconsin the aforementioned James Wickstrom, onetime candidate for governor and US Senate, openly espoused tax revolt and violence.[13] Some groups, like Charles Shugarman's Virginia Patriots Network, conduct special seminars in tax resistance, stating that wages are a special form of barter between employer and employee and, therefore, not subject to taxation.[14] With a similar barter idea, Denver Posse member John Grandbouche initiated a system of warehouse banks where depositors could convert their money to gold or silver to avoid taxes. Grandbouche called his organization the National Commodities and Barter Association (NCBA). *The Wall Street Journal* reported that the NCBA laundered up to half a million dollars a day for as many as 20,000 depositors. Federal agents raided Grandbouche's offices in 1985, recovering thousands of documents and an estimated $250,000 in gold bullion. A federal judge, however, ordered the return of this property.[15] Other warehouse banks have turned out to be simply old-fashioned bilking schemes in which otherwise skeptical farmers have lost their life savings to con men. In June 1986, for example, authorities convicted Roderick Elliot in one such an embezzlement operation. Elliot was the publisher of the movement's key tabloid, *The Primrose and Cattleman's Gazette* (its name insinuating that Jewish bankers had led farmers "down the primrose path").[16] More recently, Roy Schwasinger's organization, We The People, sold about 3,000 bogus "information kits" at $300 each to gullible farmers. These explained how to claim one's portion of a supposed $600 trillion class action suit against the government brought by ranchers and farmers. In 1995 Schwasinger received a nine-year prison sentence for his part in the scam.[17]

In 1983 the death of the sixty-three-year-old tax resister Gordon Kahl created the Posse's first martyr. Kahl was a decorated World War II veteran who kept his farm afloat by working winters in Texas as an auto mechanic. He joined the Posse in 1974, stopped paying taxes and appeared on television two years later urging others to follow suit. Going public landed him in Leavenworth prison for one year. Authorities then released him on probation with the proviso that he stay away from the Posse. Unrepentant, Kahl still refused to pay taxes and still urged others to do the same. Although he owed only a pittance, his very public defiance made him a thorn in the side of government officials. On February 13, 1983, federal marshals tracked Kahl, his son and some friends as they were leaving a Posse meeting in Medina, North Dakota. Kahl stopped at the marshals' roadblock and a gunfight began. The marshals wounded his son. A crack shot, Kahl killed two marshals and wounded three others in retaliation.[18] He went on the run for four months, then holed up in the Smithville, Arkansas "earth home" of his Posse friends, Leon and Norma Gintner. This dwelling was a survivalist bunker stockpiled with weapons and food. Federal agents and local Sheriff Gene Matthews surrounded the bunker on June 3. Outside, they captured Leonard Gintner. Shortly thereafter, Gintner's wife came out to surrender. Neither would confirm whether Kahl was hiding inside. Matthews entered the bunker, hoping that, as sheriff, he could convince the fugitive to surrender peacefully. Kahl fatally wounded Matthews with one round from his Ruger Mini-14. Police experts believe that, in the exchange, Matthews killed Kahl as well. Unsure whether the fugitive was dead or alive, agents proceeded to spray the bunker with gunfire. The assault ended only after a commando detonated the bunker's more than 100,000 rounds of ammunition with a grenade. Death left Kahl a longstanding hero in the movement.[19] It also set the stage for a siege/shootout syndrome that would be tragically repeated as the struggle between right-wing dissidents and the federal government continued to escalate.

Other Posse figures include Arthur Kirk, who died in a 1984 firefight with a Nebraska SWAT team, and the eccentric Michael Ryan. Ryan presided over a polygamous, survivalist compound in Rulo, Nebraska where he forced his male followers to sodomize each other and a pet goat.[20] Once considered a leader chosen by God, Ryan was convicted by jurors for torturing and killing two of his followers, twenty-seven-year-old James Thimm and five-year-old Luke Stice. For refusing to sodomize the goat, Ryan shoved greased rake handles up Thimm's rectum, then literally skinned him alive. When police raided the Rulo compound, they discovered more than $250,000 in stolen farm equipment, an arsenal of full- and semiautomatic weapons and 150,000 rounds of ammunition.[21] By anyone's standards, Ryan was certifiably insane. His example illustrates the individual extremes that become available once the social contract is jettisoned. Conversely, Ryan's case—among others—raises the question of how violence and irrationality become legitimized, both within extremist cults and within the mainstream.

The Turner Diaries

> The great danger of democracy, of course, is the same danger that exists with any other form of government; namely, that the wrong minority will be in the driver's seat. That's the problem we must overcome now—or perish as a race.
>
> Before the advent of television, it wouldn't have been feasible to run a truly progressive nation democratically; the process of control was too awkward. That's why the United States drifted the way it did, subject to various pressure groups, until the worst of all possible groups elbowed the others aside and took over. These days the process of control is reasonably efficient, and if we ever manage to break the grip of the present media bosses we can look forward to the use of the same process to speed America along the upward path again.

> —William L. Pierce [22]

The Turner Diaries is an influential right-wing tract written by former physics professor William Pierce. Pierce published it, however, under the pseudonym Andrew MacDonald. Critics call the book the *Mein Kampf* of American neo-Nazism. Before starting his own National Alliance, Pierce had, in fact, been a member of George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party and the John Birch Society. Society president Robert Welch introduced Pierce to an apocalyptic story called *The John Franklin Letters* that Pierce used as a model for his own book.[23] In the guise of a futuristic novel, *The Turner Diaries* is part propaganda, part primer for guerilla war and part juvenile blood lust. Its publisher Stuart Lyle described it as "an underground classic," selling more than 185,000 copies outside bookstores before its above ground publication and distribution in 1978. Pierce himself gloats:

> It offends almost everyone; Afro-Americans, feminists, gays and lesbians, liberals, communists, Mexicans, democrats, the FBI, egalitarians, and Jews. Especially Jews: for it portrays them as incarnations of everything that is evil and destructive.[24]

Former liberal William Gayley Simpson laid the ideological foundation for Pierce's book in his own *Which Way Western Man?* After working as an integrationist, Simpson became obsessed with the idea that white Christians risked forfeiting their identity through policies of desegregation and affirmative action. These, moreover, he viewed as part of a sinister Jewish plot: a divide-and-conquer strategy of miscegenation that would leave only Jewish racial integrity intact. Consequently, he argued vehemently for eugenics, segregation and the deportation of Jews.[25] Even so, Pierce sharply distinguishes between these beliefs and those of Christian Identity which he dismisses as a "lowbrow" theology incapable of attracting anyone but "hicks."[26]

The narrative conceit of *The Turner Diaries* is the belated discovery of a unique record of "the Great Revolution," the diaries of one Earl Turner, which historians have republished on the revolution's one-hundredth anniversary. Pierce envisions this event in apocalyptic—rather than political—terms. The struggle occurs in 1999, at the outset of the millennium. Copying the French Revolution, Pierce even sets out a new dating system, with time divided BNE (Before the New Era, analogous to prehistoric time) and the years following it. Nevertheless, Pierce's revolution is totalitarian, not democratic; the rights of man evaporate before a phantasm of racial purity. He also adds "editors' notes" as additional commentary to Turner's firsthand account. This "historicizes" the fantasy, a posture not dissimilar to Kruschev's boast "History is on our side. We will live to see you buried."

