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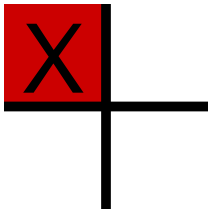
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Web of Capturing the Moving Mind: X

Akseli Virtanen and Steffen Böhm

We mark this web – this publication, this project – with crossing lines, a *chiasma*. The Greek letter *chi* (χ) marks a decussation, a crossing of tracts. With it we wish to point to the nature of this project as a diagonal arrangement, a connection and crossing of heterogeneous domains and their codings.

This web is produced in cooperation between *Framework: The Finnish Art Review* and *ephemera: theory & politics in organization*. It aims to weave a connection between art and politics, between art as an act of resistance and economy as biopolitical production. For if it is true, that today our thinking and emotional abilities, our imagination and subjectivity are increasingly put to work in economic production and that the new controls operate today with the possibilities of our thinking and acting which they try to subordinate to the pre-structured tasks and aims of a particular historical period, then the question of art as an act of resistance and creation of new forms of autonomous and good life – a life in which our ways and acts of living are always about the possibilities of life – interferes directly to the core of this enterprise. The question of organizing new forms of life and the critique of capitalism must today be seen as one.

The web, or X, presented here is based on *Capturing the Moving Mind: Management and Movement in the Age of Permanently Temporary War*, the first *ephemera* conference on the Trans-Siberian train (Moscow–Novosibirsk–Beijing) September 11–20, 2005.¹

A conference on a train? Captured in a container like sardines in a tin – ready for consumption? An experiment. But what was actually the difference between our experiment and so-called reality TV shows like *Big Brother*? Or were we just imitating the model of Post-Fordist production where mixing different roles and competences, arts and sciences, is the basic method for putting to work not this or that particular ability, but the faculty of being human as such? Or were we engaged in a spectacle, a

1 See <http://www.ephemeraweb.org/conference>. The conference was organized and supported by *ephemera: theory and politics in organization*, *Conflitti Globali*, *Megafoni*, *Framework: the Finnish Art Review*, Tutkijaliitto, The Wihuri Foundation, the Foundation of Economic Education in Finland, Helsinki School of Economics, Chydenius Institute, University of Essex, m-cult centre for new media culture, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Novosibirsk State University and Tsinghua University.

pseudo-event, a false event of marketing movement and crossing borders without, or separated from, a real capacity to experience and engage with it?

To answer these questions it is important to understand two things about our experiment as a pragmatics of existence.

First of all, this experiment did not drop from the heavens; it had to be made. It was not made for fun, but out of necessity. The necessity to resist the new war and the arbitrary powers around us. The necessity to create our own problems and not only to respond to the questions and 'weekly assignments' already posed by the Teacher-Capital. The necessity not to submit at the moment when the fragility on which the new controls are build (the bare belief and fear) reveals itself; when we should refuse the panic and fear they try to spread; when we should take control of our lives and not only react to demands and requirements set on us.

Secondly, this criss-crossing was not born out of nothing, but it was made of around 40 independent projects, 40 body-mind and time-space constellations, a series of 40 pieces whose connections were not pre-destined in any way. This was the potentiality in our hands, a potentiality for anything, a potentiality to do anything (also to fail or to submit).

On the train, it was as if we could see in the dim windows a reflection of our existence which had lost both its visible ends and clear origins, as if all that was left was its purposeless movement. It was as if we could look directly into the eye of our existence as potential beings which do not have any particular surrounding, any particular tasks or functions, that is, as beings which can do anything and from which anything may be expected. It was as if we experienced what it means to be a 'human being'. We experienced at the same time the abundance of our possibilities and the trivialness and vanity of all the reasons. In such a condition, we paradoxically had no other ground, no other resources, no other shelter to turn to – except *ourselves*. This experience of the bare 'I can' does not refer to any particular ability or faculty but to our nature as such. It is maybe the most severe and cruel experience possible: the experience of potentiality.

Yet this potentiality is always entangled in its expression, as our journey is in no way separable from its organization. Organization that didn't come from above (the leader, god, the heavens), but was made by us. Our ways and acts of living are never simply facts but above all about possibilities of life.

The level crossing we were facing was this: pure experiment. The journey could also have turned into a chaos or a catastrophe. We are animals that are able to change our fate, but also able not to do so. We can do or can not do, we can succeed or fail, lose ourselves or find ourselves, become slaves or free. No excuses; our behaviour is not prescribed by a necessity, but always retains the character of possibility. Through this potentiality we may meet chances, make connections, either lose or gain in combinations, whither away or branch off to change. None of it happens by itself, but creates rather its own 'problem'. To create our own problems is to climb back to them, to touch, not chaos where we would disappear, but movement that gives us consistency.

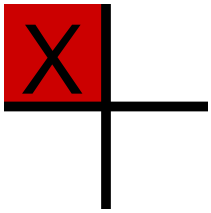
So our problem was really this: how to find the courage to look directly into the eye of our ability to do anything; how to seize our potentiality and make of it a beginning of something else, another sense or another form of life whereby the seed of potentiality grows into something else; how to travel through this space of experimentation where there are no visible landmarks or determined cardinal points?

And our answer is this: it is done by hand. It is done by touching, by groping one's way, like in the *Crane Dance* that coils and uncoils in the labyrinth of Minotaur.² In this labyrinth every entrance seems to lead to an *aporia*, a knot, which is impossible to open with visible and formal principles. We have to find our way in a 'place' or rather 'space' or 'time' without boundaries or ceilings, where one returns near the place where one started, where near and far-away commingle and which is fundamentally without a centre. Like a measuring worm, with hands and feet sticking out everywhere, we have to grope, dance and ramble our way through the empty desert. This is to sense the burning problem of what it is to live today. It is a question of sensing and not of understanding, of moving from the level of meaningful words and communication to the materiality of language where thinking turns flesh and starts directly changing the world. A production and invention of gropings, touches, whirlings, rotations, gravitations, dances, leaps... Such is the problem of crossing that would directly touch the soul, that would be that of the soul.

the editors

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- 2 The myth behind the Crane Dance or *gèranos* involves Theseus and his lover Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos. After Theseus braves the labyrinth to kill the Minotaur, he flees with Ariadne to the island of Naxos, where they dance a winding, labyrinthine dance in Aphrodite's honour to celebrate their love. The dance imitates the winding and tortuous path that Theseus took out of the labyrinth which reveals not as a maze but as a dance floor where the bull fight takes place. It is danced spirally in a chain, or a train. In *The Iliad* (18:590) Homer refers to the Crane Dance in which dancers circle and criss-cross each other "on their understanding feet": "Hereon there danced youths and maidens whom all would woo, with their hands on one another's wrists... sometimes they would dance deftly in a ring with merry twinkling feet, as it were a potter sitting at his work and making trial of his wheel to see whether it will run, and sometimes they would go all in line with one another, and much people was gathered joyously about the green."



The Structure of Change: An Introduction

Akseli Virtanen and Jussi Vähämäki

Permanently temporary war

We live in a global state of war. We don't live in sequential spaces of local wars and conflicts. War and conflict are no longer local. They are no longer states of exception. Rather, their state is indeterminate and hard to piece together. War is everywhere and nowhere. It does not confine or try to isolate itself. Rather, it wants to obliterate all borders and fences. It wants to see human bodies spread out on the same plane, for them to be at its direct disposal, sometimes cutting down their possibilities of movement, sometimes opening them up. In the end, its aim is to give direction to movement, to find for it a function and to identify its origin. It aims to give coordinates to movement.

In this permanent state of war, a new kind of system of control is spreading around the globe. War is the permanent and principal mode of being of this system, even if its explicit military, political, social, legal operations vary. In this war, we may distinguish two frontlines or lines of force through which we may begin to understand it. These lines are interlaced together; they are weaving a new form of power.

The first of these lines is external. In the external war we may still see the formal (nation) states, even if the condition of the independent states and their ability to guarantee the safety of their citizens is continuously weakening. The loss of this capability to maintain the safety of their citizens means the beginning of war, a constitutive war, a war which is shaping the coming forms of life. Therefore, if we wish to create a new safety, a new justice, we cannot start from the existing institutions of the state, not from human dignity, respect for others and other such categories, but we must start from the state of lawlessness, the state of statelessness, the state of anomy, from the state of those who don't have a state and who may thus create something new.

This external war is being waged to control the movements of human masses and populations. At its root it is a biopolitical conflict in which the brutal practices of World War II (camps, genocides, torture) are being re-enacted solely as humanitarian tragedies without any moral or political rage. This war is not external because it would then be directed outside the so-called western world. It equally penetrates human bodies in the west, by organizing and disciplining their powers and powerlessness. It is external because it is directed at the human body, which in this war is absolutely without any

protection from the law, because it is the mere powerless object of manoeuvres, as the desperate actions of suicide bombers tell us.

The second front line is internal. It is the line of development of the new system of control and the corresponding form of power, which departs radically from the state model. This war does not aim to control human bodies in space. It is being waged to control the possibilities of human action, to control the human intellect and communication, to control the movement of minds. It operates with what we can do, say and think. This new *power over the life of the mind*, that is, power over the use of brains, language and communication is not only 'western', even if it is characterized by transformations in social and political relations in western countries. These changes may be characterized as a transformation towards societies of control.

The emerging societies of control are being legitimated by a particular fundamentalist and extreme rightwing ethos. This fundamentalism does not express itself as open racism, even if it talks about the clash of civilizations. It does not express itself as open racism, as the priority of the 'Aryan race' or as apartheid. It does not focus on people's external features and properties, but on what they think, on what they believe, and on what they might do. It spread of suspicion and organization of strict, and thinking. In such example, a 'terrorist' a 'Jew'. Whoever rebels or simply acts the behaviour required for 'state safety' – for example, in defending elementary civil rights – can be perceived as at least a potential terrorist, and he or she must therefore be eliminated and disarmed, even before he or she has done anything. In other words, his or her *possibilities* for action must be controlled. This control of possibilities above all means control of thought and movement. We are on our way to the religious state where the difference between thought and action has disappeared.



The separation between thinking (belief; religion) and action (the state) formed the two supporting pillars of the modern democracies, which have collapsed in the age of the war against terrorism, as control focuses not so much on actual actions in space, but on the possibilities for thinking and acting in time. The ease with which the so-called western states are moving back to the principle of *cuius region eius religio* ('whose the region is, his religion') that dates back 400 years, is astounding. As Prime Minister Blair said after the attacks in London: "Our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people." And President Bush added: "The attack in London was an attack on the civilized world. And the civilized world is united in its resolve: We will not yield. We will defend our freedom." The destruction of the state governed by law takes place as a kind a mass psychosis, in which it is thought that punishment for thinking only concerns others, and that there are two different laws, one for 'us' and one for 'others'. But when the central principles of constitutional states collapse, they collapse for everybody and not just for Muslims, for immigrants, and for 'others' in general.

This displacement within modern societies – and the transformation towards a ‘fundamentalist’ religious state – is not as much as it seems a reaction to an external state of affairs. Rather, it is a reaction to the *internal* development of societies, especially to the birth of the new social subject (the ‘brain worker’), but with the methods and models of the old (industrial) society. This is so at least insofar as we consider the changes in the world of economics and production. The ayatollahs are much closer than Iran.



Movement without cause is the origin of restlessness and unrest. It compels power to move, outside of its castles. When movement has many directions and possible meanings, when we don’t know where we are and where we are going, we have to start to grope about, to touch, to experiment. Now, we are fleeing in every direction, escaping far from equilibrium and harmony. People are set in motion, flow and spread without the limitations of direction, origin and meaning. Only such setting in motion, flowing and spreading unleashes movement and desire. Or, thinking can advance, move and touch only when it takes meaning to the point of collapse, far beyond society and its requirements.

As Heraclitus said, war makes some slaves, and others free. In the war against intellect, we have no positive chance of freedom through rebuilding the independent castles of thinking and politics. Only a desire to create our own problems opens up the possibility of an experiment that would define anew the relations between thinking and acting, art and science, and through that the new forms of political and social action. Society and history are never experimental; they are just a set of more or less negative preconditions, which make it possible to experiment with something beyond history. Beyond history, that is where *Capturing the Moving Mind* is aiming. It was held not so much to interpret the present war, its reasons and objectives, but to experiment and experience something that goes beyond the regime of war, to experiment and experience possible new forms of action, production and politics.

Capturing

Gilles Deleuze writes in his great article ‘Postscript on control societies’ about the transformation that takes place from the temporal and spatial succession that characterizes (industrial) disciplinary societies to control societies, which instead of enclosing in a space and organizing temporal successions, operate through continuous modulation of time and space.

The institutional models of enclosure found in disciplinary societies, with the discipline being exercised on the human body and spirit, and the particular knowledges (e.g. psychiatric knowledge) that arose in them, may be understood as the invention of the *factory*. In a factory immaterial labour and manual labour, planning and execution, communication and production were separate and had their own spaces.

What does a factory actually do? Above all, it constitutes a stage that gives spatial unity and coherence to time, place and action.

What characterized a factory was a *unity of space*. In certain places certain actions were carried out, and different places were connected in a coordinated way. Specialization penetrated not only into factories, but also into schools, homes, hospitals. The workplace was a kind of mould which made the worker interiorize the norms of the economy as movements of his body. Each particular place, each link in the chain had beside it a watching space, which checked that in each place what was supposed to be performed was performed, and that time was not wasted on anything irrelevant. This spatial unity also gave rise to its own forms of resistance: booze hidden in the machine; extended coffee breaks; 'illegal' communication among workers; gravitation to the blind spots of control; etc.

What ruled in the factory was *temporal unity*. The workers were present at the same time. What was important were timetables; externally determined tasks were to be carried out at externally determined times: task one, task two, lunch break, rest etc. Timetables were means of discipline, by which tasks were divided up and time was divided off and gradually sold. The productivity of bodies and their movements was scheduled, like being enclosed in a kind of time mould.



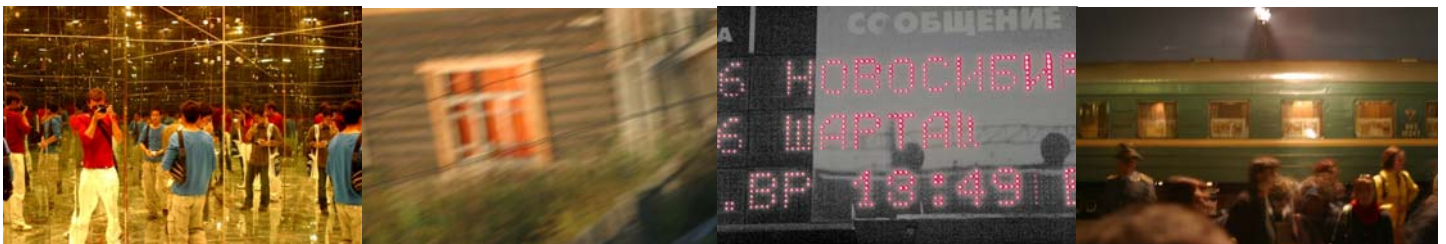
What governed the factory was the consistency and *unity of action*. Particular actions were dependent on each other and managed one by one. An organization chart coordinated it all.

The model based on the unity of time, space and action has been in crisis since the 1970's. This crisis is about the general crisis of the disciplinary society and its institutions (factory, prison, hospital, school, family). The breakdown of the traditional nuclear family, along with the emotions, norms and models of behaviour that were Taylorized in it, has perhaps been the most convincing expression of this crisis. The breakdown of the nuclear family also forces changes in upbringing, education and the labour market.

The collapse of the model of the disciplinary society has meant a passage from command to communication, from receiving orders to participation and interaction by those ordered about, from the prison to controlled movement on the highways (of knowledge), from the execution of set tasks to surfing the net, from an assertive handshake to noncommittal cuddling. The walls of the closed institutions fall and indeterminacy, confusion and disorder penetrate into the spaces of factory and family where continually different 'workstations' begin to form. We move from a closed, immobile and concrete factory to an open, moving, abstract enterprise. The enterprise is in continuous transformation and redefinition without stability, just as the work at the enterprise is changing and precarious. It is not so much a matter of flexibility or

adaptation, but of *modulation* and *variation*. As Deleuze understood, we are moving from the rigid mould ('dress code') to self-decomposing compositions, to projects that are put together out of heterogeneous materials.¹

Modulation now concerns space, time and action. The limits of space disappear, they are continuously redefined, spaces vary and even exist inside each other, because of the new means of communication. Working time varies, the time spent on the actual paid work becomes indeterminate and flexible in its limits, while working history too becomes piecemeal. In the sphere of action, the personal and the public (or what belongs to the company) start to commingle, intensities of work and levels of commitment vary continuously, and the worker's commitments make the work schizophrenic, when the abundance of promises and the possibility of keeping them irreversibly part company. And we could add to the list the modulation of the employment system itself and the increase in 'flexible components' in salaries. In short, modulation no longer operates through the unity of space, but rather is *spatially boundless*; it no longer operates through temporal unity, but rather is *temporally endless*; no longer through organizing visible and particular actions, but through action that has become *invisible and discontinuous*.



Behind these forms of modulation there is an essential factor, which might be called the conflict or the change in subjective, personal participation and commitment: we need to be interested in everything without caring for anything. This is a subjective attempt to control modulation so that we will not be left totally at its mercy. It is no surprise that the modulation of this subjective commitment has become the central site of operation for the new control systems, where they try to have an effect on enthusiasm, indifference, motivation, difference, resignations, leaving, beginning anew, and other aspects of the sense of commitment through various means, ranging from therapy and medicalization to crude enforcement. On this site – where everyone is interested in everything, but nobody cares about anything – we are fighting for our freedom, for our 'own time' and for our right to move.

According to Foucault's thesis on the primacy of resistance, if power relations penetrate the whole social field, it is because there is freedom everywhere. That is, in Fordist industrial capitalism and its disciplinary mechanisms (and modern democracies) what remained an area of freedom and resistance was brains, thinking and communication.

1 Modulation is boundless moulding or moulding in a continuously variable way. A modulator is a mould which continuously changes its form, function and settings. If modulation is moulding in a variable and endless way (in *indeterminate* time-space), moulding is modulation in a fixed and finite way (in *determined* spacetime). See Deleuze, G. (1990) *Post-scriptum sur les sociétés de contrôle* in *Pourparlers*. Minuit. and 'Anti-Oeipide et Mille plateaux', Cours Vincennes, 27.02.1979.

These are now being penetrated by the new mechanisms of power, which are minimizing the freedom of brains and killing their resistance. That is why we can say: what is going on is a war against intellect.