The plot begins when the federal government passes an anti-gun law called, suggestively enough, the Cohen Act. Blacks begin raping white women in great numbers (one of Pierce's deep obsessions) and, as special deputies, round up all those who refuse to turn over their guns. Jews, of course, have masterminded this turn of events. Only one group stands ready to resist "the System," a small network of underground cells called only "The Organization." Earl Turner belongs to one such cell of four people operating in Washington, DC. Long before the Cohen Act, his group had buried a cache of guns in a remote Pennsylvania woods. Once they retrieve their weapons, they turn to robbery and murder simply to survive; as gun owners, they can neither work nor identify themselves in public. Meanwhile, Congress passes more stringent laws requiring all citizens to carry "internal passports" –used for all transactions from banking to medical care to purchasing gasoline. This pushes the Organization to more extreme measures, culminating in bombing a new supercomputer (for processing internal passports) housed in the FBI's Washington headquarters. To carry this out, The Organization uses a truck filled with explosive chemical fertilizer. To finance its intensified level of operations, it starts counterfeiting as well. Trained as an engineer, Turner becomes responsible for bombs, communications and counterfeiting.

Soon, Turner's superiors invite him to join "the Order," an elite mystical cadre within the Organization. Its grey-hooded members reveal to him that white supremacy is divinely ordained and that Aryan terrorists are "the instruments of God." As the struggle continues, the Organization's leaders realize that only the System can win a war of attrition and accordingly step up their approach. In an all-or-nothing effort, they concentrate their entire force in Southern California and, through inside agents, trigger an insurrection within the armed forces stationed there. In the resulting chaos, the Organization manages to establish regional sovereignty, fending off the System by seizing nuclear warheads and threatening to use them. After setting up free zones in major American cities, it nukes Tel Aviv, saving a few remaining missiles for the Soviet Union. This, in effect, kills two birds with one stone, devastating communism and subverting the System's control in America. The story ends with an inadvertent allusion to Stanley Kubrick's "Dr. Strangelove": Turner flying a suicide mission to the Pentagon with a nuclear warhead strapped to his crop-duster. The editorial notes confirm that, because of Turner's noble sacrifice, the Aryan race successfully purges every other race from the face of the planet. Thus begins the New Era—a cartoon version of xenophobia with pointed consequences for the American political landscape of the 1990s.

Pierce's hatred of other races is tautological. He accuses

others of conspiracy and degradation, when he himself is the worst offender. *The Turner Diaries* depicts both Jews and African-Americans as stereotypes; Pierce even writes in dialect to further ridicule them. In lieu of social or historical analysis, Pierce invokes God to justify his beliefs. His stance toward the social movements of the 1960s and 70s is wholly reactive:

> I remember a long string of Marxist acts of terror 20 years ago, during the Vietnam war. A number of government buildings were burned or dynamited, and several innocent bystanders were killed, but the press always portrayed such things as idealistic acts of "protest."
>
> There was a gang of armed, revolutionary Negroes who called themselves "Black Panthers." Every time they had a shootout with the police, the press and TV people had their tearful interviews with the families of the Black gang members who got killed -- not with the cops' widows. And when a Negress who belonged to the Communist Party [a reference to Angela Davis] helped plan a courtroom shootout and even supplied the shotgun with which a judge was murdered, the press formed a cheering section at her trial and tried to make a folk hero out of her.[27]
>
> "Women's lib" was a form of mass psychosis which broke out during the last three decades of the Old Era. Women affected by it denied their femininity and insisted that they were "people," not "women." This aberration was promoted and encouraged by the System as a means of dividing our race against itself.[28]
>
> ...the knee-jerk liberals have forgotten all about their "radical chic" enthusiasm of a few years ago, now that we are the radicals.[29]

As a tactician, however, Pierce is coldly logical and utterly clearheaded. For starting a terrorist cell, he advises in the essay "A Program for Survival" (1984) published under his own name, a general three-phase program for Aryan supremacy comprised of:

> 1. cadre building;
> 2. community building;
> 3. community action;
> 4. make propaganda as militant as possible to attract only the most committed element;
> 5. operate on a "need to know" basis;
> 6. communicate either by meeting face-to-face or through short coded messages;
> 7. separate into "legal" and underground units (like Shin Féin and the I.R.A.);
> 8. "...[O]ne of the major purposes of political terror, always and everywhere, is to force the authorities to take reprisals and to become more repressive, thus alienating a portion of the population and generating sympathy for the terrorists."
> 9. "...[T]he other purpose is to create unrest by destroying the population's sense of security and their belief in the invincibility of the government." [30]

If the term "community action" sounds benign, however, *The Turner Diaries* shows just what Pierce means by that.

Pierce's tactics and ideology would be adopted both by Robert Mathews' group, The Order, and by Timothy McVeigh. Among other things, they anticipate baiting law enforcement officials to use excessive force and exploiting the overkill as movement propaganda.

The Bruders Schweigen

> We just want to be a nameless, white underground.
> —Robert Mathews[31]

Bob Mathews was a man with a mission. As an eleven-year-old boy in Phoenix, Arizona, he joined the John Birch Society. Later he became interested in Robert DePugh's Minutemen. Mathews then started a group of his own called the Sons of Liberty. He also converted to the Mormon faith.[32] Under the guidance of fellow Mormon Marvin Cooley, Mathews became a tax resister. In his 1973 W-4 tax form he claimed ten dependents as a single, unmarried man—by that reducing his tax burden to zero. This improbable claim quickly alerted IRS agents, who soon brought him to trial. There, Mathews had a rude awakening when only one of his militia friends agreed to vouch for him as a character witness. Shortly after this, a second friend killed himself, his wife and another couple in a bitter domestic dispute. Disillusioned, Mathews left Phoenix and resettled in Metaline Falls, Washington.[33]

After taking an apartment, the industrious Mathews soon managed to earn enough money to purchase and clear his own 60-acre plot of land. He found a wife and seemed to settle down. Eventually, his parents and two brothers, once estranged by his extremist views, moved up to Washington as well. Then, in 1978, after four years of relative calm, Mathews read William Galey Simpson's *Which Way Western Man?* which left a deep impression. He learned about William Pierce's National Alliance. By 1981 Mathews discovered William Butler's Church of Jesus Christ Christian/Aryan Nations in nearby Hayden Lake. Although he had reservations about Butler, he

Bob Mathews founder of The Bruders Schweigen confronting an anti-racism protester.

nonetheless attended Aryan Nations events. Around this time, he conceived the "White American Bastion" by which Aryans would become the racially self-conscious political force of the Pacific Northwest. This idea echoed Butlers "10 percent solution," except that Mathews felt numbers alone would be enough; he did not, at this time, envision the need for a separate government. To this end, he began advertising his "Bastion" plan in the Liberty Lobby's magazine, *The Spotlight.* Ultimately, the ads did not pan out; after all his efforts, only one couple moved there. He increasingly resented the apparent docility of most whites and condescendingly called them "sheeple"—sheep people. He also read and absorbed the lessons of *The Road Back*, an instruction manual for running an underground terrorist group; *Essays of a Klansman* by Louis Beam, which laid out a point system of awards for Aryan Warriors; and *The Turner Diaries*. After this, Mathews established his leadership by confronting rowdy counter-demonstrators at Spokane, Aryan Nations rally. Before long he had assembled a small, but hard-core circle of friends and Aryan Nations members around him. He stressed that the time for talk was over. Now was the time for action. In a bizarre ceremony, each swore a loyalty oath before a six-month-old baby, pledging to secure the future propagation of the Aryan race. Before long, the group was planning armed robberies and counterfeiting schemes.[34]

On October 28, 1983, World Wide Video, Spokane's only XXX-rated pornography store, became the group's first target. After days of talks and building up their nerve, they netted a grand total of $369.10. If serious, they were going to have to play for bigger stakes. That Thanksgiving, unbeknownst to Richard Butler, Mathews' friend Gary Yarbrough began printing their first counterfeit $50 bills on the Aryan Nations printing press. He had a hard time

getting the color right, though. Police picked up Mathews' right-hand-man Bruce Pierce (no relation to William Pierce) on December 3 when the group tried to pass the phony money. With Pierce in jail, on December 18 Mathews pulled a one-man bank heist in desperation. During his getaway, a dye-pack exploded in the loot bag, staining him and the cash red. He managed to clean most of the $25,952 with turpentine and bailed Pierce out of jail. The gang continued to rob banks and restaurants, but soon graduated to armored cars. They set up a system under which they would "tithe" most of the stolen money to other racist groups, setting aside part for their own operation and dividing the remainder as "salaries." Several men quit their day jobs and began to think of themselves as revolutionaries. With their stolen money, they began to build up an arsenal.[35]

Meanwhile Pierce had, on his own initiative, ineffectually bombed a Boise synagogue. This breach of security enraged Mathews, but their troubles were just beginning. Aryan Nations member Walter West had begun to spout off in local bars about a new white guerilla group. West also had a reputation for beating his wife, Bonnie Sue, and Order member Tom Bentley had taken a romantic interest in her. Mathews directed Bentley and three others—James Dye, Randy Duey and Richard Kemp—to kill West. Sunday, May 27, 1984 Kemp and Duey brought the unsuspecting West to a remote logging road in the Kaniksu National Forest where Dye and Bentley waited hiding, having already dug a grave. Coming from behind, Kemp struck West's skull with a three-pound sledgehammer. When this failed to kill him, Duey finished him off with his own Ruger Mini-14 automatic rifle. After that, Bentley moved in with Bonnie Sue; Mathews also began keeping a mistress of his own, Zillah Craig.[36] West was neither black nor Jewish, but his murder marked a turning point. The Order had crossed over into lethal violence.

Outspoken radio talk show host Alan Berg specialized in agitating racist listeners. He could be rude, arrogant and insulting, but he was a man of conviction. With his program commanding more than 10 percent of the Denver audience, he nonetheless regarded his provocations as mostly show business. Not so Bob Mathews. He made Berg Number Three on his hit list—after Morris Dees, co-founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and Norman Lear, acclaimed television producer and liberal political activist.[37] When Mathews stated that the time had come to "take out" Berg, opinion was split within the group. Some felt they were not yet ready, but Mathews refused to wait. His goal was to start a race war; if he were martyred in the struggle, the propaganda would be invaluable. When Mathews asked for volunteers, Bruce Pierce demanded to be the triggerman. Pierce pictured himself as "a true Aryan Warrior." According to Louis Beam's "point system," one needed a full point to become this. Killing a Jew (i.e., Berg) was worth one-sixth of a point; killing the US President was worth one full point. At 9:20 p.m. Monday, June 18, 1984, Pierce gunned down Berg in his driveway as he was climbing out of his Volkswagen Beetle. David Lane and Mathews watched from a Plymouth parked nearby. Detectives quickly found .45 caliber shells from the 12 rounds that riddled the victim's body. This was no ordinary slaying: the killer clearly wanted to "send a message" to the public. Based on the shells and slugs, investigators quickly identified the murder weapon as an Ingram MAC-10 machine pistol, a weapon of choice for right-wing gun buffs.[38] Investigative Division Chief Don Mulnix therefore wasted no time in calling the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, the FBI and the BATF in on the case.[39]

Again desperate for cash, Mathews planned the Order's next heist. Thanks to a disenchanted Brinks Company employee, he learned of a regularly scheduled truck—often loaded with millions of dollars—that took an especially vulnerable route north of Ukiah, California. Mathews put together a crew and thanks to careful planning by newly recruited Richard Scutari, pulled off the heist without a hitch. This time they netted $3,800,000. The only problem was that Mathews left behind a pistol registered to his follower Andrew Barnhill. Before long, federal investigators had tied the robbery to the Berg slaying. Their prime suspects belonged to the Order. Meanwhile, Mathews promptly tithed much of the take to his favorite charities: Richard Butler's Aryan Nations, William Pierce's National Alliance, Frazier Glenn Miller's Carolina Knights of the KKK, Louis Beam, Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance, Bob Miles' Mountain Kirk and Dan Gayman's Church of Israel.[40] With the FBI closing in, he set his sites on the next target: Morris Dees. His preliminary plan called for kidnapping and interrogating Dees, then flaying him alive.[41] He also tried to contact the Syrian government to fund his war against the Jews.[42] Finally, he gave his group a provisional name, taken from a book about Hitler's *Waffen SS*: *Bruders Schweigen*, which refers to "the Silent Brotherhood."[43]

On October 1, 1984, Tom Martinez went on trial at the US District Court in Philadelphia. Martinez was charged with helping pass the Order's counterfeit bills. Shortly before the hearing, his attorney warned him that the FBI had already linked the Order to the Berg slaying and the Brinks heist. Martinez lost his nerve and turned state's evidence.[44] Based on his tips, the FBI stepped up its manhunt, nearly apprehending Mathews and key member Gary Yarbrough twice. Mathews found safe houses for the Order on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound. On October 23 Martinez led FBI agents to the Capri Motel in Portland where he was to meet Mathews and Yarbrough—ostensibly to discuss the Dees kidnaping. They caught Yarbrough, but Mathews got away, his right hand wounded.[45]

The Order regrouped on Whidbey Island. Knowing things were at an end, Mathews drafted a declaration of war on ZOG and an Aryan Declaration of Independence, which newspapers in every state were to receive. The *Bruders Schweigen* would no longer remain underground. The

end, however, was nearer than Mathews could have ever known. On December 4, the FBI received an anonymous tip that Mathews and a dozen others had gone to Whidbey. Alan Whitaker, special agent-in-command at the Seattle FBI office, quickly assembled SWAT teams, a Hostage Rescue Team and reserve agents. By Friday, December 7, he deployed them around the Order's three safe houses and evacuated nearby local residents. In the first house Randy Duey gave up without a fight. Next, counterfeiting expert Richard Merki surrendered with his wife Sharon and an older woman, Ida Bauman. Merki had taken care to burn as much evidence as possible before giving up. Meanwhile, in the third house Mathews refused to respond to negotiators. The FBI then brought in Duey and Merki who urged him to surrender. Mathews, however, demanded that Idaho, Washington and Montana be set aside as an Aryan homeland before he would talk. Meanwhile, his partner, Ian Stewart, gave up, but refused to confirm whether Mathews still had women or children inside with him. Next SWAT teams forced their way in, but Mathews sprayed them with machine-gun fire from above, shooting through the floorboards. They retreated. The following day the FBI brought a helicopter to hover above the house; Mathews sprayed it through the roof. At 6:30 p.m., the FBI command post issued orders to lob M-79 Starburst flares into the besieged building. Within twenty minutes the house went up in a firestorm. Sunday morning, investigators, sifting through the debris, found Mathews' charred remains next to a blackened bathtub.[46]

The federal government's case against the Order had become the government's biggest since the Symbionese Liberation Army kidnaped Patty Hearst. In the wake of Mathews' death, the group itself dissipated, but its influence did not. Seattle US District Attorney Gene Wilson put together a massive racketeering case against the remaining members, consisting of sixty-seven separate counts. On April 12, 1985, a federal grand jury indicted twenty-four members on racketeering and conspiracy. When the trial began that September, twelve pleaded guilty. Prosecutors convicted ten more that December 30. After police captured Richard Scutari in March 1986, he too pleaded guilty. In spring 1988, the government sued ten of the movement for sedition, including the leaders Richard Butler, Bob Miles and Lois Beam. This jury, however, acquitted everyone.[47] After these events, William Pierce declared that America was not yet ready to embrace the revolution he had outlined in *The Turner Diaries*. He instead bought up enough American Telephone and Telegraph (ATT) stock to force a corporate phase-out of ATT's affirmative action policy.[48] Pierce's renunciation of terrorism, however, was disingenuous, simply part of his strategy to separate the movement into underground and aboveground wings.