Mind

Today, we are increasingly working with our brains and feelings. We live in a situation in which the determined spatial and temporal coordinates of work and production are disappearing. Intellect and thinking are central to production. They are also determining the nature of our organizations – we even talk about intellectual organizations, learning organizations – and are crucial to the renewal of our societies: only the intellect seems capable of creating something new by being able to extend beyond what is existent and visible.

As such, the process of thinking has no particular place: you don't see it except possible outcomes. It does not have a spatial



specific or
through its
existence, and



therefore it is impossible to restrict it to a certain space. Thinking may take place anywhere, there is no privileged space for it. It is a movement that does not



show outwardly.

Thinking has no



temporal
succession. Its time is not chronological, rather it is jumpy and meandering. Thinking can take place any time, there is no specific privileged time



for

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Thinking
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consistently, they don't proceed in a order or logic. Rather, they are ruled by a quite principle, as in the famous library of Aby



while looking for a
of work one finds another,
different perspective on
sense, thinking is
rather than a taxonomy. It

which then opens up an entirely what was thought before. In this characterized by a kind of *dyslexia* means that thinking is a talent of *sense* and not one of communication. It is a simultaneous use of many senses and not some sort of supremacy of one sense over others. What is important is understanding, moving and changing entities.

What is central in the 'knowledge economy' or 'knowledge society' is brain work, intelligence and its use. This is something that could be described, following Gabriel Tarde, as *cooperation between minds*, or as cooperation, action and movement in brains. This cooperation has no spatial existence, it is not guided by temporal succession and it does not proceed consistently. What is important for cooperation between minds is not an individual genius, a definite subject that has to be located, but the general intellect, the collective intellect. The pinpointing of the subject in a particular body always threatens brain movement. Brain workers do not form a compact social class with a spatial existence. Because of their indeterminacy, mobility and spatial invisibility they are a continuous threat to authorities and pre-existing borders, norms and limitations. Brainwork cannot be reduced to pre-existing knowledge, already codified knowledges, to what we already know and have already said. It takes place before any visible or audible performance in space.



The cooperation between brains is not only the target of control and organization, not just a focus of political operations. Rather, it has become the actual (and invisible) stage of politics, a form of political relationship and the only origin of productivity, the 'place' for creating something new. In this invisible force field, the political struggle and production mix, as when the value of companies is no longer in the fixed capital, in the machines and equipment, patents or software, but in the cooperation between brain workers, in the surrounding society where intellectual action is spread everywhere. In this 'place' the new (needs) are created, the old is recycled into new contexts. It is here that new forms of life are invented. That is why the central issue in politics in this 'place' is the use of life, brains and the entire society: free use of brains, freedom of cooperation between minds and the ability to pose our own problems; or, the use of brains for solving already existing, and already posed problems. It is on this field of political conflict, where the fight for the free use of human minds is being fought out, that the new forms and practices of power emerge. These new practices have very little to do with the methods that were based on the unity of space, time and action. They might be best described as *power over the life of the mind* or *arbitrary power*.

Indeed, from the perspective of the traditional methods of organizing and controlling work, such as wages and fixed capital, cooperation between minds is problematic, because of its spatial, temporal and operational indeterminacy: separating work and non-work, and thinking and the material results of thinking, is difficult, and moreover,

this separation in fact tends to prevent the occurrence of thought (by forcing thinking to achieve a preset result or by preventing the movement and combination of thoughts).

What is controlled is no longer tasks defined for particular spaces, tasks carried out at certain times, or the consistency of the actions performed. The new controls operate in phases and are based on the relationship between objectives and the results. Their simple aim is self-evaluation, self-control and accountability: have I achieved my objectives, have I reached my own level? Or have I once again failed? This continuous accounting and self-evaluation is flexible and pliable. Now the objectives and actions vary. This continuous modulation replaces the inflexibility and direct control in wage work. Self-evaluation returns, thinks back and organizes memory into facts, it turns it into history by giving past events their place and meaning. This remembering is not always a pleasure, as when it is done under the threat of unemployment.

The freedom of flexible, pliable work is controlled freedom. The worker needs to control herself and her commitment to work. Now the fallow times, the coffee breaks and other breaks from work, which previously formed times of resistance and freedom, are monitored by bad conscience and the feeling of ‘not doing enough’, of not having gone into work enough. What were previously moments of joy and freedom, the joy of not having to work, have suddenly and surprisingly turned into moments of sorrow and deprivation. There is no longer a boss, there are no longer the constraints of physical and spatial hierarchies: the worker must learn to work by herself.

But this is also to say that modulation is never simple, one-way control. It also concretizes the possibility of freedom, the need to get rid of the closed spaces in which all the action and movement (whether physical, intellectual or emotional) is partitioned and suspended. The disciplinary society was characterized by limitation of the movement of bodies, partitioning and concentration of thinking, the contraction of the expression of feeling and of the emotional world.

Through modulation and variation people are trying to take over their own lives and create new experiences, to expand their relationships, and thereby their power and ability to manage in the world. The question is one of the relations of force between freedom (the extent, autonomy and movement of relations) and submission.

It is also necessary to understand that control over the life of the mind does not outright destroy the model of enclosure (even if it reveals its inefficiency). Rather, the two operate side by side, shoulder to shoulder, or within one another. The decisive point, however, is that today these mixtures of controls (as in China, where we find the most feudal organization and the most advanced cyber police in operation simultaneously) avoid committing or attaching themselves to any particular institution and its function, which would set limits and tie and slow things down. Today control has no permanent external reason or foundation, like the law, the norm or a particular task, within which it would function. Rather, it operates without institutional legitimation, or then its logic and foundations seem to change from day to day: it is baseless power, that is, *arbitrary*

power or pure power, power without any permanent relation to law, to a norm, or to any particular task. Its relation to any particular reason, task or meaning is arbitrary.²

The arbitrary nature of control means that, whereas modern power always received its legitimation as a means to a particular end (the factory produces, the hospital treats illness, the state protects the labour force, the army wages war, research is done in a university...), today, power is never simply a means to an end. In other words, the arbitrariness of power cannot be understood by approaching it in relation to the ends that it, as a means, attempts to achieve, but rather its arbitrary nature entails power as *pure power*, power as power without reasons or ends. The analysis of arbitrary power cannot therefore be about identifying a power that is only a justified or non-justified means towards this or that end, but which is in no relation to ends at all, and operates *in some other way* (than as a means to an end).

The arbitrariness of arbitrary power is therefore not a result of some intrinsic character that would distinguish it, for example, from modern power, that is, from means that always have an end, or some institutional context or some particular legitimation (from means that acquire their 'reason' or legitimation from a particular institution and its task), but from its arbitrary relation to these. This is how the concept of arbitrary power opens up the nexus between the floating currency (the floating signifier, the arbitrary sign) and the generic human capacities (intellect, perception, linguistic-relational abilities) as means of production, that is, the nexus between the era when the faith in the sign is lost (our experience of the triviality of all reasons and meanings) and the production of wealth in modalities that cannot be thought or understood via the concepts of modern economics, and always restricted to capital's self-expansion. The 'knowledge economy' is the continuation of capitalism without a foundation, and arbitrary power is its logical form of organization.

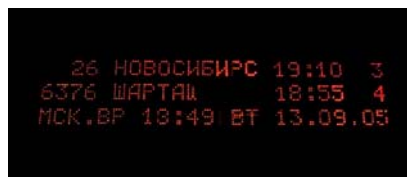
Movement, or, the structure of change

In the organizational experiment *Capturing the Moving Mind* everybody was 'alone together', each one taking care of her/himself at the same time participating in the band, sometimes in the centre, again finding her/himself at its edge, like a pack of wolves around a fire with neighbours to the left and to the right, holding on by just a hand or a foot, but with nobody behind them, their backs naked and exposed to the Gobi desert. For the logic of the one and the many did not fit our plans, nor did organizing many different (people) around a common cause, for each different one to be able to express themselves in the best way possible without impeding the others. As we saw it, a common goal, a common ground or common language is not needed as the condition of cooperation. This is the first meaning of the concept *multitudo*: it is not conditioned by a common cause or by determinate meanings. It is not a 'one' constructed out of the 'many', it is not composed of individuals or of a diversity of parts that are glued

2 Or we can put it also like this: 'International legality' (Kuwait 1999), 'humanity' and 'human rights' (Somalia 1999, Bosnia 1995, Kosovo 1999), 'enduring freedom' (Afghanistan 2000), 'war against terrorism' (Iraq 2000).

together. It is absolutely devoid of any external or transcendent common denominator. It does not amount to pluralism. It has nothing to do with tolerance. It finds its community, its unity, in change. It finds its substance in movement.³ In movement relations of cooperation combine, not in terms of a common cause, but in terms of attraction and rejection, in movement good relations are those that add power, extend and combine, and bad ones are those that take apart, isolate and suffocate. The difference between increase in powers and their reduction is not a leap, a transition or a difference in their nature. When we come across something that is right for us, we link to it, combine with it and devour it. What we were before fuses with what we have encountered and becomes part of a bigger, more extensive subjectivity.

In terms of this movement and such subjectivity it is important to understand a few things about our experimental organization. First of all, this organization did not drop from the heavens, but had to be made. It was not made for fun, but out of necessity. The necessity to resist the new war and arbitrary power. The necessity to create our own problems and forms of life, and not only to respond to the questions and ‘weekly assignments’ already posed by the Teacher-Capital. The necessity not to submit at the moment when the fragility on which the new controls are built (the naked belief and fear) reveals itself; when we should reject panic and fear they try to spread; when we should take control of our lives, and not just react to the demands and requirements placed on us.



Secondly, movement is not born out of nothing. The organizational experiment was made up of around 40 independent projects, 40 body-mind or time-space constellations, a series of 40 pieces whose connections were not pre-destined in any way. Anything could have happened. This was the potentiality in our hands, a potentiality for anything, a potentiality to do anything (also to fail or to give in), a potentiality from which anything can be expected. On the train, it was as if we could look directly into the eye of our existence as potential beings who *do not have any particular surrounding, any particular task or function*, that is, as beings who can do anything and from whom anything may be expected. Ontology revealed itself phenomenologically: we experienced what it means to be a ‘human being’. This is the second meaning of the concept *multitudo*: we experience, at the same time, the abundance of our possibilities

3 This means that it must differ, not from something else, but from itself, or in other words, that it *is* change. The question is no longer of change as a change of something, but of change itself taking on a substantial nature without any need to presuppose something else (like a changing object). To say that *multitudo* is change, is to say that it differs with itself internally: the change itself becomes a unity of substance and subject, a *causa sui*, that is, a substance that is the cause of itself. That is why the multitude does not need anything outside itself, a reason, a cause, a meaning, or any kind of mediation to support and guarantee its existence. This makes it absolute. This is important because, insofar as a cause is external to its effect, it cannot function as a basis of its being, it can only guarantee a possibility of existence, but not its necessity or substantiality. An effect can never have more reality than its cause.

and the trivialness and vanity (arbitrariness, fundamental groundlessness) of all reasons. In such a condition, we have no other ground, no other resources to turn to except ourselves, that is, this very ability to do anything that characterizes us. This experience of the naked 'I can' does not refer to any particular ability or faculty, but to our nature as such. It may be the most severe and cruel experience possible: the experience of potentiality.



Yet this potentiality is always entangled in its expression, as is our journey to its organization, and is in no way separable from it. The journey could also have turned into a chaos or a catastrophe, and remain so. We are animals that are able to change our fate, but are also able not to do so. We can do or can not do, we can succeed or fail, lose ourselves or find ourselves, become slaves or become free. No excuses, our behaviour is not prescribed by a biological vocation, assigned by a necessity, but always retains the character of possibility. Through this potentiality we may face chance events, others, either lose or gain connections, branch off into change. None of this happens by itself, but rather it creates its own 'problem'. To create our own problems is to have the courage to look directly in the eye of our ability to do anything, to climb our way back to it, to touch, not a chaos in which we would disappear, but a movement that gives us consistency.

Finally, then, if it is true that arbitrary power operates on the possibilities of our thinking and acting, which it tries to subordinate to the already structured tasks and aims of a particular historical period (as in capitalist valorization), then the question of movement and the good life – a life in which our ways and our acts of living are always about creating our own problems – interferes directly with the core of this struggle. What is at stake is not just this or that historical fact, or this or that injustice, but the *ability and structure of change as such*.

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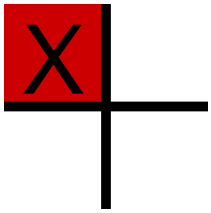
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Resisting Death, or, What Made Luca Guzzetti Jump into the Ashtray?

Leena Aholainen

On coming to the train I was troubled by a sentence, Deleuze's statement that *art is an act of resistance*. I didn't dare to hope that taking the journey would throw some light on that statement. It was a Jump that made me understand a facet of resistance, of what has the *power* to resist, and how.

When our journey had come to its end in Beijing, Luca Guzzetti jumped into the Korean artist Won Suk Han's artwork *Rubbishmuseum* (2005), a huge tray full of maggots in the backroom of a gallery space at Factory 798. The jump was then reproduced twice and the last jump was filmed. The event created a flood of reactions on behalf of conference participants assisting at the scene; anger, shame and mixed negative emotions: 'How dare he enter into the work of an artist who did not give his consent?'; 'Who gave him permission to do it?'; 'Why did we enter the private room and not remain in the gallery?'

When Luca Guzzetti first entered Factory 798 and jumped into the ashtray, it was not an act. It was a reaction to something he saw, felt, and maybe, being an ex-heavy smoker, smelled. It was his private reaction to a work of art which as such (a reaction) created the tangible condition for the emergence of a space for co-acting, a sphere of the *possible*. We do not know why Luca jumped in the first place, and I bet he himself does not know any better. He jumped, something pulled him into the pile of maggots, and this jump triggered another set of 'jumps': a few people in the gallery space started transforming the event into a *performance*. In the backwash from these jumps there was also a certain significant moment when a group of conference participants were watching this videoed moment on a computer screen in a hotel lobby in Beijing, and which then led into a 'problematic discussion' in hotel room 901.

To throw some light on the notion of performance we could refer to Austin's famous speech acts, acts that are in accordance with the act performed, of the type 'I baptise this child Luca'. These acts are generated from a *language* that 'makes acts'. These doings by saying in Austin's terminology are performative acts. If we then think of art, this performativity seems to be ambiguous. An artwork has stopped *saying* 'this is not a pipe', everybody already knows that it isn't, we've got it and we do not need to be more *informed* on the matter of language not being in accordance with the world of

phenomena. The statement about a 'pipe not being a pipe' does not *make* the pipe not be a pipe. The performative power of a contemporary artwork goes beyond its material form or its visibility; it works in another, more material, sensible diagrammatic sphere, beyond the level of meaning; it is a relating element, a dynamic principle of agglutination, like a dot on a line. Its power is to generate spaces where transgressing the private borders of personalities becomes possible: spaces for *relating* .



Luca Guzzetti, *Jump* (2005), an event carried out with Steffen Böhm, Bracha L. Ettinger, and Akseli Virtanen, Beijing, September 20, 2005.

Photos by Bracha L. Ettinger, published under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.5 licence.

'I baptise this child Luca' is a performative act in the weak sense of the word. It is part of a repetitive structure that replaces the collective act of performance. Our contemporary societies are full of these kinds of replacements, empty performative acts constructing our practical lives. They are created for a collectivity, but require no *subjective effort* of relating oneself to a collectivity. As Foucault remarks, we are moving away from disciplinary societies that define themselves by the milieu of enclosure towards societies driven by new forms of mechanisms of control, we might think of these empty performative acts, and we might think of them on a very subjective level. Our inner selves, or 'second natures' as Aristotle calls them, are structured by different kinds of laws, judgements, morals etc. that direct our movements. It is good not to kill or not to destroy every piece of art that crosses your path, but the point is that when this happens on the mere level of 'visibility', of empty performativity, and not in the sphere that requires a sensitive subjectivity, these acts are '*gratuits*', so to say. They are *mechanical*, made by no-one, and there is no *human* resistance involved. They simply happen because the structure exists, and therefore there couldn't be anything political or creative about them.

Guy Debord claims that spectacle is the common language of separation. Spectacle is the principle that separates us from our *own* power for compassionate co-acting. Morals, judgements, laws, most rules maintaining social cohesion etc. are spectacular in this sense, and they make the process of separation work on two levels that complement each other. Separating us from our own sensitive being, which is the point of departure for any subjective valuation, and which is the only real basis that enables us to connect with the collective sphere of relating to other(s), spectacle separates us from reality. We are talking about 'machines' in the Deleuzian-Guattarian sense as social assemblages, but this constellation also has its form on the individual level; we are reproducing the social machine with our own individual bodies by carrying out empty performatives and repeating a form of self-exploitation through obedience to the spectacular social forms.

The negative reactions to the jump scene were spectacular in this sense. They arose from the fear of transgression and of shareable border spaces. The event was about to become a repetition of the *group's original trauma of transgression and exclusion* experienced in the train,¹ and this is exactly the principle of the functioning of the spectacular machine: a form of *mechanical* repetition. The separation, the experience of the individual being cut off from the world creates a field of negative emotions that in their turn maintain the machine that creates spectacular realities. Getting connected to the movement of life requires a conscious effort of letting go of the private notion of the self, recognising that we are a duality, and that there is a powerful part of us that does not 'belong' to us. Our power to act is not 'ours', but is generated out of our power to be affected, and therefore out of something that is not our property, but which is *given* to us. In our individualistically driven realities this is a principle that is difficult to accept. We are powerful through something that is not ours; our power is not a fixed quality of Me, but a possibility given to us that appears in us by action taken in co-emergence with

1 Ettinger L, B. email message, Tue 27/09/2005, 8.11pm.

other subjectivities, other vectors of life.² It is this that *Capturing the Moving Mind* was trying to capture, and it is this that entered into our immediate experience at Factory 798. And it also revealed all the difficulties the group had in letting borderlines be crossed and border spaces shared.

So, let's get back to the train, because there are strings to be pulled between the train, art, action, exclusion, performance, Moscow railway station, the gallery space at Factory 798 and the hotel lobby in Beijing, where Guzzetti's jump started creating another set of backwash.

In this movement of the train one of the conference participants was excluded from the group because of his atypical, transgressive behaviour, (drinking, losing his papers, being absent-minded and rather full of himself) and finally had to stop his journey in Russia. One person being condemned to detachment from the group left a mark on the collective skin of the group. This 'act' of exclusion was a mechanical – and as such a repetitive – reaction based on a simulation of a judgement, and as such *called* for a counter-act.