In the end, Robert Mathews succeeded in becoming the kind of martyr figure that Pierce deemed necessary for a popular revolution. Gordon Kahl had come first, but he was a lone individual. There had been other paramilitary groups too, like the Covenant, the Sword and Arm of the Lord (CSA) or Frazier Glenn Miller's Confederate Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.[49] Yet these functioned more like gangs of thugs, while Mathews' Order quickly developed into, a model terrorist cell. Although Mathews had even drawn recruits from these other groups, he was the one who managed to take them from talk to action.

Ruby Ridge

In 1989 at an Aryan World Congress meeting, a biker identifying himself as Gus Magisono befriended former Green Beret Randy Weaver. Since his time in the military, Weaver had adopted Christian Identity beliefs and moved his family to an isolated cabin near Naples, Idaho. Overlooking Ruby Creek, the news media later came to call this place Ruby Ridge.

That fall, when Weaver was almost broke, Magisono encouraged him to sell sawed-off shotguns to right-wing militants.[50] After Weaver sold his first two, "Magisono," a.k.a. Kenneth Fadeley, identified himself as a federal operative and threatened to turn him in unless he agreed to spy on Aryan Nations meetings. The FBI had promised Fadeley a reward if Weaver either complied or was arrested. In short, the US government had entrapped Randy Weaver.

Weaver, however, refused and warned Aryan Nations of the plan.[51] In turn, the federal government indicted Weaver on firearms charges in December of 1990 and arrested him the following January. He posted a $10,000 bond and was released. The BATF set a court date for February 20 but sent Weaver a summons dated March 20. Six days before he thought he was supposed to appear in court, Assistant US Attorney Ron Howen issued a warrant for his arrest.[52] March 20, however, came and went; Weaver ignored the summons and stayed holed up in his cabin.

August 21, 1992, six US marshals, part of a SWAT-like team called the Special Operations Group, surrounded the cabin on Weaver's isolated twenty-acre property. They kept clear of the house itself for fear of being seen. One marshal threw pebbles near the cabin to distract Weaver's dog. It started barking. Weaver, his fourteen-year-old son Sammy and a friend, Kevin Harris, grabbed their guns, thinking the retriever had found game. They followed him as he chased the marshals. Randy Weaver split from the others and, spotting a figure in camouflage gear, shouted a warning and ran back to the cabin. As the others began to follow, Marshal Art Roderick shot the dog. Sammy Weaver shot back. Then he continued running. After another burst of gunfire from the concealed marshals, Sammy Weaver fell to the ground dead, shot in the back. Harris returned fire. That exchange left veteran Marshall William Degan dead. It remains unproven exactly who shot


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SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

FEDS LOSE BIG

■ Federal jury finds Harris innocent on all counts

■ Weaver guilty on two lesser charges, acquitted on the rest

■ Spence urges prosecution of agents who killed Samuel and Vicki Weaver

The Weaver family and Kevin Harris make the cover of a Spokane newspaper after winning a wrongful death and civil rights lawsuit against the federal government for the Ruby Ridge shootout.

whom in this exchange, but clearly Ron Howen had prematurely authorized use of excessive force to arrest Randy Weaver.[53]

The remaining five officers immediately contacted the US Marshals Service in Washington, DC, which in turn called in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The FBI mobilized its crack Hostage Rescue Team, headed by Richard Rogers. It brought in agents from around the country. By the day's end, Idaho governor Cecil Andrus had called a state of emergency, by that authorizing the use of both the National Guard and state militias to capture Weaver. The next day, about four hundred military and police specialists had converged on Ruby Ridge with a helicopter, "humvees" (a military vehicle used in "Desert Storm"), armored transport and personnel carriers, and communications equipment. This force blockaded the Weaver's property. Rogers had drawn up special "Rules of Engagement" for the operation, authorizing agents to shoot any adults carrying weapons on sight.[54]

About 6:00 p.m. that day, Weaver finally decided to venture out to reexamine his dead son, whom he had carried to a small shed near the cabin. Harris and Weaver's daughter Sarah came with him. As he tried to enter the shed, a bullet ripped through the soft flesh under his arm. All three ran back to the cabin. Vicki, Weaver's wife, held open the door, a baby in her arms. As they raced inside, a federal sharpshooter's bullet passed through Vicki Weaver's head, killing her instantly and severely wounding Harris.[55] Fearing for their lives, Harris and the remaining Weavers refused to go outside for the next nine days. During this time Harris's condition grew critical. By the barricades, a hundred local residents kept a vigil for those trapped inside and began to protest the paramilitary assault. Finally, Weaver agreed to surrender only after another former Green Beret, Bo Gritz, and a local Baptist minister, Chuck Sandelin, assured him that he and his family would go unharmed. [56]

About one month later, Randy Trochmann, Chris Temple (publisher of a Christian Identity newspaper, *The Jubilee*) and several others who stood vigil during the siege formed a group called United Citizens for Justice. They

proposed to expose government abuse of power and to form chapters in every state to protect fellow "patriots." The organization, however, fell apart after only a few months.[57] Another, more ominous organizing effort followed. This meeting, called "the Rocky Mountain Rendezvous," took place on October 22 at Estes Park, Colorado. Besides Trochmann and Temple, Louis Beam, Richard Butler and other prominent members of the patriot movement attended.[58] Their purpose was to mobilize the far right in the wake of Ruby Ridge. To do so, they decided to focus on anti-government sentiment and to downplay racism, which had been too divisive. As they re-prioritized Jews and blacks as "secondary" enemies, euphemisms replaced racist epithets in movement propaganda. In this, they took their cue from David Duke's successful campaign for the Louisiana legislature. Identity pastor Pete Peters observed:

> Men came together who in the past would normally not be caught together under the same roof, who greatly disagree with each other on many theological and philosophical points, whose teaching contradicts each other in many ways.[59]

All agreed that they must take extreme measures to check the tyranny of the federal government. Beam stated:

> When they come for you, the federals will not ask if you are a Constitutionalist, a Baptist, Church of Christ, Identity covenant believer, Klansman, Nazi, home schooler, Freeman, New Testament believer, [or] fundamentalist….those who wear badges, black boots, and carry automatic weapons, and kick in doors already know all they need to know about you. You are the enemy of the state.[60]

They concluded that small, unorganized armies would be the most effective countermeasure. Thus, the contemporary militia movement was born. As Morris Dees notes, "At Estes Park, the movement changed from a disparate, fragmented group of pesky—and at times dangerous—gadflies to a serious armed political challenge to the state itself."[61]

Ron Howen later tried to prosecute Weaver and Harris. The jury, however, in what *The New York Times* called "a strong rebuke of force during an armed siege," acquitted the two of all the serious charges: murder, conspiracy and aiding and abetting. They found Weaver guilty only of failing to appear in court and violating the terms of his bail.[62] The Weaver family and Kevin Harris later filed a wrongful death and civil rights lawsuit against the federal government. On August 16, 1995, Attorney General Janet Reno announced that the Justice Department had reached a $3.1 million settlement with the Weavers. Yet the government, as customary in such cases, admitted no wrongdoing.[63] Under a government probe, however, E. Michael Kahoe, who supervised the siege for the FBI, admitted shredding documents detailing the shoot-to-kill orders.[64] Clearly the FBI and the BATF, under the Clinton administration, had overstepped their authority to such an extent that extremist warnings of a nascent police state began to seem credible. Tactically, the encounter furnished the far right with invaluable propaganda. Even so, just as the Weaver case was being tried, the BATF blundered again—with even more horrible consequences.

Second part of the video "Waco, the Big Lie" by Linda Thompson.

Waco

On April 19, 1993, the FBI and the BATF launched a concerted, paramilitary assault on a heavily armed and fortified compound in Waco, Texas. They used gas, tanks, and helicopters to incinerate and destroy a complex that belonged to the Branch Davidian religious group and had been under siege for 51 days. When the government ended the siege, they had killed Branch Davidian leader David Koresh and seventy-five of his followers. Of these, all but nineteen were women and children.[65]

Branch Davidians grew out of Victor Houteff's Shepherd's Rod Church in the 1960s. Shepherd's Rod was a Seventh Day Adventist church; Adventists believe in the "Second Coming" of Jesus, which entails the fiery, apocalyptic destruction of the earth from which only true believers will be spared. After her husband and Branch Davidian founder, Ben Roden, died in 1978, Lois Roden became the new prophet, pronouncing that the Holy Spirit was female.[66]

David Koresh was born as Vernon Wayne Howell on August 17, 1959. He joined the Davidians in 1981, moving

to the Mount Carmel Center. Howell became popular with the other Davidians and by 1984 began to emerge as the sect's new spiritual leader. This led to a dispute with Lois Roden's son George who ejected Howell from Mount Carmel. Many other Davidians followed him and set up a community on rental property in Palestine, Texas. In 1985 Howell visited Israel where he claimed to have a visitation from God who instructed him to study and to teach the prophecy of the Seven Seals from the Book of Revelations. During the same period, he also claims God told him to create a "House of David," in which many wives would bear his children. His offspring would become the rulers of a new, purer world. Although the Davidians were apocalypticists, they were not racists like Christian Identity adherents; the congregation was racially and ethnically diverse.

After his mother's death, George Roden challenged Howell's leadership of the new group. He went so far as to dig up a coffin at Mount Vernon, daring Howell to raise the corpse inside from the dead. A gunfight resulted after Howell snuck onto the property to photograph the coffin. US District Judge Walter A. Smith sentenced Roden to six months in jail after Roden had threatened to infect him with herpes and AIDs. With Roden out of the way, Howell urged the country to put a lien on Mount Carmel for sixteen years of unpaid back taxes. By paying these off, Howell legally regained possession of Mount Carmel on March 22, 1988. In 1990 he changed his name to David Koresh, after the Old Testament King David and Cyrus, the Persian king who freed the Jews in Babylon.[67]

When Koresh declared in 1989 that God had commanded him to take the sect's married women as his wives, follower Marc Breault became angry and left the group. In a 1990 affidavit he described Koresh as "power-hungry and abusive, bent on obtaining and exercising absolute power and authority over the group." He took up the role of "a cult buster" and encouraged over a dozen Davidians to sign affidavits against Koresh. The charges included statutory rape, tax fraud, immigration violations, illegal weapons possession and child abuse. In 1991 Breault informed David Jewell that his young daughter Kiri would soon be eligible to become one of Koresh's many wives. Jewell sued for custody in January 1992 and Jewell's estranged wife surrendered the child voluntarily.[68] In October of that year a *Waco Herald-Tribune* reporter contacted Assistant US. Attorney Bill Johnson about an exposé he was writing about Koresh, called "The Sinful Messiah." It would detail the Davidian's alleged child abuse and arms buildup.[69]

The BATF felt pressured to take action at Waco. On one hand, Jewell and the local media had raised charges of child abuse within the compound; on the other, due to charges of inefficiency, racism and sexism—not to mention the Ruby Ridge debacle, the BATF faced possible budget cuts and reorganization. Clear and decisive action at Waco might clear up both problems at once. Instead what resulted was a fifty-one-day siege that cost the lives of four BATF agents and that culminated in the death seventy-six Branch Davidians. As in the Ruby Ridge incident, the FBI failed to follow standard agency rules of engagement. Instead, after Davidians shot one marshal, agents received orders to shoot on sight. Reports suggest that although the Davidians were heavily armed, they would have complied with regularly served search warrants—as they indeed had done in the past. By beginning with a siege, the FBI and the BATF may have unnecessarily escalated the entire confrontation. FBI Director Louis J. Freeh later suspended Larry Potts and reprimanded dozens of other federal employees for the botched standoff at Ruby Ridge.[70] Potts had overseen both Ruby Ridge and Waco. After this outcome, popular resentment ran deep. In a fund-raising letter, the otherwise mainstream NRA characterized BATF agents as "jack-booted government thugs" who wear "Nazi bucket helmets and black storm trooper uniforms." That letter caused President George Bush to resign his NRA membership, stating, "Your broadside against federal agents deeply offends my own sense of decency and honor, and it offends my concept of service to my country."[71] In response to both Waco and Ruby Ridge, in October 1995 Janet Reno set forth new rules of engagement procedures for all federal law enforcement. These directives restrict the use of deadly force to a last resort and prohibit changes, even under extenuating circumstances.[72]

Right-wing propagandists were quick to exploit Waco—notably Linda Thompson. Calling herself "Assistant to the US Commanding General NATO" with a "Cosmic Top Secret/Atomal Security Clearance," Thompson produced an inaccurate and misleading two-volume video set on the massacre called "Waco: the Big Lie."[73] Ironically, because of "race mixing" many of Thompson's supporters would have otherwise targeted the Davidians themselves. White supremacist Timothy McVeigh nonetheless used Waco to justify the Oklahoma City bombing.

Oklahoma City

On April 19, 1995, a truck bomb exploded at Oklahoma City's Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, killing 168 people and wounding about 500 others. As for loss of life and sheer destruction, this was by far the worst terrorist action in US history to date. Nineteen of the victims were children, most from the building's day care center. In the wake of the World Trade Center bombing, the Clinton administration was quick to blame Arab terrorists, but then had to retract this accusation as it became clear the perpetrators were, after all, American. As in *The Turner Diaries,* the bomb consisted of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and fuel oil; the target was a building used by the FBI. One Aryan Nations group had already targeted the Murrah

U.S. Air Force personnel from Tinker Air Force Base work alongside civilian firefighters to remove rubble from the explosion site of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, 1995. Photo: Staff Sergeant Mark A. More/Wikimedia Commons

building in 1983. A key member of that group, in fact, was Richard Wayne Snell, executed in Arkansas on the very day of the 1995 bombing.[74] Before his death, Snell warned, "Look over your shoulder, justice is coming!"[75]

Shortly after the bombing, a state trooper stopped a yellow Mercury sixty miles outside Oklahoma City to check a missing license plate. He arrested the driver after finding a Glock semiautomatic pistol and a five-inch hunting knife inside the car. The driver turned out to be Timothy McVeigh, a twenty-seven-year-old veteran who had received a Bronze Star in operation Desert Storm. With an identification number from a mangled axle found in the wreckage, investigators soon linked McVeigh to the bombing. They traced the axle to a Ryder truck from Elliott's Body Shop in Junction City, Kansas. Shop owner Eldon Elliott identified McVeigh as the man who had rented the truck on April 17. The FBI found McVeigh's fingerprints on fertilizer receipts as well. Other evidence suggested that the brothers James and Terry Nichols may have been involved as well. Once in police custody, McVeigh said little, conducting himself like a prisoner of war.[76]

The radical right, in fact, had earmarked April 19 as a symbolic date. The Militia of Montana (MOM) called for a "national militia day" to commemorate not only Snell's execution but also the Waco tragedy.[77] Telephone records show that McVeigh called William Pierce's unlisted telephone number in West Virginia one week before the bombing.[78]