The context for carrying this traumatic event on into a healing process was offered at Factory 798 when Luca Guzzetti jumped into the artworld. His first jump and the reactions prompted by it generated a crossroads situation, a moment of choice, when there was the *friction* required for transforming and activating the collective sphere. A few people in the gallery space sensed the *possible* in the situation, and started transforming Luca's jump into a performance. On the video³ we see these people setting up the scene, encouraging Luca to jump, joyfully playing with each other, with a certain scent of danger in the air. In the moment, they must have known that they were transgressing the apparent border lines, but they anyhow felt the need to experiment, to actualise the potential reconciling power that they must have sensed in the moment, of which, however, they could not have foreseen the result. There was a collective instinct, or intuition, expressing itself in action.

There is a counter-force that works against the general alienating processes that we all go through in different degrees. Wrapping our sensible selves in plastic and slowly detaching ourselves from our natural point of departure, our sensible sharing of the world, we invent for ourselves personalities that coincide with the outer (imaginary) conditions, and act in our place. By nature we are powerful, but employing this power requires an act of *relating*. We could talk about power *in* the world and power *over* the world. Power in the world implies a certain support from a structure (an empty or mechanical performative act), and this generates acts that *look* like generic acts. Power in the world does not necessitate singularity or subjectivity, and therefore it does not necessitate action, which alone can empower us.

2 This is what Bracha L. Ettinger calls the matrixial copoiesis whereby a joint trans-subjectivity seizes a potentiality and allows the growth of a gesture into something else, the transformation of a gesture into an artistic counter-event. See her essay 'Copoiesis' in this issue.

3 See the videos by Steffen Böhm at <http://www.ephemeraweb.org/conference/framework/jump.htm>

Luca's jump did necessitate an *act* to prevent it from having a determined repressive outcome. It created the condition where *relating* in action became possible, when people setting up the second and the third jump were transforming the first jump into a performative event, taking the jump beyond its original private framework, and bringing it to the level of, and making it *for*, the group; like a gift it was brought into the public sphere where it could be processed and shared, and where it could *affect* individuals. But giving a gift requires certain conditions. If we have nothing, we do not give gifts. On the level of empty performatives we *have* nothing, we are being exposed and used by the outer conditions that think us, feel us and decide upon our actions. When Luca started the jump, standing still, he was already in *there*, in the movement. As was everybody else in the room. The movement *exists* whether we are disposed to perceive it or not, and the only way to have power over it is by relating to the power of the other(s), by becoming able to be affected.

In the train the main mode was the movement, the ever-ongoing outer cinema that penetrated into the travellers. We were 'consciously' (it was so obvious) in the movement, talking about it, about how our thoughts were constructed differently because of the movement and in the movement, trying to go to sleep, but finding ourselves in an insomnia with a head full of thoughts that wouldn't stop. I started noticing a peculiar thing:⁴ the movement of the train created another level, a *simulation* of the movement, like a parallel reality. Perceiving all the moving forms created a certain feeling of *uncertainty* regarding the environment, and at the same time a peculiar feeling of action, as if we had become part of an action, actors, just by gazing out at the scenery through the screen of the window. It was as if we were interiorizing the *image* of the outer movement, as if our moving minds were being captured and fixed by it, painted on a canvas. An image can be an object. I see a lady walking her dog on a street, and what I see, the perception of this happening, can be an *object*. If I am affected by this perception and sensible to it, it can be something else, a related element, and if not, it is an *object* for me in the sense that it does not, literally, touch me. The fact that the image on the level of *visual* perception is moving, does not mean that it is not still on the level of my inner perception, whether I am aware of this or not.

The most intense moments of anxiety and '*mal-à-l'aise*' were lived through when the train was standing on the border zones, and we in the train were prevented from watching the outer cinema. 'How long do we still have to sit here?' seems an absurd question after having sat in the train for four or five days already. Anyhow, the question arose, and it is an important one because it reveals our problematic relation to the *movement* surrounding us, and to ourselves in action. If our actions are based on inner, still images that are separated from the movement, we are not acting in the actual sense of the word, but reproducing images in the form of 'act-simulations'.

Let's reflect a moment on the question of art, as we are reading and writing in the context of an art review. Gilles Deleuze said in one of his lectures at the Parisian film school Femis⁵, without really clearly explicating the further meaning of his words (and

4 Thanks to a comment made by Bert de Muynck I started elaborating this train of thought.

5 Deleuze, G. (1990) *Avoir une idée en cinéma. A propos du cinéma des Straub-Huillet in Jean-Marie Straub et Danièle Huillet. Hölderlin, Cezanne*. Éditions Antigone, 74.

it is precisely here that the genius of his forms of expression lies), that art is an *act of resistance* connected to counter-information. An act of resistance.

A window could be compared to an art object. It has a shape, we can see the elements that it has been constructed out of, our attention can be drawn to faults or scratches on it. We can see its physical dimensions: the frames, its depth and width. It is an object, but it opens up another world, serving as a passage into a vision. It frames our experience, locating the focal point of perception, with an ever-changing scenery. And it challenges us to see *through* it, just like the movement behind it challenges us to capture it instead of being captured by it.

For Deleuze, art is not an *object* of communication. There are, however, affinities between an artwork and an act of resistance. Art is not counter-information, but counter-information becomes effective when it becomes (and it is so by nature) an *act* of resistance. Deleuze creates a liaison with Malraux's definition of art: "Art is what resists death".⁶ Spinoza, when talking about adequate and inadequate ideas, considers that the passage from the latter to the former happens through the growth of our power to exist and to act, and that the power to exist and act corresponds to the power of being affected.⁷ I would marry counter-information with the power to be affected, and note that the power to be affected necessitates relating to the power of other(s).

So, what is this counter-relating, or *counter-organization*, that could empower us to resist death? A friend of mine was looking, one early morning, at Lake Baikal out of the window of the Trans-Siberian train, and, touched by this early moment passing by, he spontaneously said: 'That is just so amazingly beautiful'. A man standing next to him, seeing the same scenery responded in the same tone: 'Listen, why stay there, why not go further, go beyond that?'

"Perhaps we are trying to avoid (beauty) much more than aspiring to arrive at (it), because the beautiful, as Rilke says, is but the beginning of the horrible in which – in this dawning – we can hardly stand."⁸ Beauty is not a visible form, a 'visibility', but the vertigo of approaching the inevitable death, the death of the private self. Death in this context is like an action space resulting from transgressing the personality's private space. And what Deleuze calls counter-information requires this transgression, because counter-information is not receivable without experiencing death; counter-information is already an act, an art of dying.

When talking about the joyful passions, Spinoza claims that they are always inadequate, because they are generated by an external cause.⁹ This external cause could be anything: a human being, the weather, an emotion, an object. "Therefore we must, to increase the

6 *Ibid.*, 74-75.

7 Hardt, M. (1991) 'L'art de l'organisation: Agencements politiques chez Spinoza', *Futur Antérieur*, 7: 3

8 Ettinger, B. L. (1999) 'Trauma and Beauty', in K.R. Soleim (ed.) *Fatal Women*, 11, and (2000) 'Art as a Transport Station of Trauma', in *Artworking 1985-1999*. Ludion: Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels.

9 Hardt, M. (1991) 'L'art de l'organisation: Agencements politiques chez Spinoza', *Futur Antérieur*, 7: 5.

joyful passions, form an idea of what there is in common with the external body and the one that is ours. For only this idea of what is in common, is adequate.”¹⁰ And, I might add, can resist death. These inadequate passions of Spinoza’s carry in themselves the seeds of the adequate, because they provide the *friction* that is needed for forming an adequate idea or the notion of what is in common, they offer the pre-condition for the perception of what we consider as the exterior. No friction, no fire, this people have known ever since the first spark was struck by a human hand. Resisting death does not mean overcoming it, but living it through in order to see what resists it and can be transformed by it, what has the power of not dying. We are all afraid of death because we rarely have the *confidence* to believe that there is something in us that survives death. This fear of death is a genuinely inadequate idea. So perhaps we are trying to avoid beauty much more than aspiring to arrive at it.

Seeing the jump video in a hotel lobby with a group of people who had been involved in the moment when Luca Guzzetti jumped into art was peculiar. What I saw there, among these people, was a moment of *suspension*. It reminded me of all the ‘essentialities’ of art, of why and for what we have this mode of expression. A moment when you are given the possibility to halt on your own image, so that something can touch you.

In the discussion that this moment generated in room 901 there was a second moment of negative reaction, which was worked through with the intention (conscious or not) of creating *public meaning* for the performance carried out. The arguments against the constellation of the jump revealed us to be at a *common* point of friction: between ourselves and the exterior forms that make us think, reflect, transform, suffer and enjoy, live. An artwork defines itself in every moment of history through the figure of freedom that it incarnates.¹¹ And in that moment, we were questioning the figure of freedom in ourselves.

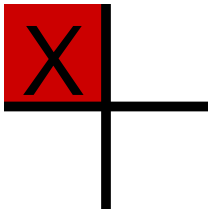
When I was flying back from Beijing to Finland, I saw Lake Baikal as a small, immobile spot on a huge canvas. And I didn’t have the sensation of being in motion, even though my body was flying through the air at a speed far faster than any train could ever reach. And I thought to myself that what I saw was the idea of a lake, since I had the knowledge that the spot was one. Otherwise, there was nothing that would have qualified as lake-like in its appearance, according to my experience. And I thought that the speed making the movement imperceptible to me, also made my *place* disappear. I was there, of course, but looking at the world beneath me as a beautiful far-away idea. And suddenly I had the urge to stop – or to jump.

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10 Deleuze, G. (1981) *Spinoza. Philosophie pratique*. Éditions de Minuit, 262.

11 Mondzain, M.J. (2002) *L’image peut-elle tuer?* Bayard Éditions, 63.



What is Art?

Luca Guzzetti

When I entered *Rubbishmuseum* (2005) by Won Suk Han, I recognised the smell of tobacco, I touched some works of art made out of smoked cigarette butts, I appreciated the general atmosphere, probably because I'm a smoker even if it's almost four years since I stopped smoking (I used to smoke 50 cigarettes and 10 cigars a day).

Then I saw the cigarette butts pool: it was ready for welcoming the visitor, and I dived into it. I dived without any doubt that that was the right thing to do.

Often when you go to a contemporary art exhibition you have the problem to find out whether the piece of art in front of you is supposed to be touched and used, or just watched. It happens that being uncertain, you stand watching something with which you should bodily interact or, seldom, that you touch something which should just be looked at. In that studio in Factory 798, I was sure about the use of the cigarette pool, and I jumped into it.

Bracha and Akseli were as sure as me that that was the way to enjoy the work of art, and so they asked me to dive again, to record the action. We – Bracha, Akseli and me – enacted a performance, and Steffen filmed it and intervened, asking questions and commenting on it.

The immediate public of the performance was the rest of the Moving Mind group. Many of them had strong negative reactions against the performance. In my opinion, this happened because in their eyes we had perpetrated a double violation. The first, very serious violation was against art: With our performance we had physically and thus intellectually violated the sacred sphere of Art (and, possibly, also another sacred sphere, that of Private Property). But there was probably also a second, minor violation: With the jump, the body (of the group) was once again – after a long journey on the Trans-Siberian train – thrown, quite literally, into the rubbish: the dirt, the ashtray.

In a sense, I think that the discussion that followed the performance was pointless, if the question was whether I had the right to dive into the cigarettes pool: Won Suk Han, the Korean artist, who had created the *Rubbishmuseum* said – and showed – to be very happy of what had happend. And that, I think, should be enough.

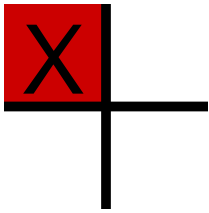
But the discussion on our performance that continued all night long probably served as a sort of collective auto-conscience reflection, about art and about what we had been doing in the precedent week travelling across Europe and Asia.

Although a lot of good art is of course driven by different sentiments and experiences like despair, loneliness, depression, trauma etc., I think that joy, fun, laughter and especially enthusiasm, in its etymological sense of being possessed by a God, are crucial elements in art.

Although the question ‘What is art’ is fundamental for the contemporary conception of art, in my opinion, nor the artists nor the public need necessarily to answer such a question. I think that in the end art has to be practised, loved, lived and enjoyed, not just talked about. “It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental. (Ethics and Aesthetics are one and the same)... What we cannot speak about we must consign to silence” (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*).

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Thank you for the Jump

Won Suk Han

I am first of all very happy that your Trans-Siberian trip ended in Beijing. As an artist (...) I am indeed very cheerfully concerned by performance (...). Mr. Guzzetti's action, his 'jump', has evoked an enormous greatfulness in me. The short but extremely interesting conversation I had with the Cameraman and the Dame on 'will' of the artist in front of his work and on the act of participation was very capturing indeed. I like to let the spectators react in connection to my work. In this sense the act of Mr. Guzzetti is very interesting. I would not have left him alone to jump in the maggots but we would have done some performances on my work together. I would have liked to talk with him more, for I think that him and I, we could become the 'best friends'.

the artist

Won Suk Han

Education

Now Visiting researcher in Tshinghwa University, Beijing, China

04, 2003~ : PhD. Architecture (Gallery & Museum Study), Tokyo University, Japan

09, 2001~09, 2002 : Chelsea College of Art & Design Design for the Environment, United Kingdom

09, 2002: Awarded Master Degree with Research Project 'Rubbish Museum'

09, 2000 ~ 07, 2001: Fashion Business Access at London College of Fashion

Work Experiences

Architectural Work, Now member of UAA Architectuer association, Beijing, China

2004 Exhibition Hall, Kyungin Education University, Inchon, Korea

2004 Art Hall, Ehwa Women's University, Shinchon, Seoul, Korea

2004 Gallery Artside Remodeling, Insa-dong, Seoul, Korea

2002 Oriental Health Clinic, Sangrim, New Malden, London, United Kingdom

2000 Vero Design & Fashion, Myung-dong, Seoul, Korea

Artistic Experiences & Achievements

Now Space ium director

Exhibitions

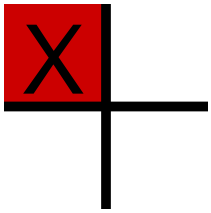
2003 Dreaming Object, Group Exhibition, Gallery Kumho, Seoul, Korea

2003 'The Flower of Evil', Solo exhibition, Art Side Gallery, Korea

2002 Chelsea College of Art & Design show 2002, Manresa Rord, London, UK

2001 Borrowed Space-Time bound, Architecture Foundation, London, UK

2002 Making Children's book collection, A to Z of Rubbish, Friends from a starship, Mr. Collector is coming, A journey of newspaper, Waste reduce and recycling, FAQ of Rubbish (Not Published)



Saudade, To be at Home without a Home

Klaus Harju

With the lack of a given centre of knowledge together with continuously changing codes of conduct, individuals/collectives have ethics superjected upon them in such a manner that we are basically free to organise ourselves according to the frescoes that have been painted above our *milieux* as mementoes of potentialities. The only thing that exists in the centre is the melancholy of a bossa nova¹. There no longer is the singular par excellence creation of the uomo universale in The Sixtine Chapel. (Wo)man has the divine potential to paint her own heavens as ‘God’ is dead. One might refer to Vinicius de Moraes’ words “*tristeza não tem fim felicidade sim*”² but this is not a Greek drama – this is reality as tragically as we live it.

Life in the 21st century is now more than ever before in the history of human suffering labelled by a constant interbeingness – being stuck in the middle – as in an everlasting intermezzo. Our topography is marked by ongoing overlapping projects, transgressions between work and non-work, dissolutions of thoughts of (pre)determined space and time. Although the petit-bourgeoisie, now perhaps more eagerly than before, seeks walls and a roof on top of a home – it is time to understand that the shelter of the fortress started already crumbling in the middle ages with the decoding tendency of capitalism. We wander in the ruins of those walls like vagabonds.

There is no such thing as secure stable walls beyond pataphysics. Being free is far from what most modern people crave for. Definitions of ‘liberal’ societies are closely linked to ordered structures, home, family, factory/office-work, leisure... The above is history in today’s society in its becoming. The rhythm of the contemporary is the *wesen* of the bossa nova. It is joyful and sad in the same moment. It enjoys search but it knows how much suffering that takes. It is joyful in nature in the tragic sense of humanity. It embraces a longing for the unattainable.

Freedom – what the neo-liberalist pretends to strive for – is for the bourgeoisie nothing but ‘another word for nothing left to lose’. That is, if one is part of a commonplace game with a given set of rules. The now, as the social is constantly in motion, to put it boldly, is beyond a neatly served set. On the contrary the game is constantly interrupted

1 The new crack or fissure

2 Sorrow has no end, happiness yes.

by corruption. Players leave the courts as the games begin while the institutions attempt to make-up new regulations that would fit everyone. Absolute freedom is obviously an oxymoron but the idea of a serendipitous longing is to be in principle a transgressive insider/outsider. The state of the contemporary is not being – it is *maybe(ing)*.

Different multiplicities are nevertheless constantly being orchestrated into place because it is so hard to be homeless and feel insecure but this is the beautiful, tragic nature of human being. Depending on our active or reactive nature we have different longings or homesickness', *id est saudades*. *Saudade* is of course of a sad kind as the tune in Heidegger's *sorge*. Life is tragic in nature but that is precisely what is so sublime about it. Without longing there is no movement, no desire for the enterprise to touch.



The Mask
Photo by Bracha L. Ettinger

Being-in-the-world is shaped by our will or desire as we simultaneously care about something. This *saudade* as a will/care is in other forces' service if it is active in nature only in order to maintain the status quo or a predefined code. In a similar vein it is slave's logic if it is reactive for the sake of saying no. On the contrary it is potent and active if it is reactive in order to create and defies given orders. Above all it is also active by hailing the yes of being active implying a hailing of *saudade* itself. The active one is the one who is at home with homelessness – the one who has a 'coração vagabundo' – the heart of a vagabond.

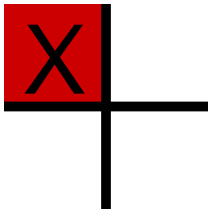
The lives of the citizens of our era are marked by constant reassessment. Institutions of diverging kinds attempt to make account of that what is already on the move. They stamp passports as if they would put travellers on hold although a passport is merely a legitimization to go through doors – contrary to being held captive in abstract ports or camps. Capturing the moving mind is basically impossible. Society today is a multitude as *milieux*, as simultaneous mediums/environments, whose in principle infinite interconnectedness in their inbetweenness is equal to fascination for creation. The *milieux* bring with them processes as durations. Memory works out of the durations like an inverse *saudade* or another form of delonging.

The collective force of this world in becoming is that in it the potential is equal with the real. This is perfectly the case with problematisation, which is the sole virtue of *saudade*. Questioning from the will/care of questioning for the 'yes' is why the maybe or as perhaps lies at the core of *saudade*. When the 'as perhaps' becomes 'as such' or even 'as if', it no longer is of interest, since it can now be orchestrated towards banality. When something is questioned it is both potential and real at the very same time. Neither one precedes each other – whereas in the world of sovereign or commonplace ethics the potential always preconditions reality. Life as problematised is being amidst *milieux* of problems vis-à-vis a world that looks for origins and ends. Once one sees in line with Aristotelian thought that the potentiality of man lies in the abyss of human impotentiality one has to understand that anchors and shelters are beyond the active *saudade*. The enormous mountain one has to climb is not a conventional ass' 'oh no' – the infinite roads-not-taken are a challenging Yes! with a capital letter. The moving mind in this seemingly infinite universe makes people their own creators, artists, virtuosos.

It may feel that the polyphony and complexity of this time of ours appears as chaotic – but that is merely myopia caused by the falling institutions, which are already dragging behind. There is no longer an acropolis (higher place) to go to for answers. The ancient acropolis' are all destroyed. Life in the contemporary is being in the centre in the mother-womb of actuality in the metropolis (centre-mother-place). This is where everything is happening in such a way that the social creates itself like artists with no fear of the endless deserts of ignorance that surround them. This is where life resembles work of art. In the world where one is *at home without a home* one has journeying for the unattainable as the singular roadmap. It is synonymous to life because it wants itself beyond any constraints of the other. And life as an oeuvre makes life resemble creation beyond subjection. Schopenhauer said we need aesthetics to understand metaphysics and it may be closer to the quotidien than we have thought before. The beauty of life lies amidst this tragic *saudade* – the longing that maybe makes Yves Klein paint the goddess of victory blue.

the author

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Art, Memory, Resistance

Bracha L. Ettinger and Akseli Virtanen

Akseli Virtanen: For Félix Guattari an a-signifying semiotic opens meaningful words up to unexpected material intensities. Perhaps we could understand these elements which express the materiality of language and its internal tensions a little better by recalling Deleuze's analysis of a Francis Bacon painting. For modern painters the canvas is not a *tabula rasa*, but a space of visual preconceptions and accepted conventions of representation, which the artist brings to the canvas, and with which she struggles, and which she tries to defeat or escape. For Bacon the moment of transformation begins with a stroke of the brush, a drip of the paint or touching the canvas, which may be unexpected. For example a light touch on wet paint makes a mouth suddenly spread across the face. It creates a moment of chaos, a catastrophe on the visual probabilities, which Bacon calls a 'diagram'. The diagram is really a chaos and a catastrophe, but it is also a seed of organization and rhythm, as Bacon starts to follow the created change, the form, colour or line of this diagram. As if the skin of a rhinoceros were suddenly tightened and it revealed new microscopic, repetitive patterns. Bacon uses this as a way to produce new intensive relations with the painting, which inevitably transform the character he had started to paint. The new form emerges out of this unformed figure. I think of Luca Guzzetti's jump as an unexpected stroke of the brush in our organizational experiment. In fact, that is why his motives are not so relevant. What we then did was to follow the new intensive relations to transform our experimentation, to make it a performative, a work of art.

Bracha L. Ettinger: I agree with what you suggest, and in terms of the copoietic moment there is more to say.¹ The first jump was a reaction to another work of art. Such reactions to a work of art are wonderful, crazy, the dream of every artist. It was not a work done for the gaze, but for the sense of touch, a ground-play for adults, a sandbox. It worked as such for Luca. His reaction was strong. For you and me it was *génial*, yet it didn't make it a work of art. The work of art was born in the repetition that was a sovereign trans-subjective move: a new cocreation. So, the first jump, of which we have no record – it is only in our memory now – is the enigmatic event in reality: this is the beauty of whatever has no first-hand visual record, it is only in our minds now. Then, with the repetition-in-jointness in our coemergence, a transformation is created, the

1 See Bracha L. Ettinger's article 'Copoiesis' in this issue as well as Ettinger's essays in *Poiesis VI*, 2004 and *Poiesis VII*, 2005.

jump embodies and displays sameness within difference or difference in repetition. The first step of the *Jump* as art is at that point of repetition-indifference; when the *Jump* becomes an artwork, we don't have 'the origin', we don't have a single author, and this is symbolic of the fact that in any case there is no one origin to anything that is becoming art in copoiesis, and a virtual matrixial borderlinking is also at play.

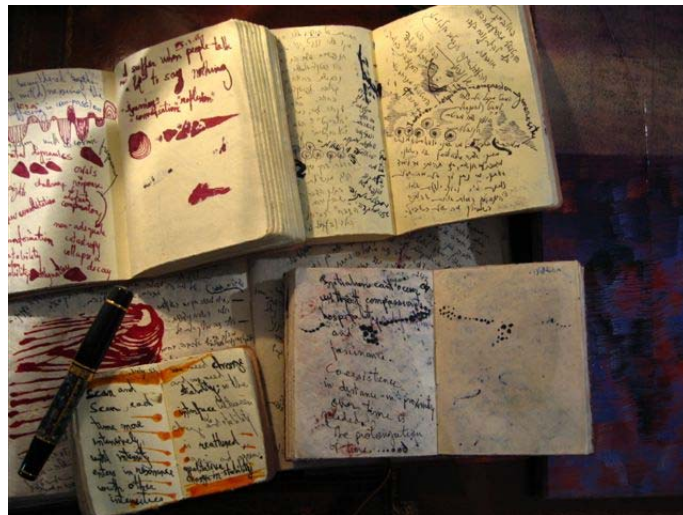


Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

Luca's jump was an unexpected stroke of the brush in our organizational experiment, not only motivated by personal needs, but also by the group's 'original sin': the trauma of the expulsion of a transgressive individual. Contrary to the conceptual declarations concerning the transgression of borderlines, which was the group's conscious wish, the group couldn't deal with transgressive behaviour within its mental shareable borderspaces. The event of the first jump, within these parameters, was about to become a repetition of that original trauma of transgression and expulsion. What we then did, matrixially, in copoiesis, was to embrace and plant the new intensity within the web of our relations, to transform our experience into artistic experimentation, to turn Luca's reactive acting-out toward the work of art of someone else (Won Suk Han) into a sovereign act, to turn the event performative, to turn this event into a subjectivizing time-space of encounter: not transgression – but a performance of transgression, so that the potentially traumatic, unexpected stroke, a stroke that could simply become *jouissance* and trauma, both to Luca and to the group, like previous acts of real transgression of borderlines, would become a transformative matrixial encounter-event and a work of art that allows us to approach anew both aesthetical and ethical questions.

In other words, we can pay attention to five points here: 1) Won Suk Han's pile of cigarettes. 2) The unexpected stroke. 3) The original traumatic event on the level of the group, and the pattern of repetition it was destined to entail, which for us exists from before. 4) The artistic event as a transport-station of trauma: where the potentiality for retraumatizing becomes transformative, while we are moving together to a zone between the aesthetical and the ethical. 5) The matrixial copoiesis whereby a joint trans-subjectivity allows, by compassionate hospitality and a duration of *fascinace*, the transformation of gesture *jouissance* and catastrophe into an artistic encounter-event. And of course the encounter-event went on all night from that inaugural moment until

the morning, because on the level of transformation it travelled to other venues through outbursts of anger, reflexion, discussion, and hopefully some transformation and rethinking and reframing of the whole experience within the larger experience. With this performance as a matrixial event, all the difficulties of the group to let borderlines be crossed to become thresholds and borderspaces be shared were revealed. It is important that you stress that, in the end, Luca's private motivations as such are not the central point here, because on that level it would have remained an idiosyncratic act after which you feel fine, or you feel guilty, or ashamed, or proud, or stupid, etc., and so what? After all, there are many such gestures going on everywhere and all the time and leaving no artistic trace or ethical impact. It could have remained on the level of catastrophe or chaos or jouissance or even 'instinct'. The work of art 'begins' when the artist – here the artist is the matrixial subjectivity composed of the three of us to begin with, but surely also of others who were not there and entered before and after – seizures in the catastrophe a potentiality, and for one reason or another, both ethical and aesthetical, must make of it the point of birth for another sense and another form, whereby the seeds of the catastrophic gesture, arriving from elsewhere, will grow into something else. There are rare moments when copoiesis emerges, and there are millions of moments, or jumps, that 'fail' to make sense and do not make an art event.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

It is an important task to articulate all this as an artistic event on its own terms – not in terms of the original work to which Luca reacted, not in terms of the first stage which would still be considered a reactive acting out, with some ancient reason that wouldn't have an artistic intensity if it had been left on its own – but in terms of the project itself: *Capturing the Moving Mind* as a work of art. I think that we all agree that it is one. For this voyage as a work of art, this moment is a peak moment. The fact that the whole performance was not planned in any way, but became a necessary, unexpected crescendo of a thread of this journey – the journey as an art event, is significant. It ties the beginning and the end, not in a repetitive cycle, but as a section of a spiral of transformation-within-repetition in a matrixial bordertime and borderspace. Luca allowed us to perceive and even materialize the difficulties in opening and fragilizing yourself and generously accepting the other, and in transgressing mental borders. He is therefore my hero.

Akseli: So, three visible levels: we have the work by Won Suk. We then have Luca's first jump. Then we have the performance as our copoiesis: the second and third jump, documented by you and Steffen Böhm. Then we have an invisible level, the whole experience of *Capturing the Moving Mind* as a work of art, of which the performance as a work of art is a part, and into which even Won Suk's work was carried by the first jump and by the performance. As Leena Aholainen says in her essay, the second would have a very different meaning in this context without the third level – and then there is also the moment of watching the video and what it generated: a kind of moment of a stroke on the canvas in which all the forces represented there regroup themselves and create a 'line of flight' from the 'chaotic' lines, as I said at the beginning.²

And you are right, 'its own terms' are of vital importance. Why? Because the *Jump* did not emerge out of nothing. It can't be separated from the potentiality of our lives, through which we may encounter chances, others, and either lose or gain in combinations. None of this happens by itself, but rather creates its own 'problem'. To create our own problems is to climb back to 'the origin without an origin' to touch, not a chaos in which we would disappear, but a movement that gives us consistency. That is why what happened in Factory 798, and on our journey, is something that cannot be reached by spatial successions, historical facts or a succession of presents – first jump, second jump, third jump etc... this is what happened in Helsinki, this in Moscow, this on the train... – just like the arrow in Zeno's paradox is motionless at every point of its trajectory and seems to annul the reality of motion and change. Movement, or copoiesis as you call it, is betrayed every time it is approached as the relation between mere actual elements or as a succession of presents or motionless cuts, or, in other words, when time (duration) is mistaken for space, or memory for states of consciousness that are separate and external to one another.

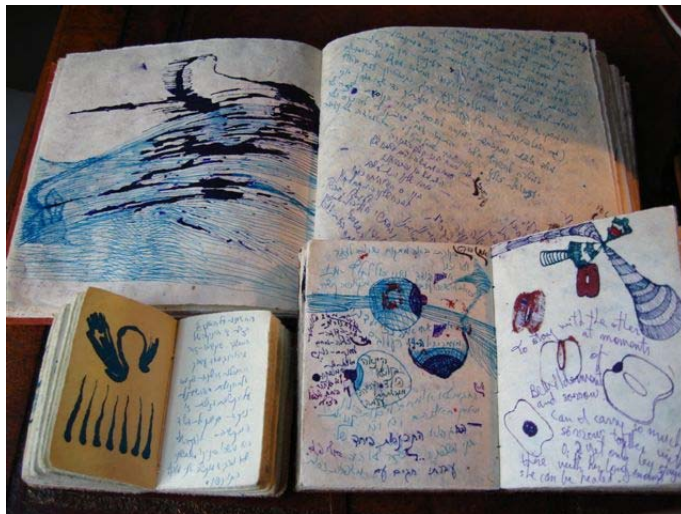
So asking 'Why the *Jump*?' is not a question of causal relations, of causes and effects, of pinpointing reasons. It is rather to acknowledge this 'space of copoiesis' or 'time of mutation' without which we cannot create and become actively, without which our journey also remains a little more than a reactive series of sequential sensations. Without a 'matrixial' metaphysics or memory as the force that keeps what-is-no-longer in that-which-is, without memory as duration, the world would be forced to start over from scratch every instant. Without this fertile succession that contracts before and after all sensations, Luca's sensitivity would have amounted to simple excitation. It is a question of explicating the ability of copoiesis or the structure of change.

Bracha: As I said in Beijing, the artwork processes a matrixial time where a memory of oblivion that can't be otherwise processed finds its space. Artworking is sensing a potential coemergence and co-fading and bringing into being objects or events, processes or encounters that sustain these metramorphoses and further transmit their effect. Art evokes further instances of trans-subjectivity that embrace and produce new partial subjects, and makes almost-impossible new borderlinking available, out of elements and links already partially available in bits. These are going to be transformed in ways that can't be thought of prior to artworking itself, on the way to shifting with-in-to the screen of vision inside the tableau. In art today, trauma and virtual matrixiality

2 See Leena Aholainen's article 'Resisting Death' in this issue.

more than phantasm determines the trajectory of what is, out of art, a forever no-time and no-place. Art links the time of too-early to the time of too-late and plants them in the world's time.

Akseli: So, if copoiesis is the place of mutation or a potential transport station, as you call it, then it must be that which differs, not from something else, but internally from itself, or which, in other words, changes. Change is here not change between two different states of affairs, but it itself takes on a substantial nature without any need to presuppose something else, like a changing object. To say that copoiesis is change, is to say that it differs with itself internally: the difference, the change itself becomes a unity of substance and subject, a *causa sui*, that is, a substance that is the cause of itself. That is why copoiesis does not need anything outside itself, a reason, a cause, a meaning, no kind of external mediation for the support and guarantee of its existence. This makes it absolute. And it does not mean any kind of confusion, chaos or indeterminacy, because the elements and relations are with one another in a completely determined whole, but this whole is just not actualized as such. So we need to avoid the temptation to give the elements of copoiesis an actuality that they don't have, and deny them the reality that they have. Instead, that the *Jump* as a work of art emerged out of nothing, or was reactive, or that existence was merely added to a possibly existing thing, the actualization is the creative taking place of things.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

Bracha: The creative taking place of encounter-events I would say. A sense of danger, mixed up with immense joy, immediately started to build up, and with it, an intensive appeal to transform the moment and give it a new meaning, or a memory as you say, based on the unconscious of the voyage itself. It seems to me that Luca, you and I shared this urge for another meaning. Aesthetical and ethical knowledge could arise only through working it through and acting it up, or climbing up to 'it' and giving some visage to the foreclosed and the virtual. Thus, what we see on the video was born. Now some people became extremely aggressive and also expressed a lot of fear and domineering emotions; the questions asked were: 'How does Luca dare to enter the work of an artist who was not there to give his consent?'; 'Who gave the permission to do it?'; 'Why did Bracha encourage him?'; 'Why did Akseli protect him?'; and 'Why

did we enter the private room and not remain in the public gallery?'; 'Why did Luca mess with the work of art of others?'. Luca was aggressed, then you, then me. Later in the night, watching the video, I was the focus of the attack because it was easier for some people to see Luca as a drunk and therefore as the object and not as the subject of his acts, and me as a theatre-director and not as a subjectivizing vector. I know that Luca was not an object, but the subject of his acts, but for a time-space to become a subjectivizing scene a compassionate hospitality is needed – ours and the artwork's. And this was making us strong and very fragile. Through participating in a larger subjectivity and in allowing us to participate in a larger subjectivity, individual borderlines opened up and copoiesis was working-through.

After the first jump, you became worried and asked me to close the door. You thought, and you were right, that some of the people around will not tolerate Luca's jump, but we made the choice on the spot to transform, together with Luca, this second potentially traumatic event of transgression into an artistic performance, within which even the aggressive reactions will acquire another dimension and be recontextualized. It was quick, no time to think, it was thinking-and-knowing as feeling-and-affecting, it was affective transmission, reattunement and cooperation. I didn't really foresee that the reactions would be so aggressive, because for me Luca's first jump was a reaction of love, and my joining both of you instantly and the *Jump* were about love, not about crossing the private borders of another artist but sharing in the artwork's generosity.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

For me a work of art, any work of art, is a string of generosity by definition. A work of art is a gift. Watching the video, I couldn't believe that this flow of generosity that I was trusting so joyfully could turn into something that everyone is blaming. The decision to transform the performative moment into an artistic performance had ethical and aesthetical dimensions all along, and in it the ethical compassion towards the other and the arising borderlinking in trans-subjectivity and the emergence of matrixial responsibility were crucial. You and I turned our wit(h)nessing into sovereign subjective positions, and Luca turned his reaction into a sovereign acting, in jointness.

Akseli: 'Wit(h)nessing' captures something important in the structure of change.