McVeigh went to trial on April 24, 1997 in Denver, Colorado. Michael and Lori Fortier, the prosecution's chief witnesses, recounted how McVeigh had diagrammed his plan on their kitchen floor with soup cans six months before the bombing. On June 3 the jury found McVeigh guilty of conspiracy, two bombing charges and eight counts of murder for the federal agents killed in the blast. During the penalty phase of the trial, McVeigh's defense team changed its tactics. Instead of insisting on McVeigh's innocence, they stressed his outrage at the Waco massacre, as a justification for taking 168 lives. Morris Dees, however, disputes the far right's putative "eye for an eye" logic:

> The fact that lives were lost during both the Waco debacle and the Weaver incident does not make those tragedies morally equivalent to the Oklahoma City bombing as the militias have suggested. Viewing the Waco incident from the perspective of the government's complicity, the deaths were by accident. Viewing the Oklahoma City disaster from the perspective of the bomber's responsibility, the deaths were by design. And even if one were to buy the thoroughly discredited militia line that the government started the blaze that engulfed the Davidians, a crucial distinction would still remain. The FBI pleaded with Koresh and the Davidians to come out of their compound for fifty-one days. The Oklahoma City bombers struck without warning.[79]

McVeigh received the death penalty on June 13. He remained stoic as he heard the verdict and, leaving the courtroom, flashed the "victory sign" to his family. He was executed on June 11, 2001. Terry Nichols went to federal trial on September 29, 1997. Unlike McVeigh who received a sentence of life imprisonment after the jury deadlocked on the death penalty. For this reason, Nichols was tried again by the state of Oklahoma—which had declined to prosecute McVeigh—in 2004. That jury also balked during the death penalty phase and, for 161 counts of murder, Nichols received an equal number of consecutive life sentences without possibility of parole.

The Militia Movement

Before the Oklahoma City bombing, few Americans knew of the militia movement. Suddenly, Ted Koppel's *Nightline* , *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Time* magazine all featured stories about it. For the first time, the mainstream public heard eccentric figures clad in camouflage gear warn of black helicopters, an invading strike force of Nepalese Gurkhas, secret tracking devices installed in their car ignitions, and the construction of massive crematoria in Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Kansas City and Oklahoma City. All of this was supposedly the work of a global secret government that had even orchestrated the Oklahoma City bombing as a pretext to crack down on Patriot groups. Richard Abanes assessed the movement shortly thereafter:

> This loosely knit network of perhaps 5 to 12 million people may be one of the most diverse movements our nation has ever seen. Within its ranks are college students, the unemployed, farmers, manual laborers, professionals, law enforcement personnel and members of the military....Interesting, patriots have no single leader. The glue binding them together is a noxious compound of four ingredients: (1)an obsessive suspicion of the government; (2) belief in anti-government conspiracies; (3) a deep-seated hatred for government officials; and (4) a feeling that the United States Constitution...has been discarded by Washington bureaucrats.[80]

Reporters have described the militia trend as paranoid. It is largely an expression of middle-class rage—not of the broad middle class itself, only a tiny, disaffected extreme. Since the onset of the Reagan Revolution, .5 percent of the population has consolidated its hold over almost 40 percent of total national assets. With the gap between rich and poor turning into a gulf, the middle class has seen its incomes shrink and its prospects for a higher standard of living disappear. It is further enraged by economic agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Mexican "bailout." It views gun control and environmental restrictions as government "meddling" in their private affairs. Many militia members are "weekend warriors" who simply enjoy dressing up and marching around; others, of course, fully intend to use their weapons.[81]

Robert DePugh's Minutemen, formed in the early 1960s, were the first contemporary, paramilitary group. Nonetheless, it was Ruby Ridge which gave birth to a national militia movement. During the standoff, sympathizers and local citizens had gathered outside the Weaver property to protest the government's handling of the case. The resulting negotiations threw Bo Gritz into the limelight; after the Weaver incident, his Specially Prepared Individuals for Key Events (SPIKE) program took on a bigger role in training militia groups. Meanwhile, Louis Beam introduced the idea of leaderless resistance at the Rocky Mountain Rendezvous in Colorado. Beam argued that the patriot movement imitate "the communists"; it should discard traditional, military "pyramid structure" in favor of small, independent cells, impervious to infiltration by federal agents.[82] Other protesters formed the United Citizens for Justice in October 1992 to protect citizens from "overzealous government." That organization soon fizzled, but one member, Randy Trochmann, moved back to Noxon, Montana to form the Militia of Montana (MOM) with his father, Dave, and his uncle, John. The Trochmanns all have ties to Christian Identity. Unlike other militia groups, MOM concentrates on publishing training and propaganda material.[83] Its titles include the *M.O.D. Manual* (a home guide to guerilla warfare), *The Road Back* (reclaiming America from the New World Order) and the instructional video *Invasion and Betrayal* (a survey of New World Order conspiracies). MOM members have had armed encounters with local police, but their primary significancy has been to spread the "militia gospel."[84]

The Michigan Militia, founded by Norman Olson and Ray

Armed militia member portrayed as patrolling the U.S. border.

Southwell, is one of the movement's best known. Six months after it was founded in 1994, brigades had sprung up in sixty-three of the state's eighty-three counties. National attention focused on the Michigan Militia when investigators learned that suspects in the Oklahoma City bombing may have attended the group's meetings. University of Michigan janitor Mark Koernke ("Mark from Michigan") is the militia's chief propagandist. He inveighs against the Federal Management Agency (FEMA) as a wing of the "shadow government" and has produced a two-hour video *America in Peril: a Call to Arms* that outlines the whole gamut of current conspiracy theories. In keeping with "need to know" tactics, most other militia groups prefer to operate in relative secrecy. Daniel Junas described how militia ideology differs from region to region in *Covert Action Quarterly*:

> the militias vary in membership and ideology. In the East, they appear closer to the John Birch Society. In New Hampshire, for example, the 15-member Constitution Defense Militia reportedly embraces garden variety U.N. conspiracy fantasies and lobbies against gun control measures. In the Midwest, some militias have close ties to the Christian right, particularly the radical wing of the anti-abortion movement. In Wisconsin, Matthew Trewhella, leader of Missionaries to the Preborn, has organized paramilitary training sessions for his church members.[85]

Claiming that the New World Order controls 50 percent of the United States, US Representative Helen Chenoweth (Idaho) has lent official credence to such otherwise crackpot theories. In line with so-called Wise Use doctrine she also declared "spiritual war" on environmentalism and introduced a bill requiring all arms-bearing federal agents to obtain permission from local sheriffs before entering a state.[86] Tactical anti-environmentalism began in Catron

County, New Mexico with the Country Rule program. Here, attorney James Catron succeeded in passing an ordinance that declared that the country government supersedes federal law, including such questions as whether cattle may graze on federal lands. With this precedent, some 100 more western counties have followed suit.[87]

The biggest militia confrontation to date came in March 1996 when members of a group calling itself the Montana Freemen planned to kidnap and execute a judge and a second government official. Previous Freeman actions had included tax resistance, counterfeiting and impersonating government officials. FBI agents intercepted two members who were bringing a truckload of weapons from North Carolina to a compound they called "Justus Township" near Jordon, Montana. After this, sixteen other members, lead by Russell Dean Landers, holed up in this community for what would become an 81-day siege, the longest in American history. During that time, a total of 633 agents worked in twelve-hour shifts with sometimes as many as 150 agents surrounding the compound. After Ruby Ridge and Waco, FBI director Louis J. Freeh had decided to exercise extreme caution. Only after seventy-one days, did the FBI cut electrical power to the compound. Some criticized the agency for wasting time and money, but this approach paid off on June 13 when the FBI ended the armed standoff with no loss of life. Freeh declared, "The message that comes out very clear to everybody—if you break the law, the United States government will enforce the law. It will do it fairly but firmly." Attorneys Kirk Lyons and David Holloway from the CAUSE Foundation in North Carolina will represent the Freemen in court. The CAUSE Foundation calls itself a civil rights organization for right-wing activists. Randy Trochmann declared that the trial would provide an ideal platform for militia propaganda.