Bracha: The participation of partial subjects within a trans-subjective matrix is important for the understanding of the meaning of change in copoiesis. The whole event goes together, we all felt concerned and responsible, concerned for Luca and concerned for the event, and responsible for the other and for an event we didn't initiate – that we wit(h)nessed – that's in matrixial terminology. The artist becomes responsible for an event she didn't produce, and by joining in and transforming it into an artistic working-through, the original event of the other or the cosmos, which can be traumatic for the other or for a world, becomes a source of meaning and knowledge within a joint psychic sphere and for whoever can join this sphere immediately or later on. This is, for example, the sense of my painting within traces of images of traumatic war events. This is also at the heart of my works of conversation and notebooks. The link between aesthetical working through and ethical working-through (which is the psychoanalytical healing practice) is at work in the working of art. A strange responsibility it is: to take responsibility for the other in the other, for a world in the world, for the cosmos in the cosmos, and to embrace the virtual matrixiality accessed to you – based on a kind of illogical knowledge of the other in the other and the cosmos in the cosmos. Such was even our shared knowledge in the cigarette work, the knowledge that this work is assuming its own consequences, that it is there for this: for someone else to enter it.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

I somehow felt that I must take on board the responsibility for transforming Luca's jump, as well as the fear and aggressivity that started to build all around Luca, so that this event would not end up in aggression and expulsion like the group's first transgressive event: the drunkenness of K. The rejection of K., and following that his losing his papers, symbolic of the loss of the self and the losing one's face by public rejection, was the group's first trauma, its unconscious primal sin. A transgressive behaviour, the crossing of private borderlines, in a group that is there to work on the issue of crossing borders, became a reason for exclusion and expulsion. I view this event as a traumatic founding event that transformed anonymous individuals into a group with an already traumatic history: an unconscious founding event of the group as a group, that followed the conscious establishing of the voyage of a group as a work of art. As the experience went on, few projects became non-defensive parts of the co-emergent evolvment itself: for me the most important in these terms was the

Mobicasting work (Adam Hyde, Netta Norro and Sophea Lerner), which was transformative as they mixed together ideas and visions evolving in the group, and Helen Grace's work, who was filming the group itself and putting together thoughts coming from different members, putting also visions and ideas together, and, personally and surely somehow partially and privately my own notebooks work, asking and taking notes and signing all the time what people thought art is – working through these ideas to raise the consciousness and bring out more ideas together. So, these and many other ongoing encounter-eventings took place in the moving and with the moving and for the moving. There were surely other influencing threads, Brett Neilson's and Ned Rossiter's ongoing reflections for example, but I am not able to articulate anything about all the different significant interventions for the moment.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

But the first trauma of the group, its primal sin, was doomed to be repeated. There is an interesting photo in the set, where we are with Luca arriving at the hotel in Moscow, and if you look carefully, K. is there with a mask on his face. The second transgressive event could also have become a simple repetition of a similar traumatic moment, with transgression plus fear, aggression and finally some kind or another of silencing and exclusion. This time, the crossing and transgression was of spaces. The group couldn't tolerate the blurring of the borders between a private space and a public space, as formulated by some. A transgressive borderspace was forbidden. To transform the jump from an event that arouses fear, shame, guilt and aggression, and has a private intrapsychic meaning, into a transformative event with inter-subjective and trans-subjective meaning, the *Jump* as materialization of a virtual matrixial unconscious net, reattunement was needed, but also an ethical acting-decision and aesthetical working-through: to turn the impulsive and compulsive reaction from a repetition and reaction into a subjectivizing event and a work of art with its own parameters with what looks at first sight like a stage or scene, stage-directors, an act, a few acts, an actor, a few actors, a photographer, and also a video documentalist, all an event supposedly needs in order to be taken out from within the limits of the individuals involved and be turned into an *oeuvre*. But not even all these elements necessarily make a work *work*. When I started to take photos, asking Luca to jump again, to stay there longer, to jump again, etc., when you started to rearrange the place as a stage, this was almost an instant drive that

followed the instant drive of Luca. But it took the joint dancing of few bodypsiches, a copoiesis like that of a musical dance, connecting Luca, you, myself, and Steffen, who joined in suddenly at the end of the second jump, to transform what had already taken place inside someone's (Luca's) mind and was acted out, into an artistic working-through with the second and third repetitions as a joint event that needed the bodypsiches of each participant to be in unconscious attunement with one another and to create a shared psychic *camera obscura* with poietic and healing potentialities. This is coemergence, copoiesis and cofading. It transformed Luca's act into a matrixial encounter-event that became *Jump*. And it worked. From that moment on, even the fear and the aggression became a part of the artistic performance. And later on, with Leena and others, the long discussion into the night about the meaning of art, of ethics, what is ethical, what is a work of art, what is private and what is public, modernism, postmodernism, etc, based on the video shots taken by Steffen – and involving people who were not physically there, but who viewed the performance in the video – was already the reaction not to the jump but to the video which is a part of *Jump*. The work of art *Jump* in question was not the basin of smoked cigarettes, and not the first jump that was still a personal reaction, but the copoietic videoed duration itself. What matters is the event, the repetition of the event as performance art, and the repetition of the performance as performance art, the video, and all that followed from that moment on – the discussion, the conversation.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

For me the fact that suddenly Steffen was there taking a video of the event was a part of the matrixial unconscious web that was woven slowly during the voyage itself and attracted us all to articulate this web as an artistic event, unknowingly. I didn't know that he was there and filming the second and third jump until later in the hotel. He did, however, work hard; insist on interviews after the *Jump* and before the night-long discussion. Steffen played an important role in the first trauma and expulsion. It is therefore no wonder to me that unknowingly he was drawn to this particular copoiesis and became a part of it as a wit(h)ness to it and the producer of the filmed traces of the whole performance. He was surely working-through and perhaps understanding for the first time the meaning of his active part in the production of the first trauma. He was perhaps working towards understanding and reparation, and was wit(h)nessing with us,

something that the ethical side of this performance as a work of art was offering. The fact that you two could, immediately after the performance, discuss the expulsion of K., as seen on *Video 2*³, points to this as one of the lines of flight.

Akseli: A *Crane Dance*, we refer to its necessity as a way out of the labyrinth in which there are no visible landmarks or set cardinal points also in the introduction to the project as a whole.⁴

I also think that responsibility is essential here, not responsibility for the other, or for K.'s behaviour, but for intuition, joy and its expansion. Responsibility to escape destiny, to take our destiny into our own hands. I also think that the key to reaction and action is here, which is also to say that let's be careful about the 'cause' of what happened: I am sure that the *Jump* overstepped its own time, it was untimely, *unzeitgemäß*, in the sense that Nietzsche talks about it: it didn't emerge out of history, the already-happened, which cannot be affected and is outside the human being. This untimeliness is necessary for creation. For to create we need to step outside of our own time, out of the demands and requirements of society, out of the necessity to communicate and respond to the demands of the age. This is also the way I understand the potential nature of *copoiesis*: it may produce outcomes or effects in the state of things, but it is never reducible to its outcomes, products or effects. It has no beginning or end; it is without a cause and a subject. The one who does and what is done, the active and the passive, cannot be distinguished at that level, it does not have any particular content, cause or task; it can't be divided, partitioned or represented. It is there from where the *Jump* as a work of art originated. And it was with the *Jump* that a sudden possibility to climb back there emerged, a possibility to jump beyond our limits. And here I would also like to refer what you said in Novosibirsk about the uncertainty of this 'transport'.⁵ That is why I don't think we can do *Jumps* by listening to others, which is precisely how the preconditional, the preorganized 'facts' and communicative requirements work on us. The feelings of sorrow and disappointment originate in our inability to use our powers, they express submission and powerlessness. Joy is the opposite of sorrow. If sorrow is the reduction of our activity and capacity, and originates from withholding powers, from eyeballing the 'cause' or the 'subject', then joy is always the multiplication of our capacity and an extension of our powers by addition. Joy does not focus or contract powers, but expands them. There is no investment in joy; it does not proceed through 'the other'. Luca's jump was joyous directly, we were joyful directly. Joy does not reduce or weaken our power. When we encounter something that is right for us, we link to it, combine with it and devour it. What we were before fuses with what we have encountered and becomes part of a greater and more extensive subjectivity.

3 See Video 2 by Steffen Böhm at <http://www.ephemeraweb.org/conference/framework/jump.htm>

4 See the Introduction to this issue.

5 "The place of art is for me the transport-station of trauma. A transport-station that more than a place is rather a space that allows for certain occasions for occurrence and for encounter that will become the realization of what I call borderlinking and borderspacing in a matrixial trans-subjective space by way of experiencing with an object or process of creation." Ettinger L., B. (2000) *Artworking 1985-1999*. Ghent: Ludion.

Bracha: In *Video 8* and *Video 9*⁶ I explain how one knows in the other, indeed something very different from communicating or proceeding through the other or through the self. Joy was there, I knew it *in* you and *in* Luca, even though you weren't maybe able to feel it on the spot because other vectors, necessary for the event, were known in a stronger way by you. I would therefore say: responsibility for *jouissance* and for trauma as well. All these vectors were there, carried from one another and from elsewhere and nowhere, and creating the transformation into an art-event. Joy was there, but if it weren't for that particular matrixial web it wouldn't have appeared like that on the video. This is freedom, as Luca felt and expressed it, and it involved what I call co-response-ability. Subjects, objects, actors, etc., should be viewed, from this perspective, as the redispersion of trans-subjectivity in and by different partial subjects.

Here is what I wrote in my notebook on the 7th of September, before all this happened: 'The machine of social communication eats it all. Compassion is the only resistance to the power-manipulation machines. Compassion is the ethical opening, and also the possible response. You can't command it. You can't falsify it. But you can work yourself through to become more and more compassionate in attitude as well as by the aesthetical practice of fascinance with others (toward the other). The psychological practice is a compassionate practice, and the painting process is a practice of compassionate fascinance with moments of horror and bewilderment of other sister human beings.'



Bracha L. Ettinger, Notebooks. 2002-2005. © B. L. E.

This is one of the points: in the matrixial sphere on the aesthetical and ethical level it is possible to take responsibility for the other in differentiation-in-jointness, by which the other is never total Other. I felt an appeal to take responsibility for the first 'sin' and for what Luca is doing, and by this, in compassion towards the two transgressors, you are transported to a sphere where reasons and communication don't matter, where the already transforming potentiality works to create-while-transforming an encounter-event. Or, like what you see in the video, you are starting to discuss with Steffen about K., which is a beautiful moment, entirely nuanced, mellow, delicate, unfinished, and of

6 See the videos by Steffen Böhm at <http://www.ephemeraweb.org/conference/framework/jump.htm>

course very relevant somehow, with no particular reason, no beginning, no end. It somehow goes together with my assumption that the trauma was in the air or within the web. Or like you defended Luca, saying that he always liked cigarettes, and so on..., I mean you were there and really supporting Luca and explaining that he liked to smoke, and this enabled Luca to do many things, not because this was a 'true reason'; this – and not the fact that somebody said 'jump!'. Luca was also letting himself do it again because by the second and third takes he was already compassionately held by our affective *fascinace*, and he was therefore already a part of copoiesis and not anymore in the realms of reaction or repetition. This is why our work of art, and his performing as a part of a work of art started after the first reaction. So, when one starts thinking about irrelevant questions like 'authorship' one misses the point of coemergence, though the difference between individuals on other levels (like the self-identity level) is not denied and choice is not erased. Freedom begins there. Co-emergence is not easy to admit, it means the giving up of all kinds of powers (of limits, boundaries, of self), and it therefore usually remains invisible. Or it is ignored and foreclosed. What is so beautiful in the *Jump* is that the borders between any definition and who's contributing what, and why, are entirely blurred. There was never one reason anyway, metramorphosis was working its borderlinking within and between webs – this is one of the points. The point of copoiesis as the emergence of 'the jump as a performance' is getting more and more clear, no?

Akseli: Yes, I think so too. An organization without ends and subjects, that is one of the names we also gave to *Capturing the Moving Minds*.

To tie again the beginning and the end, I was thinking about the 'original sin': it is maybe difficult, and not fair, to reduce it all to that and for everybody. Even if at the Moscow railway station I too easily believed that it was a consensus opinion of all. Maybe we could say that the original trauma also included our worry, insecurity, anxiety and fear of not understanding the experiment, being afraid of being just a tourist, not getting something concrete out of it, not being able to handle it, to give up one's defences and to open oneself to creation. So even more, and especially in terms of *Capturing the Moving Mind* as a whole, as a work of art, or as an act of resistance, we can move beyond the level of individual body-psyches and that of our particular group. We have to understand that there is more at stake here than just personal inabilities (like the enormous distance between the intellectual desire to cross borders and the emotional incapacity to stand the crossing of borderlines) or private transgressions or self-developments (or their absence).

I mean that today the new controls, or what we have called 'power over life of the mind', operate no longer so much with our actual actions in space, but with the *possibilities* of our thinking and acting, with the possibilities of our entire time of life.⁷ Our potentiality, which is without any function and always open to change, is subject to pressures that try to subordinate it to the already structured tasks and aims of a particular historical period (like to economic valorization). Thus the question of copoiesis or good life – a life in which our ways and acts of living are never simply facts, but always and above all about creating our own problems, about the possibilities

7 See Akseli Virtanen and Jussi Vähämäki's article 'Structure of Change' in this issue.

of life – interferes directly with the core of this enterprise. Either we submit to ‘creation’ within already set questions and limits, and allow our lives to be ‘put to work’; or we create our own problems, our own forms of life. So what I am trying to say is that the *Jump* and how you understand art and this voyage as a work of art, and the critique of capitalism, must today be seen as the same thing. The ethical has become directly economical and political, we have moved from being between aesthetics and ethics to being between aesthetics and politics. What is at stake is not just this or that historical fact, or this or that injustice, but the ability and structure of copoiesis as such.

Bracha: For me, art will always escape organization, and the vibrating strings between ethics and aesthetics will always escape the political, while forming and informing it. The best photo as a still for me is Luca with a dirty face and his hands up. Especially in the context of ‘war’ and ‘resistance’, as you said already at the beginning of the conference. Having your hands up, on the other hand, being dirty and ambiguous, is a very strong image and in a sense more enigmatic, more problematic, and for all of us it is perhaps an important ambiguous image. It takes us further away from the question of tobacco, which is not important, and it puts the emphasis on the journey, the trip, the peoples, the issues, and takes us to the question of the group journey as performance, what is art, what is surrendering, what is freedom and how self-relinquishment is connected to freedom and resistance – and what is courage.

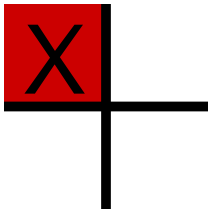
Language editing by Mike Garner.

**the artist &
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Copoiesis

Bracha L. Ettinger

I have named matrixial borderspace the psychic sphere which is trans-subjective on a sub-subjective partial level. A mental matrixial encounter-event transgresses individual psychic boundaries even if and when its awareness arises in the field of the separate individual subject, and it evades communication even if and when it operates inside intersubjective relational field. Subjectivity here is a transgressive encounter between 'I' (as partial-subject) and uncognized yet intimate 'non-I' (as partial-subject or partial-object). Co-poietic transformational potentiality evolves along aesthetic and ethical unconscious paths: strings and threads, and produces a particular kind of knowledge. Unconscious transmission and reattunement as well as resonant copoietic knowledge don't depend on verbal communication, intentional organization or inter-subjective relationships. Aesthetical and ethical processes are impregnated by matrixial copoiesis. In aesthetical working-through the artist transforms time and space of an encounter-event into matrixial screen and gaze, and offers the other via com-passionate hospitality an occasion for fascination.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Eurydice, n. 36.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2001. © B. L. E.

'I' meets a 'non-I,' 'I' meets another 'non-I.' This 'non-I' meets another 'I.' Each encounter creates its own psychic resonance field, and each resonance field is with and in other fields of resonance. Thus, each matrixial cluster is a web of meeting of one with-in the other, where each one – and each other – belongs to several such clusters. The matrixial web is thus the body-psyche-time-space of the intimate even though it is a web of several, and it is from the onset transgressive. Transgressive and intimate – even when the encounter is between, with, and in two subjects, the encounter is not symbiotic. Transgressive and intimate – even if the encounter is between three subjects, inside this sphere triangulation is not Oedipalizing. Com-passionate matrixial empathy is not oedipalizing, yet difference is being swerved there already. Individuation and differentiation do not wait the third subject. The third in the matrix is not the one who will introduce difference inside a supposed symbiosis and thus bring about the first differentiating instances, but is the one who will also co-emerge with-in a matrixial web as an I or a non-I. Uncognizing yet knowing one another on a partial level – by erotic borderlinking, by affective, empathic, intuitive and even quasi-telepathic knowledge and by erotic investment and sensual and perceptive sensitivities, as well as by way of the sharing in fields of resonance and influence, and in one another's pulsative intensities – sharing in terms of wavelength, frequencies and vibrations not perceivable by the senses but transmissible and translateable by the mind, thus sharing via virtual, traumatic and phantasmatic strings to create coeventings or encounter-events – I and non-I are cross-printing psychic traces in one another and continuously transform their shareable threads and sphere. While continually inspiring one another, I and non-I create a singular shared trans-subjectivity where even traces of each one's earlier or exterior trans-subjective co-emergences, co-eventings and cofading with other non-I(s) influence the newly arising time-space. The sharing and exchange of traces of mutually subjectivizing agencies that dwell in different levels and frequencies create a mutating co-poietic net inside a singular trans-subjective web. The interlacing copoietic strings and threads create the ever-transforming transgressive metamorphic borderlinks in a relatively stable yet fluid jointness in severality.

In the opening to an unconscious matrixial event-encounter, the artist can't not-share with an-other, she can't not witness the other. The I and non-I are wit(h)nessing one another, and by that they become partialised, vulnerable and fragilised. The artist doesn't build a defense against this fragility but freely embraces it. Transmissibility and transformative potentialities "wake up" to vibrate the virtual and real strings. Sensitivities are reattuned, unconscious imprints cross-inspire, traces are reaching one another beyond each one's personal boundaries. Inspiring psychic strings covibrate and traces are stored in shareable threads. The matrixial psychic space concerns shareability and severality that evade the whole subject in self-identity, endless multiplicity, collective community and organized society. The matrixial borderspace is drawn and is further drawing virtual and real traumatic and phantasmatic as well as imaginary and symbolic transgressive psychic contacts by inhabitation and erotic co-tuning in the same resonance field; vibrating space or elusive time of which each participant becomes partial by its own reattunement and attention. Affective vibrations that tremble with virtual strings, body-psyche-space-time cross-imprints and uncognized memory traces accumulated in several threads transform each partial-subject into some kind of mental continuity of the psyche of another partial-subject. Each psyche is a continuity of the psyche of the other in the matrixial borderspace. We thus metabolize mental imprints

and traces for one another in each matrixial web whose psychic grains, virtual and affective strings and unconscious threads participate in other matrixial webs and transform them by borderlinking in metramorphosis.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Matrix - Family Album, n.8.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2003-2005. © B. L. E.

Matrixial transformation is a co-transformation-in-difference. Matrix that signifies womb and indicates femaleness, prenatality and pregnancy supplies the symbol and an image by which we can identify and recognize the moves of the transgressive and partial trans-subjectivity behind or beyond the moves of the differentiated subject and draw the activity of a specific Eros with its aesthetical and ethical consequences. I have named 'metramorphosis' the ensemble of joint eventing of transmission and reattunement in encounters where I and non-I coemerge, co-change and co-fade in borderlinking to each other with-in virtual and real strings. Copoiesis is the aesthetical and ethical creative potentiality of borderlinking and of metramorphic weaving. The psychic cross-imprinting of events and the exchange of traces of mutually (but not symmetrically) subjectivizing agencies, occurring via/in a shared psychic borderspace where two or several becoming-subjectivities meet and borderlink by strings and through weaving of threads, and create singular trans-subjective webs of copoiesis composed of and by transformations along psychic strings stretched between the two or several participants of each encounter-event. Thus, a matrixial borderspace is a mutating copoietic net where co-creativity might occur.

A matrixial co-emergence has a healing power, but because of the transgression of individual boundaries that it initiates and entails, and because of the self-relinquishment and fragilization it calls forward, it is also potentially traumatizing. Therefore, to

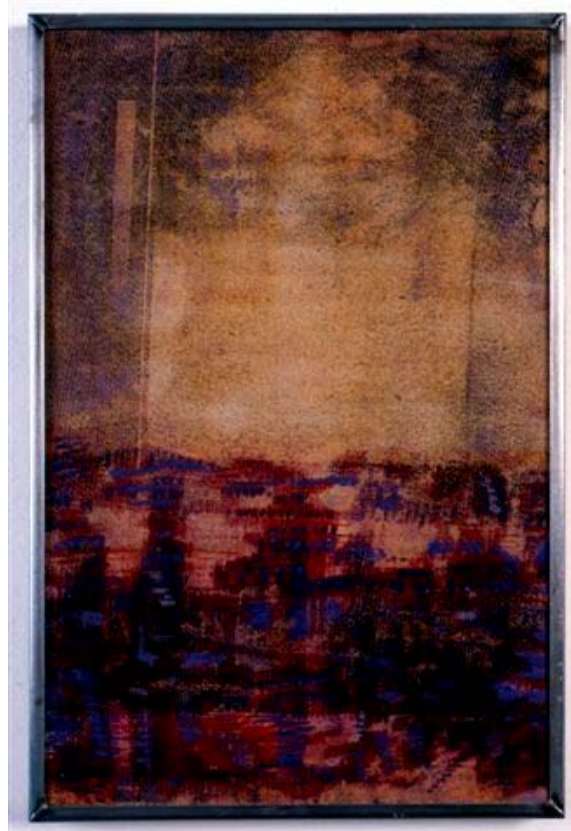
become artistic or generate healing, the aesthetical transgression of individual borderlines (that occurs in any case with or without our awareness or intention) calls for the awakening of a specific ethical attention and erotic extension: an artistic generosity. In art, the aesthetical working-through bends towards the ethical with matrixial response-ability in wit(h)nessing; in psychoanalysis the ethical working-through that entails the generosity expressed by compassionate hospitality and by effects and affects of *fascinace* bends toward the aesthetical realm.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Matrix - Family Album, n.3.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2001. © B. L. E.

Matrixial trans-subjectivity hosts moments of coemergence-in-differentiation that weave their own time zone – a matrixial bordertime. Composite partial subjectivities produce, share and transmit assembled, hybrid and diffracted psychic objects and links, as well as their mental traces, via originary psychic conductible borderlinks. As strings, the erotic antennae of the psyche disperse different aspects: links, waves, frequencies and intensities, affects, together with their threads composed of imprints and memory-traces of jouissance and of traumatic events shared or transmitted between me and the stranger who thus unknowingly becomes ‘my’ intimate anonymous partner. New traces are inscribed along psychic matrixial paths and threads and more strings are vibrating. This very psychic coemergence also depends upon the capacity and quality of witnessing of the non-I in jointness: on that particular quality I have named wit(h)nessing, witnessing while sharing in the distribution and reabsorption of traces of

the event and participating in trans-subjective transmission via unconscious strings and threads.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Matrix - Family Album, n.5.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2001. © B. L. E.

A matrixial borderlinking is transformational. I have called the aesthetical duration of affective and effective participation within a transformational subjectivizing potentiality of a matrixial link (or link *a*) be it gaze, voice, touch, movement, breath, gaze-and-touching, move-and-breathing, etc.: fascinancy. Fascinancy is an aesthetic affect that operates in the prolongation and delaying of the time of encounter-event. It allows a working-through of matrixial differentiating-in-jointness and copoiesis. Fascinancy can take place only if borderlinking with-in a real virtual, traumatic or phantasmatic encounter-event meets with compassionate hospitality arriving from the other (as m/Other). It is the ripening of a transformational potentiality in a matrixial prolongation of a time of coemergence with and in a sensitive image, sound, touch, move, breath, etc. Fascinancy might turn into what Lacan describes as fascinum when castration, separation, weaning, split or rejection abruptly intervene. Working through traces of the Other in me is also an aesthetical gesture where compassionate hospitality and generosity meets with fascinancy. Co-poietic differentiation-in-coemergence is possible only with-in compassionate hospitality and with fascinancy. Artworking, like psychoanalytical healing of long duration, is a compassionate encounter-event of prolonged generosity. The artist who is working through the cross-inscribed traces and is worked through by virtual, phantasmatic or traumatic real strings practices her art –

art that is an aesthetic-in-action – as a healing, healing that is an ethics-in-action. Such is the co-response-ability of artworking and of healing in copoiesis.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Matrix - Family Album, n.6.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2003-2004. © B. L. E.

By aesthetical and ethical joining-in-differentiating and working-through, a spiritual knowledge of the Other and the Cosmos is born and revealed. Artworking and art-works create such knowledge. It is reached by borderlinking one's own soul-psyche to the breath of the psyche of the other and to the spirit of the Cosmos. In each particular copoiesis with the Other or with the Cosmos, being-with and being-in is 'self'-differentiation and individuation within transgressive reattunement, which creates spiralic metamorphic vectors. Freeing the potentiality of an other while being transformed by it too is a kind of love – an ethical co-birthing in beauty. I and non-I share co-response-ability when a non-I co-responds in compassionate hospitality to an I who bathes in this resonant atmosphere by way of fascinace. In the aesthetical practice which is artworking, an ethical working-through occurs as long as subjective emergence is woven within a trans-subjective pulsative borderspace. This openness between an I in fascinace and a m/Othernal compassionate agency paves the way toward openness to the Cosmos. By this openness the psychic transforms the virtual. If rejection occupies the space of such a fragile openness, devastating unconscious effects necessarily occur.

Metamorphic processes remap the traces of the event by specific routes of passability and transmissibility, transitivity, conductivity, and transference between various psychic

strata of different individuals. The matrixial exposure of the becoming-m/Other is an openness to the uncognized world and to unknown but intimate others by a compassionate Eros that is not a sexual libido in the usual sense. Compassionate Eros and sexual libido are different psychic instances. They might intermix, but they nurture different kinds of love. Where sexual libido takes the lead, Thanatos – death drive – is there too, never too far. In that case, the potentiality for compassionate erotic hospitality is often deformed. By compassionate Eros a non-aggressive thanatos is revealed. Not death, but the *non-life* as *the not yet emerged*, the *not yet becoming alive*, is accessed and intended.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Matrix - Family Album, n.7.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2003-2005. © B. L. E.

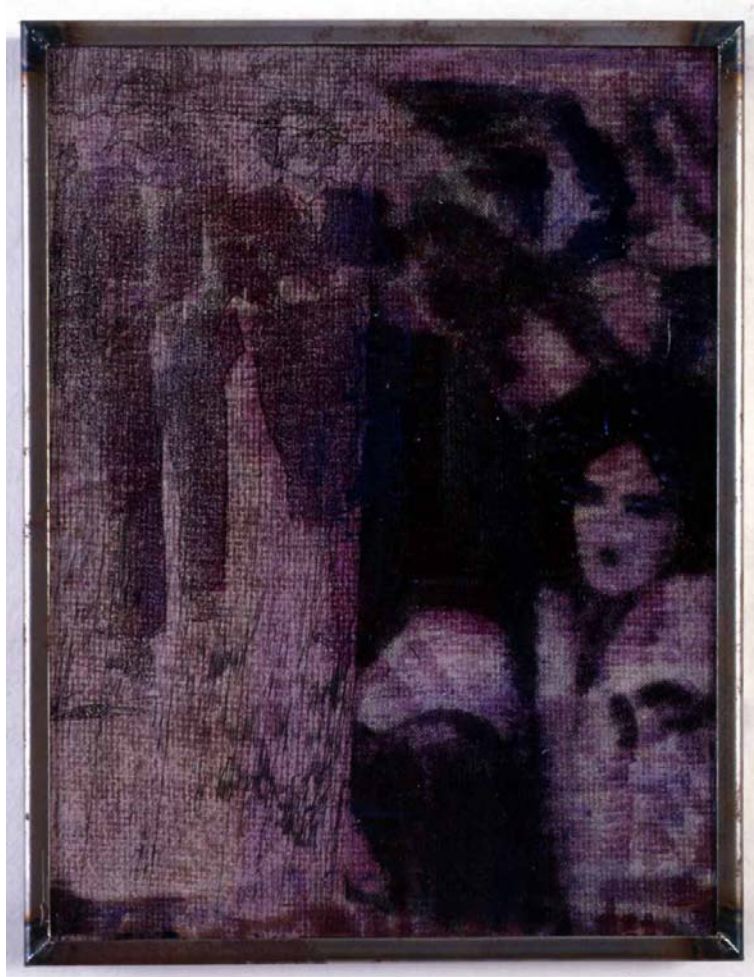
The sense aroused by minimal reattunement in distance-in-proximity within the same resonance camera obscura is transmitted behind words and beyond symbolic-phallic comprehension, and we are reminded of Freud's remark regarding direct "psychical transference" of ideas: "One is led to a suspicion that this is the original, archaic method of communication between individuals and that in the course of phylogenetic evolution it has been replaced by the better method of giving information with the help of signals which are picked up by the sense organs. But the old method might have persisted in the background" (1933, p. 55). Therefore, in the attempt to open up the foreclosure of a matrixial borderspace, an artist-healer must take the responsibility to become a concerned and compassionate open channel for both I and non-I. Traces from a memory of oblivion of such a field are impossible for access outside deep human compassionate connectivity which is love. Without wit(h)nessing, the openness to this unconscious level becomes very painful – a dangerous event. There is always a danger of re-opening

a painful, frozen thread and adding a traumatic weight to it instead of transforming it in a life-enhancing direction. This is where artworking and healing step forward. In co-poietic moments of exposure towards the other, the artist as healer transforms the traumatic event into a subjectivizing potentiality.

The matrixial gaze is a vacillating trace of the nearly-missed borderlinking of an I with a non-I. A link is ebbing and flowing with each coemergence and cofading. The matrixial gaze is a touching gaze, it is never purely visual, and it enters and alters the screen of vision which by definition is im-pure and inseparable from other unconscious dimensions of the psyche, informed by different sources of sensibilities, and mainly, connected to and affected by the unconscious of the Other and the consciousness of the Cosmos. The artist in the matrixial dimension is wit(h)ness in com-passionate hospitality. The viewer, and this partially includes the artist in her unconscious viewer position is a wit(h)ness in fascinace. The viewer will embrace while transforming traces of the event and will continue to weave metramorphic borderlinks to others, present and archaic, cognized and uncognized appealing from the future, from the past or from an unrealized virtuality. The viewer is challenged by the artwork to join a specific anonymous intimacy. The potential embracing of the memory of oblivion can't be 'just' aesthetic. Someone must join in. With the idea of wit(h)nessing in encounter the scope of aesthetics itself shifts. By borderlinking, the artist can bear wit(h)ness and articulate sub-knowledge of/from the other. The matrixial gaze exposes instances of co-birthing and co-fading in which some excess that surpasses the artist as subject is suddenly distinguished out. What is captured and is given form to at the end of such a trajectory is what was waiting to be born and to receive almost-impossible articulation, in a body-psyche-time-space of suspension-anticipation that you can only 'view' or glimpse by joining in.

Artworking is sensing a potential co-emergence and co-fading and bringing into being objects or events, processes or encounters that sustain these metramorphoses and further transmit their effect. Art evokes further instances of trans-subjectivity that embrace and produce new partial subjects, and makes almost-impossible new borderlinking available, out of elements and links already partially available in bits. These are going to be transformed in ways that can't be thought of prior to artworking itself, on the way to shifting with-in-to the screen of vision inside the tableau. In art today, trauma more than phantasm determines the trajectory of what is, out of art, a forever no-time and no-place. Art links the time of too-early to the time of too-late and plants them in the world's time. Metramorphosing traumatic Thing-encounter and Thing-event means extracting times of too-early and too-late out of virtuality or indifference on-to with-in-visibility with-in-difference, when new affects wake up virtual or archaic ones and conjointly offer a wit(h)nessed Thing its first apparition. The contemporary effect of beauty meets the effect of the sublime when it indicates for us, not only the place of relationships to one's own trauma, but also the rapport of the I to the trauma of unknown others and the real of an encounter with a virtual string, thus replanting transcendence with-in the borderline and transforming it into a threshold. The artworking and healing might fragment an unconscious path and melt a psychic thread into a vibrating string. The artwork processes a matrixial time-space. Thus, a memory of oblivion that can't be otherwise processed and a virtual string that can't be otherwise touched are realized in a time-space. From art and back into the world, aesthetical but

also ethical is the transform-ability of the no-time and no-place of archaic encounter in a new transferential co-emergence and co-fading in copoiesis.



Bracha L. Ettinger, Eurydice, n. 36.
Oil and mixed media on canvas. 2001. © B. L. E.

I would like to end with a quote from my essay 'Art as the Transport-Station of Trauma' (2000): The place of art is for me the transport-station of trauma. A transport-station that more than a place is rather a space that allows for certain occasions for occurrence and for encounter that will become the realization of what I call *borderlinking and borderspacing in a matrixial trans-subjective space* by way of experiencing with an object or process of creation. The transport is expected in this station, and it is possible, but the transport-station does not promise that passage of remnants of trauma will actually take place in it; it only supplies the space for this occasion. The passage is expected but uncertain, the transport does not happen in each encounter and for every gazing subject. The matrixial trans-subjective field is a field in whose scope there is no point to speak neither of such certainty nor of absolute contingency. Likewise, it is pointless to evoke there the whole subject, a definite hindrance of encounter, a neat split between subject and object, a total evacuating of the subject, its death or its shattering into endless particles. In this psychic field, a gathering of several of its potential intended correspondents is possible – of several – and not of all of them, and not at just

any moment, in their actualization as partial objects and partial subjects. Beauty that I find in contemporary art-works that interest me, whose source is the trauma and to which it also returns and appeals, is not the beauty as 'private' or as that upon which a consensus of taste can be reached, but is a kind of encounter that perhaps we are trying to avoid much more than aspiring to arrive at...

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the artist & author

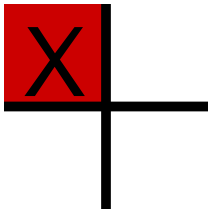
Bracha L. Ettinger is an artist, psychoanalyst and feminist theorist. She is a professor of psychoanalysis and aesthetics at the University of Leeds and a visiting lecturer at Bezalel Art Academy, Jerusalem. Her latest book, *The Matrixial Borderspace*, is in print with University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

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Exhibitions (Selection)

2006 Breathing/Suffocation. The Royal Museum, Antwerp
2003 Solo Exhibition. Gerwood Gallery, Oxford University
2003 Solo Exhibition. La librairie, Les Abattoirs, Toulouse
2003 Aletheia. The Art Museum, Gothenburg

- 2002 Solo Exhibition. Maison de France. Hebrew University, Jerusalem
2001 Solo Exhibition. Drawing Center, N.Y.
2000 Solo Exhibition. Le Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles
2000 Now Permanent exhibition, at: Freud's Dream Museum, St. Petersburg
1999 Interarchive. Kunstraum der Universität Lüneburg
1999 La Mémoire. Villa Medici, Rome
1999 Voices from Here and There. Israel Museum, Jerusalem
1998 Eurydice. Solo Exhibition. Cinemateque, Bergen
1998 Artists in Israeli Art (The Ninties). Haifa Museum
1997 Suspension. Image and text in: J. Crandall's project for the Documenta X, Kassel
1997 Kabinet. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
1997 Body. Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
1997 Inside the Visible. Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
1997 Oh Mama. Museum for Israeli Art, Ramat-Gan
1996-7 Face à l'Histoire. Centre G. Pompidou, Paris
1996 Duo Exhibition: Bracha L. Ettinger and 'Africa'. Memory and Amnesia. Pori Art Museum
1996 Inside the Visible. ICA, Boston; National Museum for Women, Washington; Whitechapel, London
1995 Solo Exhibition. Israel Museum, Jerusalem.
1994 Solo Exhibition. Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery, Leeds.
1994 Solo Exhibition. Kanaal Art Fondation, Béguinage, Kortrijk, Belgium.
1993 Solo Exhibition. The Museum Of Modern Art, Oxford.
1993 Solo Exhibition. The Russian Museum of Ethnography, Saint-Petersburg.
1992 Solo Exhibition. Le Nouveau Musée, Villeurbanne.
1992 Routes of Wandering. The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.
1991 Israeli Art Now. Tel Aviv Museum of Art.
1990 Solo Exhibition. Goethe Institute, Paris.
1990 Feminine Presence. Tel-Aviv Museum of Art.
1988 Solo Exhibition. Musée des Beaux-Arts et de la Dentelle, Calais.



Origins of Art, or, The Un-timely Jump

Steffen Böhm

One possible translation of 'origin' into German is *Ursprung*, which is literally the 'primordial jump'. *Ur-sprung*: The pre-historic jump; the jump before history was recorded; the jump before 'our' time; the un-timely jump. Thus, in German, when one talks about the origin of art, or the original artwork, one gets a sense of un-timeliness.¹ In such view, art is not something that exists within a linear history that knows an exact beginning and an end. An original artwork is an un-timely call for a jump into something. What is this 'something'? Can we name it? Is this 'something' art? If we could name this 'something', it could not be art. Because 'naming' is based on a particular history of voice that renders the un-timely nameless: silent. There is thus a silence in the work of art.² This is its secret. This is the gift of art.

The jump that took place at the end of the Trans-Siberian train project was an original artwork, not in the sense of a 'thing' to be gazed at, but in the sense of an un-timely performance that produced a space of undecidability. This ending to our conference was also its beginning: a jump into a matrixial³ space of connections that could not be foreseen – nor can they be judged. Some were quick to decide; some were quick to judge. Others took their time to make sense of what took place. But it didn't matter what actually took place. The jump itself was simply a physical act that engaged with an artwork. What took place was an event that went beyond the physical jump. Here the concrete work of art was merely a transitional stage.⁴ It was something else in the course of its gestation and it became something else again by the way we interacted with it. Art here is not something to be gazed at; it is a transitional event.