Although the federal government made egregious mistakes at the Ruby Ridge and Waco sieges, these were exceptions. Nonetheless, the far right has aggressively exploited these events, turning its criminals into heroes. This might tempt Americans to forget that law enforcement officials have routinely risked and lost their lives to keep otherwise unregulated paramilitary groups in check. No one has turned the dead BATF or FBI agents into martyrs. Morris Dees notes that no other country in the world tolerates private armies that build bombs and train with assault weapons; local police seldom enforce state laws that forbid these armies.[88] Moreover, he warns of a racist component in the tolerance extended to these groups:

> It would be interesting to see the reaction of the state attorneys general if the militia groups operating today were all located near large metropolitan cities like Detroit and Philadelphia, and were comprised only of blacks. If law enforcement's violent reaction to the Black Panthers of the 1960s is any example, I seriously doubt if black militia units training with assault weapons, distributing recipes for building bomb, and preaching hatred for the government would be tolerated.[89]

Any analysis of the constitutionality of the militia movement entails two questions: i) the right to bear arms and ii) the right to form *private* militias. While the constitutional right to bear arms is unclear and subject to debate, the Constitution expressly prohibits forming private militias. A militia may consist of the citizenry at large, just as the patriot movement claims. It fails to note, however, that only Congress can call up a militia, which, in turn, remains subject to government regulation:

> Private citizens cannot simply band together, saying "Okay, we're a militia. We're here to protect our rights against what we believe is a tyrannical federal government." The militias of today's patriot movement are functioning outside constitutional boundaries. They are *unconstitutional* militias. The Constitution stipulates, "Congress shall have the power…To provide for calling forth the militia…To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia…reserving to the states respectively, the appointment of officers, and the authority of training the militia.[90]

Alarmed by the World Trade Center bombing of 1993, the Clinton administration tried to pass the Omnibus Counter-Terrorism Act of 1995. It intended this legislation to allow the FBI more leeway to collect information and to conduct surveillance without prior court authorization. The act did not pass. Appearing before the Senate, Morris Dees advised lawmakers simply to enforce existing laws; the FBI did not need such sweeping powers. Most important, Dees reminded his audience, although they should never accept misconduct by federal law enforcement agencies, they should never take effective law enforcement for granted. It forgets that even before Ruby Ridge the government had peacefully resolved dozens of standoffs. Since then, it acknowledged its mistakes and has taken steps to insure that they will not happen again.

Afterword

The Clinton Administration's decision to limit deadly force significantly helped defuse the militia movement in the short term. The long-range impetus behind the militias waned for other reasons as well. The first, and most

Tea Party protest at the National Mall on September 12, 2009. Photo: Wikimedia Commons/CC BY-SA 3.0

obvious, is that overturning the Federal government was never an achievable goal from the outset. However much ideological heat can be produced by stoking such fantasies could never drive a full-blown, right-wing revolution. Second, the logic of globalization, once so tempting for extremists to condemn as a conspiracy, has inexorably come to be accepted as part of twenty-first century social reality. Nonetheless, the extremist right continues to exert a disproportionately large ideological influence both domestically and internationally, though no longer in the form of an underground movement. The Tea Party represents the most recent expression of its disaffection, the roots of which can be traced back to the ongoing decimation of the middle class and the economic and social dislocation wrought be global capitalism. The progressive left has responded to these conditions as well, most notably through the Occupy Movement, which re-asserts the principle of communal public space and property against the logic of ongoing privatization. It is notable that how wealth is allocated is what fundamentally moves the populist right and left. Domestically, an ever-smaller elite lays claim to ever-more profits. Internationally, the distribution capital is beginning to include Third World economies rising out of the conditions of neo-colonialism. These are the underlying conditions of the Great Recession of the 2000s, which has so dramatically reduced the size and political clout of the middle class. The mandate, then, for the Tea Party has become to transform government, not overthrow it. It casts the proposed transformation as returning to the values of the founding fathers, even when such proposals blatantly contradict fundamental Constitutional principles. Embedded in the idea of such a return is the assumption that this will lead to a restoration of a once vibrant middle class. For example, Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum's recent assessment of John F. Kennedy's 1960 speech to Baptist ministers in Houston, a speech that reaffirmed Constitutional separation of church and state is one such "return." Santorum said the Kennedy's speech made him want to "throw up." What is perhaps most

alarming in this is, apart from its vehemence, that it signals a perceived feasibility of merging church and state. For the immediate future it seems that the battle over such issues will be waged by debate within the ranks of the Republican Party – and not with weapons from remote and isolated survivalist compounds.

X

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1
"Too Young to be a Hippy, Too Old to be a Punk (Discussion with Mike Kelley)," *Be Magazin*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, vol. 1, no. 1, 1994, 119–123.

2
James Wickstrom, *The American Farmer: 20th Century Slave* (1978) quoted in Richard Abanes, "Oh, What a Tangled Web," *America's Militias: Rebellion, Racism, Religion* (Downers Grove: Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 171. (Hereafter abbreviated *AM*.)

3
Carol Moore, "The BATF's Ruthless Raid Plan," *The Davidian Massacre: Disturbing Questions About Waco Which Must Be Answered* (Franklin, Tennessee and Springfield, Virginia: Legacy Communications and the Gun Owners Foundation, 1995), 99. (Hereafter abbreviated *DM.*) Moore further points out that the *P osse Comitatus* Act has been recently amended to sanction non-reimbursable US. military and National Guard support of civilian police in counter-drug operations.

4
James Coates, "Posse Comitatus," *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988), 105. (Hereafter abbreviated *AD*.)

5
Lyman Tower Sargent, "Posse Comitatus," *Extremism in America: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 343-44.

6
Ibid, 343.

7
Morris Dees with James Corcoran, *Gathering Storm" American's Militia Threat* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 10. (Hereafter abbreviated *GS*)

8
Catherine McNicol Stock, "The Politics of Producerism," *Rural Ra dicals: righteous rage in the American grain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 18.

9
As a southerner, Jefferson naturally opposed the Federalists (Hamilton, Madison et al.) who, playing upon anti-Catholic sentiments, in turn disparaged his close ties with France. Jefferson, however, viewed immigration as a threat to American democracy.

10
Stock, "The Politics of Producerism," 15-86.

11
Dees and Corcoran, *GS*, 11.

12
Coates, "The Politics of Hatred," *AD* ,197.

13
Coates, "Posse Comitatus," *AD*, 111.

14
Ibid, 118.

15
Ibid, 112-13.

16
Ibid, 112-15.

17
Ibid, 116.

18
Abanes, "Misinformation Specialists*," AM*, 118.

19
James Ridgeway, "Posse Country," *Blood in the Face: The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads and the Rise of a New White Culture* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1995), 138-42. (Hereafter abbreviated *BIF*)

20
Coates, "Posse Comitatus," *AD* 104-09.

21
Coates, "Posse Comitatus" and "The Compound Dwellers," *AD*, 120-6.

22
Coates, "The Compound Dwellers," *AD*, 121;132.

23
William L. Pierce, "The Lesson of Desert Storm," *Extremism in America* , 187

24
Coates, "The Order," *AD*, 48.

25
Lyle Stuart, "Introduction by the Publisher," William Pierce (as Andrew McDonald) *The Turner Diaries: A Novel* (New York: Barricade Books, 1996) unpaginated.

26
Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, "Establishing the White American Bastion," *The Silent Brotherhood: The Chilling Inside Story of America's Violent, Anti-Government, Militia Movement* (New York: Signet, 1990), 105-06. (Subsequent chapter references are followed by the abbreviation *SB*.)

27
David Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *The Party of Fear: The American Far Right from Nativism to the Militia* Movement, (New York: Vintage, 1995), 419. (Hereafter abbreviated *PF*.)

28
Pierce (as MacDonald) *The Turner Diaries* , 43.

29
Ibid, 45.

30
Ibid, 63.

31
William L Pierce, "A Program for Survival," *Extremism in America*, 176-182.

32
Flynn and Gerhardt, "Enter the Zionist Occupation Government," *SB* , 174.

33
Mormons believe that women's sacred calling is to provide physical bodies for God's spiritual children and that the second coming of Christ is near. In preparation for the millennium, like the survivalists, they stockpile food and other provisions.

34
Flynn and Gerhardt, "Robbie, the All-American Boy," *SB*, 27-57.

35
Ibid, "Establishing the White American Bastion," *SB*,105-127.

36
Ibid *,* "The Turn to Crime," *SB*, 128-167.

37
Ibid, "Enter the Zionist Occupation Government," *SB*, 203-208.

38
Dees had founded the Southern Poverty Center's Klanwatch Project. Through Klanwatch, he effectively used the criminal justice system to battling racism. In 1981 he obtained a court order to stop Louis Beam's Texas Emergency Reserve from harassing Vietnamese immigrant fishermen in Galveston Bay. In 1984 he sued Glen Miller's Carolina Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which led to the dissolution of that group. Miller, in the end, turned state's evidence. In 1986 he obtained a $7 million judgment against the United Klans of America for lynching a black college student in Mobile, Alabama. This put the group out of business. In 1987, he bankrupted Georgia's Invisible Empire with a $12.5 million court judgment. In 1989 he won a class action lawsuit against Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance group for their part in the beating death of an Ethiopian immigrant in Portland, Oregon. This, too, bankrupted the organization. See Dees and Corcoran, "The Seditionist," *GS*, 37-41 and "Recipe for Disaster*," GS* , 98-103. Celebrity TV producer, Norman Lear, is best known for his character Archie Bunker, who epitomized bigotry as ignorance. Lear also founded a liberal lobby group with a conservative-sounding name: the American Family Foundation.

39
Flynn and Gerhardt, "Alan Berg: the Man You Love to Hate," *SB*, 233-250.

40
Ibid,"Brink's and the $3,800,000 War Chest," *SB*, 255.

41
Ibid," 271-290; "Survivalism: the Man Who Ate the Dog," *SB*, 291-6.

42
Ibid, 349.

43
Ibid,"Judas Arrives on American Airlines," *SB*, 379.

44
Ibid, "Survivalism: the Man Who Ate the Dog," *SB*, 348-9.

45
Ibid, 354-55

46
Ibid, "Blood, Soil and Honor," *SB*, 407-449.

47
Ibid, "Blood, Soil and Honor," *SB*, 407-449.

48
Ibid, "Epilogue: Blood Will Flow*,*" SB, 450-51.

49
Ibid, 469-70

50
Former Green Beret Frazier Glenn Miller is the onetime leader of the Confederate Knights and the White Patriot Party. He was present at the Greensboro slayings of communist anti-Klan demonstrators in 1979 and ran for governor of North Carolina in 1984. That same year, attorney Morris Dees succeeded in barring Miller from further paramilitary organizing through a North Carolina civil suit. This effectively brought an end to his Confederate Knights. Miller went underground and declared war on ZOG. After his May 1987 capture, he turned state's evidence and received a reduced sentence of five years in prison. See Flynn and Gerhardt, "Enter the Zionist Occupation Government *,* *SB*, 203-3 and "Epilogue: Blood Will Flow *,*" *SB*, 467. The minister James Ellison began the CSA as the Zarephath-Horeb Church near Bull Shoals, Arkansas. During the 1970s, Ellison took on a survivalist orientation and embraced Christian Identity theology. He set up a survivalist training center that included an obstacle course and Silhouette City, an urban mockup for street warfare. Randall Rader, later a key member of the Order, had been Ellison's "defense minister." By the early 1980s Ellison grew more extreme and more erratic. He declared himself to be "King James of the Ozarks" (tracing his lineage back to King David) and proclaimed that theft (from non-Identity people) and polygamy were sanctioned by the Lord. This, coupled with extreme poverty within the CSA compound, led to a general exodus by 1983. Order members Richard Scutari, Ardie McBreaty and Andy Barnhill also had CSA connections. See Flynn and Gerhardt, "Survivalism: the Man Who Ate the Dog *,*" *SB*, 304-308. The FBI laid siege to the CSA compound in April 1985 and Ellison was convicted of racketeering that same year. See Flynn and Gerhardt, "Epilogue: Blood Will Flow," *SB*, 464.

51
US federal law prohibits the sale of shotguns with barrels less than eighteen inches long, except where special permits have been granted.

52
Alan Bock, "The Weavers' Road to Ruby Ridge," *Ambush at Ruby Ridge* (Irvine: Dickens Press, 1995), 52-3. Subsequent chapter references followed by the abbreviation *ARR*.

53
Ibid, 55.

54
Bock, "August 21-22, 1992: The Siege," *ARR*, 7-9.

55
Ibid, 12-13.

56
Ibid, 20-21.

57
Ibid, "The Standoff," *ARR*, 101-10.

58
Ibid,, "The Aftermath," *ARR*, 240.

59
Larry Pratt is the executive director of both Gun Owners of America and the Committee to Protect the Family Foundation (the anti-abortion group which raised funds to protect Randall Terry). He is also founder of English First, a lobby opposed to bilingual education. Dees and Corcoran, "Rocky Mountain Rendezvous," *GS*, 54.

60
Ibid, 53.

61
Ibid.

62
Ibid, 69.

63
Bock, "The Lawyers Close, The Jury Decides," *ARR*, 227.

64
Ibid, "Update and Postscript," *ARR* , 308.

65
Abanes, "The Saga of Ruby Ridge," 49.

66
Moore, "Why the BATF and the FBI Massacred the Branch Davidians," *DM*, 1-4.

67
Ibid, 14-15.

68
Ibid, 14-21.

69
Ibid, 19-21.

70
Ibid, 39-40

71
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 449.

72
Dees and Corcoran, "Bonds of Trust," *GS*, 197.

73
Abanes, "The Saga of Ruby Ridge," *AM*, 48.

74
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 457-59.

75
Ridgeway, "Introduction to the 1995 Edition," *BIF*, 20.

76
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 440.

77
Ridgeway, "Introduction to the 1995 Edition," *BIF*, 9-10.

78
Dees and Corcoran, "Winds of Rage," *GS*, 135.

79
Ibid, "The Almost Perfect Soldier," *GS*, 165.

80
Dees and Corcoran, "Bonds of Trust," *GS*, 197.

81
Abanes, "Introduction," *AM*, 2.

82
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 446.

83
Ibid, 440-41

84
Bock, "The Aftermath," *ARR*, 240-241.

85
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 450-451,

86
Daniel Junas, "The Rise of the Militias," *Covert Action Quarterly,* April 24, 1995 See http://www.publiceye.org/rightist/dj_mili.html .

87
Bennett, "Reshaping of the New Right, Rise of the Militia Movement," *PF*, 468-469.

88
Junas, "The Rise of the Militias."

89
Dees and Corcoran, "Bonds of Trust," *GS*, 188.

90
Ibid, "The Last Best Hope," *GS*, 224-225.