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- 1 In *Zur Genealogie der Moral* Friedrich Nietzsche distinguishes between *Entstehung* and *Herkunft* as the two ways of using the word *Ursprung*. If *Herkunft* is origin and descent, then *Entstehung*, as the true object genealogy, means emergence, the moment of co-emergence in a certain relation of forces. See also Foucault, M. (1977) 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by D. F. Bouchard. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
 - 2 Fuglsang, M. and S. Böhm (2003) 'The Rest is Silence: A Remark on the Micro-Fascism of Critique', *ephemera*, 3(4): 56-62.
 - 3 Ettinger L., B. (2006) *Matrixial Borderspace*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
 - 4 Benjamin, W. (1974) 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit', *Gesammelte Schriften*, I. 3.

What took place was the event in which we begun to be something or someone else. We stopped being individuals, tourists, conference participants. With the jump we started to become: a group that emerged out of different components. We had to decide how to react, engage and go on. Emotions were overflowing. But there was no right and wrong. What matters is that we took responsibility: of responsibility.⁵ Responsibility cannot be a moralistic concept that is simply and programmatically applied to a situation. Responsibility is first of all the event of being/feeling responsible for responsibility. And this is a communal event. Responsibility can only take place in a space where one meets the other. Responsibility is an event of co-emergence, in which egos are relegated to the background in order to let the silence of art speak for itself. Art is transformed from a narcissistic author to an event of copoiesis.⁶ Art is the jump into a unique moment, where we take responsibility for our selves: we take responsibility for our future, for who we are, and who we want to be: we take responsibility for life.

This event of art as responsibility is not simply positive or creative. This event is also an event of death; an event of destruction: of madness, trauma. How can it not be? Great works of art are silent because they render us speechless. Even the chatter of today's hypermodern busy-ness comes to a halt in the face of a great piece of art. The eternal return of history suddenly comes to a standstill – it shuts you up. We can see the face of death.⁷ The primordial abyss of our existence becomes visible. In the face of the origins of art history is killed: morals become sense-less and un-timely. Art is an event, a gift, of death. Art is the event when we take responsibility for any longer. In the event of art we jump into the impossibility of death. The gift of death is when we take responsibility for ourselves. Is this not the attempt to come to terms with death? Is this not the event of taking responsibility for death?

Modern existence is all about keeping death at bay. We drop bombs from B5 bombers high in the sky; their impact is only visible on a TV screen. Today death only becomes visible as a TV event.⁸ During the first world war soldiers still looked into the enemies eyes; they stood in the trenches and saw the face of death. It is perhaps for this reason that those few who returned home after the trauma of war said 'never again'. Today we can often not take responsibility for death because it is kept at bay for us. We cannot stop it, because we don't know what it is. War violence becomes the eternal return of a spectacle that we cannot recognise as death. A press of a button releases the trauma of death, the madness of violence in which time is out of joint – but we are far away from this experience, and so we continue with our 'normal lives' where we don't get involved.

But art is an event of involvement. It is a jump into a collective event of responsibility that hopes to involve the other. Yes, things get messy in such an event. Yes, often we

5 Derrida, J. (1995) *The Gift of Death*, trans. D. Willis. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

6 Ettinger L., op. cit.; also see 'Copoiesis' in this issue.

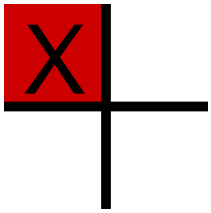
7 Salvador Dali, *Ballerina & the Face of Death* (Ballerine en cabeza de muerte), oil on canvas, 4.5 x 9.5 cm, Merz Collection.

8 Weber, S. (1996) 'Television: Set and Screen', in *Mass Mediauras: Form, Technics, Media*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

don't know how to go on. Yes, we might see the face of death. But for the first time we take responsibility for ourselves and life itself.

the author

Steffen Böhm is Lecturer in Management at the University of Essex. He is co-editor of mayflybooks (www.mayflybooks.org) and a member of the editorial collective of *ephemera: theory & politics in organization* (www.ephemeraweb.org).
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Invisible Journey

Peter S Petralia

Contemporary art makers obsess over the question, ‘where is performance?’ Is it in the documentation of an act or in the act itself? Artists like Sophe Calle perform in the borders of daily life and fiction by creating interventions into public space that are invisible, unseen. Participants often have no idea they are involved in an art project – they participate by default, as the artist manipulates the flow of daily life. What ends up being called ‘art’ in Ms. Calle’s case is the documentation of these interventions, but for me the art is in the enacting of her strange fictions. She might see her acts as a means to an end (i.e., photos, writing) but it’s possible that her constructed realities are more artistically interesting than the resulting documentations. Without the story, the photos are just pictures.

Taking a cue from Sophe Calle and the theater group Blast Theory, I conducted my own ‘performance as life’ experiments recently on the Trans-Siberian railway while participating in the Capturing the Moving Mind Conference. My goal was to send out strands of ideas like a virus through a series of pre-arranged encounters with artists at train stations and hotels. The project was meant to work like this: I’d document the happenings of the conference, fictionalize these documentations and then deliver them in packages to artists who I’d arranged to meet me at train stations and hotels. Back at home after the conference was over, I’d wait for those artists to send me a response via DHL.

Some of the meetings were grander than others. When I stepped off the train at 5 a.m. in Irkutsk I was surprised to find a long banner stretching across the platform emblazoned with a giant ‘Welcome Peter Petralia.’ My visit coincided with an arts festival and since my stop was only for 15 minutes, the curator brought the festival to the train station. Two musicians played accordion, a local television crew interviewed me, and as I boarded the train to leave, a series of beautiful fire performances lit up the dark Siberian night.

Some visits were brief. In Yekaterinburg, the artist was too busy to meet me, so he sent an assistant. I handed her the envelope and she took it, slightly baffled but extremely polite. Other meetings, allowed for deeper interaction. In Novosibirsk, I managed to finagle a young arts collective called CAT onto the program of ‘official’ conference sessions. They added an interesting element of tension to the day, by showing video of

their performance actions against the establishment – much to the visible dismay of the ‘officials’ on the bill.

The packages I delivered in my meetings were not what I expected they’d be. Instead of simply recording day-to-day occurrences and fictionalizing them, my packages ended up capturing emotions, experiences and ideas that have no direct physical manifestation, i.e., *the invisible journey*. I became obsessed with this pursuit, wondering how the narrative of absence, time-zone tag and distance we were engaged in as travellers could be represented physically. It seemed to me that as the train progressed across the continent, those of us in the conference began to contain and compress individual, invisible narratives. We drank. We furiously recorded the moment in photos. We told each other stories that may or may not have been true. All of this, in the interest of keeping the turmoil of our emotions wrapped tightly under our skin.



Package Three, Photo by Peter S Petralia

We were passengers, strangers and tourists but we were also conference participants. We negotiated the borders between what we came expecting and what we actually encountered. I attempted to turn these border disputes into documentations that could recreate a feeling of the moment in the viewer. The package I gave to Tatyana in Irkutsk contained a series of ‘identical’ Polaroid’s showing my face in close-up. On the bottom frame of each picture was a word describing my emotional state: happy, lonely, drunk, depressed, anxious. Although I kept the same face, I was cycling through states of distress internally. *The invisible made visible*.

In Moscow, I sought to capture the strangeness of the false socialization of the conference and the dislocation of crossing ten time zones. Here we were, strangers assuming the comfort of long-time friends. We let our guard down, shared intimate details and assumed the fact that we were all ‘selected’ somehow ensured the safety of the group as a whole. This intense, immediate intimacy was captured in a narrated photo tour of Moscow I created for Sergey in Perm. Mixed into this tour are recordings about being lost in the many hallways and foyers of the hotel. I adopt an intimacy in the way I address him. I assume he feels safe with me. The recording suggests a *system for moving through the invisible landscape of foreignness* and it does so using the language of long-time friends. I end the narration by inviting Sergey to tell me something intimate about his home town. How do you navigate a city that until recently was completely inaccessible to foreigners? What are the invisible journey’s he takes every day?



Package Four, Photo by Peter S Petralia

This is my first experiment with this form and it verifies my evolving belief that performance is ephemeral. It happens everywhere and often, and it disappears just as quickly as it appears. Performance happens while sitting in a café in Beijing engaging in an extremely complicated conversation about art, politics and economics with a man whose language you don’t understand. It happens in the false safety of organized meetings and events. It happens in the lies we tell every day. It happens in every moment but most of the time we ignore it. We only need change our gaze or alter our interaction with the moment as it passes us to experience the performance around us. Maybe the performance can’t really be captured. Maybe it happens in encounters: a

performance for two, by two. The photos, videos and audio recordings are something else. They are documentations of a performance that has since evaporated.

I set out to connect myself to the places we temporarily inhabited and ended up creating a map charting the invisible landscape of time and the invisible spaces and experiences that made up my journey. This map was constructed from interactions that provided a way for the discussions and ideas happening on the train to spread out into the geography we moved through, to be altered and to return changed. Now, one month later, I am constantly checking my doorstep for a yellow box with my name on it from Galina, Sergey, Vladimir, CAT, Jeurgney, Tatyana, Mugi, Tian or Shu. And while I wait for these packages, a new performance begins.

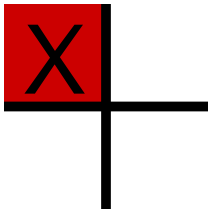


Package Eight, Photo by Peter S Petralia

'Since leaving, time has not made sense. It has looped, tripped and reversed itself repeatedly. Before, I thought the ground I walked on gave me stability; now I realize it was time that ordered my life. On the train, time is fickle, inconsistent, unkind. It teases with the promise of sleep. But it only delivers disorientation. At first, I missed the old version of time – the one that gave me consistency – but now I have fallen in love with this new time. Soon, I will return to time as an iron vest, constraining and controlling my movement. I will miss being lost in time zones vast and foreign to me. But being lost is a fiction that can't be maintained. So, I return home, to alarm clocks and schedules. And learn to love my past.' Beijing, Package Nine

**the author &
artist**

Peter S Petralia is a producer, director, writer, curator and designer who works in live arts. Peter is Artistic Director and founder of Proto-type Theater for which he has written and directed nine new works for theaters in NY, NC and Europe. He is a member of the Avant-Garde-Arama committee at PS122 and recently created a project called TEN MESSAGES while traveling on the Trans-Siberian Railway from Moscow-Beijing with the support of TCG/ITI. He has been awarded many grants, residencies and awards including Person of the Year 2004, nytheater.com. www.proto-type.org
E-mail: info@proto-type.org



The Trans-Siberian Photo Project

Elly Clarke

As a first-time Trans-Siberian train traveler, I was interested in finding out who was on the train, apart from fellow conference goers. I wanted to know where my co-passengers were headed, for what reasons and how they felt about their journey. Despite being the longest train journey in the world, I was aware of how fleeting any experience or encounter I would have within three countries over a period of less than ten days would be. I wanted to understand a little more of the places we were passing through than I could get by looking out of the train windows and interact with people I would not normally have had the chance to meet.

My method was to communicate with passengers at all points along the way, using Russian and Chinese-translated cue cards listing questions I wanted to ask about people's journeys, and a letter, explaining my project in full. The Trans-Siberian Photo Project had two parts. The first was the conversation, which, with permission, I video-taped. The second was a photo project, whereby each passenger I spoke to was given a disposable camera and a form to list details of the photographs they would take – date, place, time, title – and a request for these photos to be taken in a way that reflects their journey or experience of travel. I asked them to take their pictures from the day we met until the day they reached their final destination. From there, the camera would be posted back to me in the UK. All this was explained in the letter and interviews began only once all this had been clearly understood and agreed.

I gave out ten cameras in total: five to Russians, four to Mongolians (including one to the National Ice Skating Team of Mongolia). The only Chinese person I could persuade to take part was the train's conductor. Conductor 119, as he is known, was happy to take the photos but did not want to be interviewed and neither did he fill in the form. Despite having a fluent Chinese speaker with me at the time, and inviting almost every Chinese passenger on the train to participate, on the whole, as far as Chinese passengers were concerned, I found that my project was met with suspicion and unease. This was a cultural contrast to the Russian passengers, who welcomed me into their cabins, and, with their offers of food and drink, made it sometimes actually quite difficult to get away.

Conductor 119 may have been reluctant to be interviewed, but I find his photographs at once beautiful, and interesting. As a conductor, he knows this route better than any passenger and his pictures may be said to reflect this. One of the fifteen pictures he took

shows a train approaching in the opposite direction, quite late in the evening. This did not happen often, so to be ready to take a picture of it at the precise time he did would have taken some forward thinking.

Another set of photographs comes from three Mongolian passengers who were travelling from Ulaan Baatar to Guangzho via Beijing, for part holiday, part business. When asked whether they enjoyed travelling by train they answered: "Outside you have vast landscapes, which broaden your horizon. Inside you have the space to take a walk."

I am still waiting for most of the cameras to make their way back to me and I do not know how many will make it. Those I have received have not been titled and the interviews I have on tape are yet to be fully translated. There is still work to do and the language barrier does indeed present quite a challenge. As with all participatory projects, the process (getting there) is often as interesting as the end result (destination).

The Trans-Siberian Photo Project was based on a model of another project I did in 2004 in the East London Council-owned apartment building where I live. In *The Broadway House Photo Project*,¹ I circulated a single disposable camera around my building, asking residents to take three photographs from and within their flats, (one looking North, one looking South and a third picture of what they wanted inside their homes) and to give their pictures titles. One in five flats in the building took part. The project culminated in an exhibition at a gallery five minutes' walk away, where my neighbours got to see their photographs for the first time, as well as to meet each other, also in many cases for the first time, despite several having lived in Broadway House for more than twenty years.

Through my work, I am interested in finding alternative ways of capturing particular aspects of life and lives that are not normally given a great deal of exposure.

1 See www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-1-125-1016.jsp, or www.opendemocracy.net/arts-photography/article_1016.jsp

Participants in The Trans-Siberian Photo Project

Video stills from part of my interviews where I ask 'Have you got anything of particular interest or importance to show me?'



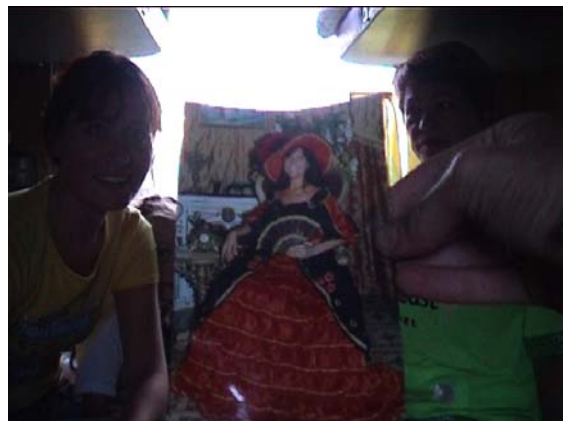
Swiss Souvenir (and Russian Milk)



A bandaged arm



A pilots watch that has flown 1000 hours



A Ukrainian Costume

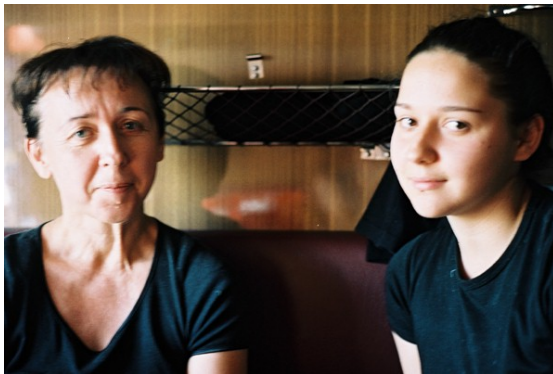


Jesus



Austrian holiday snaps

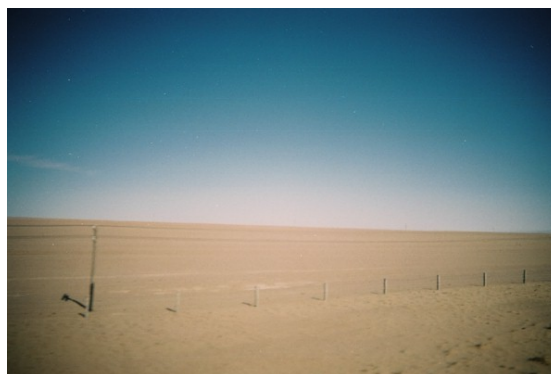
Asja and Lilra and their pictures



Asja and Lilra on their way home from a two-week holiday in Switzerland and Austria

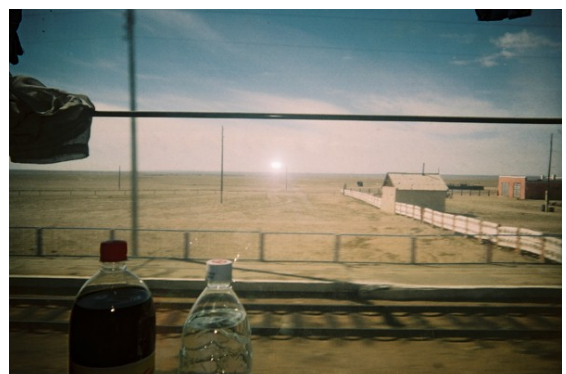


Conductor 119 and his photos



Mongolian passengers and their pictures





“Outside you have vast landscapes, which broaden your horizon. Inside you have the space to take a walk.”

The Trans-Siberian Ebay Project

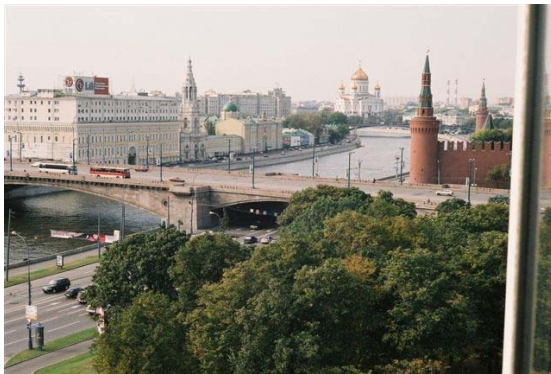
Without funding, I could not take part in the Trans-Siberian conference. My application to the Arts Council was rejected on the ground of my project providing not enough public benefit, and I was not eligible to apply to any academic funding schemes, as I am not an academic. Finding myself between stools in this way forced me to think of alternative ways to raise money. I decided to sell unique one-off photos I hadn't yet taken onboard the Trans-Siberian train, via ebay. I committed to taking two photos a day for the duration of the conference: one in the morning, another at night. As far as possible these photos would be taken at 10am and 4pm. I named each un-taken photograph according to the date and time they would be taken. For example: 110905AM (the first photo taken on Day 1 of the conference, in Moscow) and 200905PM (the last day of the conference, and the final picture in the series – taken in Beijing.) I sold all twenty photographs and raised a total of about £450. It was interesting taking photographs so systematically like this, especially knowing they had already been purchased by a particular person. It was as though they bought a second of my time and whatever happened to be before my lens at that time was what they received in the post two months later. I would like thank everybody who has helped to fund my conference participation.



110905AM, Hotel Rossia, Room 7292, 10.20am



110905PM, View from Conference Room in Hotel Rossia, 4.20pm



120905AM, View From Room 6043, Hotel Rossia, 11.45am



120905PM, Moscow Train Station, 4.00pm



130905AM, View from Train at Balesino, 9.15am

Opposite: 130905PM, Between Perm and Swerdlowsk Pass, 4.00pm



140905AM, Between Tatarskaja and Barabinsk, 10.30am



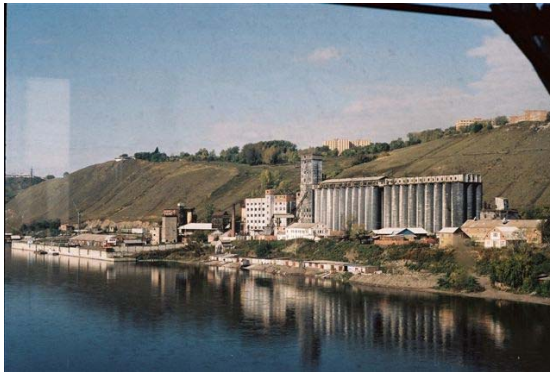
140905PM, Roundabout, Novosibirsk, 4.30pm Novo time



150905AM, Akademgorodok, 10.30am



150905PM, Novosibirsk, 4.00pm



160905AM, Near Krasnojarsk Pass, 10.20pm



160905PM, Chinese Conductor's Cabin Carriage 9, 4.30pm
Novo time + 1 hour



170905AM, Near Lake Bakal, 9.00am local (Novo time +2)



170905PM, Untitled, 4pm



180905AM, 2 hours from Ulaan Baatar, 10am



180905PM, Sajin-Sanda, Mongolia, 4pm local time



190905AM, First glimpse of China, 10am, Beijing time



190905PM, From bus on way to hotel from train station, Beijing, 4pm



200905AM, View from Room 701, Unisplendour Hotel, 11.11am

Opposite: 200905PM, Tsinghua University and Bike, 5pm



All photos by Elly Clarke, published under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.5 licence

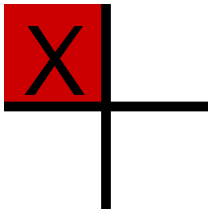
the author & artist

Elly Clarke is an artist based in London. She is interested in the impact of mobility upon sense of self – both when alone and as part of a community – and in the technologies that mediate such experiences and interactions. Although largely lens-based, the focus of Clarke's work lies as much on the process of production as the images created from it. Equally important is the context within which a particular project is made, and/or shown. Elly Clarke has a Masters in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins and a First Class Degree in History of Art from Leeds and has since worked on several projects in collaboration with the Centre for Mobility Research at Lancaster University.² She is also currently part of a video show that is touring to the United States, Canada, New Zealand and the UK.

<http://www.axisweb.org/artist/ellyclarke>

E-mail: elly.clarke@virgin.net

2 <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/sociology/cemore>



‘Capturing the Moving Mind’ as a Work of Art?

Gwylene Gallimard & Jean-Marie Mauclet

Sept. 2nd 2005. Our participation in the ‘Capturing the Moving Mind’ adventure is also our contribution to a project called ‘The Future is on the Table’, a global exercise in connecting artists and activists from everywhere in the world around topics like water, shelter and other burning issues of basic social justice. ‘The Future is on the Table’ started with the making by us of 57 stools. We sent bundles of them to groups around the world as presents. Recipients are to respond their own way. We intend to bring the stools back together at some point and shape a puzzle with whatever they have generated. A gift-exchange story?

As of August 25th, the landfall of Katrina, the US of A is facing head on its unique breed of social justice. How hard it is to realize that the politics of race and economics run this country! America is not ready to take on the ‘moving mind’ train. Far from it. The turmoil is such, here, that it has stopped us, literally, in our track. Yet we will be in Moscow. We will unfold our table for a quick performance, the content of which is fast shifting from lofty thinking ahead to anger management.

Sept. 11th 2005. Well we did not catch the train in Moscow! ‘Artists should not need visas!’ (Hiroshi Mikami)

Sept. 14th 2005. Early Morning. Our mind is moved by ‘The Future is on the Table’. We are transmitters for the Charleston ROOTS Rhizome with questions and perceptions to communicate and answers to bring back. We also carry a big box, filled with pictures, sounds, films sent by other participants to ‘The Future is on the Table’, from India, England, France, South Africa, the US, and with the beginnings of a table: cardboard, old lace, ticker tapes. We re-plan a performance of the box for the train: a train moving with a radio station, an audience, DJ’s maybe...

Later. Meeting the train in Novosibirsk, we are catching up with the spirit. With everyone’s help. Thank you!



We find activism everywhere: in the concepts behind 'Capturing the Moving Mind' in the Trans-Siberian-Mongolian-Chinese train, September 11 to 20, 2005; in artists and museums responding to a call titled 'Management and Movement in the Age of Permanently Temporary War'; and in 'The Future is on the Table', handcrafted and virtual.

Activism is a common ground, on the Trans-Sib (please circle answers):

RIGHT

WRONG

Reading the pre-conference proposals. Michel Foucault is quoted on Biopower, Jacques Derrida on Aporia, Gilles Deleuze on Segmentation, Roland Barthes on Managerial Mythologies. Then there is Jacques Lacan and Psycho-analysis, Pierre Bourdieu and his Fieldworks, Alain Badiou and Evil as a Point of Departure. Jean Rouch is checked for Building Bridges and Baudelaire for Imagining a Futuristic Body.

French Philosophy is a common ground, on the Trans-Siberian:

RIGHT

WRONG

He has a Bolex. She has a mini-DV. You have a recorder. I have a Hi8. They have digital cameras. You have transmitters. We have Mobicast.

Pictures, Movement, Sound is a common ground, on the Trans-Sib:

RIGHT

WRONG

Media, Communication is a common ground, on the Trans-Sib:

RIGHT

WRONG

American English, Australian English, British English, Finnish English, Scandinavian English, French English, Spanish English, Italian English, Chinese English...

English is a common ground, on the Trans-Sib:

RIGHT

WRONG

English as a Second Language:

STIMULATES

SLOWS DOWN

NEGATES

communication.

Sept. 16th 2005.

To sleep or not to sleep,

To watch or not to watch,

To ask or not to ask,

To create or not to create,

To be or not to be. Was that a question?

Please fill in the blanks:

The ... 'Capturing the Moving Mind' is a ... representative of your The ... participants were ... Africans ..., ..., NGO's and showers were To rediscover our ... experience is to move forward Art generates ... interaction, sends ... signals, which ... the edge of the A ... of ... is producing a The ... of it is

Check all statements that apply. What does best describe the Tran-Sib experience?

- ☐ The creation of the space supplies the occasion but does not guarantee the encounter
- ☐ Fragilizing ourselves to generate anew
- ☐ Co-emergence, co-spacing, co-linking
- ☐ Temporary wars
- ☐ Experience collectively – produce collaboratively?
- ☐ Innovative management
- ☐ Encounters between the I and the non-I
- ☐ Creative destruction with ambiguous consequences, feast and knowledge transfer
- ☐ Wonderful women and beautiful men

Check all statements that apply. What does best describe 'Capturing the Moving Mind'?

- ☐ No point to talk about I without talking about you.
- ☐ Border spacing and border fading
- ☐ Impossibility, like algae without water
- ☐ Symbols of possibility, producing movement. Energy
- ☐ A story circle
- ☐ Social transportation of information
- ☐ Disorder, disordering, monstrations
- ☐ A recipe for failure, like a dead memorial monument
- ☐ Self-conscious de-centering, redistribution of power
- ☐ Establishing vulnerability as a way to instrumentalize non-violence

Check all statements that apply. What does best describe 'Art'?

- ☐ Hopes
- ☐ Weak signals
- ☐ Distant Satellite
- ☐ A creative space and time for the mind to move
- ☐ Emergency
- ☐ A lubricant
- ☐ Voyeurs
- ☐ A curve

Sept. 20th 2005. Walking the Wall. Walking the city. Blocks are a kilometer long and streets cannot be crossed in between. And beware of Karaoke bars.

Check all statements that apply. Who was/is your Audience? Whom did/do you miss most?

o Passengers o Sex-Rights Activists o Food Sellers o Artists o A physically challenged friend o Youth o Time Rich People o Time Poor People o Work Rich People o Work Poor people o Golden Geese o Russian Researchers o Kids at Heart o Academics o The Non-Institutionalized o The De-Institutionalized o Your Family o Chinese folks

Grade from 1 to 10 the strength of the following items:

o Recordings o Papers o Dreams o Body Installations o Memories o 1mn texts o Interviews o Non-Verbal Communications o Quantum theory o Videos o Diaries o Broadcasting o Photos o Story Circles o Networking o Cartoons o Stools o Social Dividend o Negative growth

Grade from 1 to 10 what makes you smile?

o A Natural Granite Platform o Your Worries o Aesthetics of Love o The Injection of Non-Violence Is Ethical o Bamboo Forest and Eight Treasures o Boiled Beef Tripe with Duck Blood o We Meet the Demands of International Standards o The Flight Back o The Gobi Desert o Siberia Is Livable, Not Frozen, Don't Believe Books... Be Back o 6500 Kms As The Raven Flies o Leasing is A First Step Towards Precariousness of Employment o Borders as Forms of Antagonism o A Silence of Three Minutes for the Stories We Are Missing o We Cannot Say The American Model Will Work Great Here

Describe in ten lines your understanding of A WORK OF ART after the Trans-Sib experience using at least 10 of the following words:

tripartite enterprise – temporary war – no selection – perception – social justice – balance of powers – civil disobedience – un art parlant de – mediatissant – displacement of gods – network construction – necessary collaborative outcome – psycho-analysis – portion of a labor of resistance – male babies – smoked fish

Please fill in the blanks for my Charleston (SC, USA) friends:

Mongolia is next to Government impacts ... life Religions are ... by ... government. Russian Brides are I saw ... billboards in Beijing. The ... Wall ... is ... Art. Art ... in education. I ... Hip Hop Have you seen yurts, yaks, ponies, Genghis Khan, lots of uniformity, Moscow millionaires? ... Which color was the 'Moving Mind'? ... What do you know about the South? ...

And could you help us to answer this dilemma (brought to us by a great close [d?] mind): Is it the nature of the mind to move?

Oct. 14th 2005. We wish y'all Siberian health and Caucasian longevity. Would you like cha, coffee or vodka? Please come back. North to South? From trading our 'The Future

is on the Table' bumper sticker we have received so far a book on accounting, a loaf of Russian bread, a few photographs, a CD, a tape, a filming, a wonderful proposal and many thanks. The deal is still on. Shipping and handling charges are on us. Would you like a few stools as well?

Notes on 'Is it a work of art?'

We like to think of the Arts as children of first generation immigrants, living in a constantly moving field. A place of refuge for the mind inhibited by lack of references; for the individualistic mind which feels its lack of freedom; for the mind looking forever-new disciplines. In other terms art could be defined as the place for everything that other subjects, fields and even languages do not recognize. Then each work of art advances its own definition of art, hereafter to be captured or abandoned.



English as a second language has the energy of instability, for we are confronted with a vision rich with first hand moving knowledge. And as the introduction of 'Capturing the Moving Mind' says, citing Benjamin, we need to rediscover our childish experience in order to move forward politically.

Our artistic work means to keep the local involved in the global. However isn't the local always moving as well? Does the mind move by understanding how infinitely small a part we play on earth? So small, but so locally anchored (family, friends, working environment or more). So temporary, although potentially amplified by collaboration, mediatization, histories, socio-political necessities. It seems that in our work we act to keep form and function related as well as to recognize the breath of their separation.

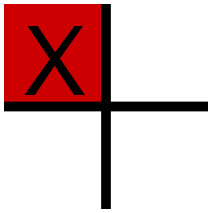
The Native masks in a museum are keepers of the History of a Culture another Culture has destroyed. When the Arts are so much a part of life and culture that there is no point to having a word in the language for it (as is the case with many Native American languages) then process is as important as the product. Within that process there is research value, artistic value and social education. We are wondering how 'Capturing the Moving Mind' on the Trans-Sib and 'The Future is on the Table' collaborate; how, they can create or temporary define the space for a moving culture that exists between the instruments of oppression and instruments of liberation, squeezing their juice out with violent love.

We cannot forget that "attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building" (Paulo Freire).

the authors & artists

Gwylene Gallimard and Jean-Marie Mauclet have worked for thirty years independently and collaboratively in the field of visual arts in France and the United States. Their collaborative experiences include two community-oriented French cafes; art installations about the health insurance industry, the fast food phenomenon, religious beliefs; archives & history, globalization, gentrification, populations displaced by war, dictatorship. Their endeavors involve school populations, homeless communities, refugee organizations, other artists and activists. They are presently developing 'The Future is on the Table #3' where they send sculptural elements to groups over the world as a starter to promote an artistic exchange.

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Continental Drift: Activist Research, From Geopolitics to Geopoetics

Brian Holmes

How does a world come together? How does a world fall apart? Neoliberal globalization made those opposite questions into one – before September 11 showed that the answer cannot be a perfect synthesis. Locating yourself against the horizons of disaster, then finding the modes and scales of intervention into lived experience, are the pathways for intellectual activism in the contemporary world-system.

Neolib goes neocon

A double dynamic is at work today which destroys what it constructs, dissolves what it unifies. And that is exactly what we all have to deal with. One prime example is the enlargement of the European Union, right up to the fiasco of the ultraliberal constitution. The end of the historic split with the East now appears as the beginning of the Core Europe/New Europe divide, with the social-democratic bastions of the West seeking shelter from the global market, while post-Communist states refuse any speed checks on the road to riches. But the absence of a democratic constitution only favors corporate lobbies and bigpower deals, leaving national parliaments as a smokescreen over the real decisions.

An even more striking case is the self-eclipsing rise of the WTO, which just yesterday seemed fated for the role of world government. No sooner was the international trading regime consolidated than tariff wars sprang up between the US and the EU, protests flared around the globe and the process of bloc formation gathered steam, with negotiations for both the FTAA and a renewed Mercosur in Latin America, moves toward an expanded ASEAN system (joined by China, Japan and South Korea) and finally the Venezuelan proposal of ALBA, calling for a leftist 'dawn' after the sundown of free trade. But as any historian remembers, trading-bloc formation was the prelude to the global conflicts of the 1940s.

For the strangest embrace of contradictory forces in the world today, consider the symbiotic tie between industrialized China and the financialized United States. China constantly struggles to produce what the US constantly struggles to consume – at an

ecological risk that no one can even measure. To make the wheel of fortune go on spinning, the Chinese lend their manufacturing profits back to the US, so as to prop up speculation on the almighty dollar and keep the world's largest market soluble. What will happen if the Chinese pipeline to the US Treasury stops flowing is anybody's guess; but as New Orleans floodwaters recede into a domestic quagmire that can only recall the international disaster in Iraq, America's attempts to save its fading hegemony look increasingly desperate and uncertain. Levels of conflict are rising all across the globe, and the problem of how to intervene as a world citizen becomes more complex and daunting than ever.

The counter-globalization movements marked the first attempt at a widespread, meshworked response to the chaos of the post-'89 world system. These movements were an uneasy mix between democratic sovereignists, no-border libertarians (David Graeber's 'new anarchists') and traditional, union-oriented Keynesians. They could all critique the failures of neoliberal governance, but they all diverged and faltered before its cultural consequences. And the latter wasted no time coming. By undercutting social solidarities and destroying ecological equilibriums, the neoliberal program of accelerated capital expansion immediately spawned its neoconservative shadow, in the form of a military, moral and religious return to order. Nothing could have made better cover for the denial of democratic critique, the clampdown on civil liberties and the continuing budgetary shift from social welfare to corporate security. The backlash against globalization became a powerful new tool of manipulation for the elites who launched the whole process in the first place.

The current scramble to consolidate regional blocs reflects the search for a compromise between global reach and territorial stability. Beyond or before the 'clash of civilizations,' a feasible scale of contemporary social relations is the leading question. From this perspective, the free-market policy of the Bush administration in Latin America is comparable to Al Qaeda's dreams of an Islamic Caliphate in the Middle East. The networked production system forming around Japan and China, or the EU's continuous diplomatic courtship of Russia despite flagrant atrocities in Chechnya, give similar insights into this quest for a workable scale, which is essentially that of a 'continent,' however elastic or imprecise the term may be. Paradoxically, continentalization is not countered but is driven ahead by global unification. Behind the tectonic shifts at the turn of the millennium lies the accumulated violence of a thirty-year neoliberal push toward a borderless world, wide open to the biggest and most predatory corporations.

Disorienting compass

The extraordinary breadth and speed of the current metamorphosis – a veritable phase-change in the world system – leaves activist-researchers facing a double challenge, or a double opportunity. On the one hand, they must remap the cultural and political parameters that have been transformed by the neoconservative overlay, while, on the other, remaining keenly aware of the neoliberal principles that remain active beneath the surface. In this effort, the social sciences are the key. Economic geography is crucial for

tracing the global division of labor, and grasping the wider frameworks of what European activists now call 'precarity.' The sociology of organizations reveals who is in control, how power is distributed and maintained in a chaotic world. The study of technics charts out the future in advance, and shows how it operates. And the toolkits of social psychology offer insights into the structures of willful blindness and confused consent that uphold the reigning hegemonies. This kind of analysis is critically important for activist initiatives, which can stumble all too easily into the programmed dead-ends of manipulated ideologies.

Yet the disciplines also have to be overcome, dissolved into experimentation. Autonomous inquiry demands a rupture from the dominant cartographies. Both compass and coordinates must be reinvented if you really want to transform the dynamics of a changing world-system. Only by disorienting the self and uprooting epistemic certainties can anyone hope to inject a positive difference into the unconscious dynamics of the geopolitical order.

How then can activist-researchers move to disorient the reigning maps, to transform the dominant cartographies, without falling into the nevernever lands of aesthetic extrapolation? The problem of activist research is inseparable from its embodiment, from its social elaboration. Just try this experiment in public presence: literally tracing out the flows of capital, the currents of warfare and the rise and fall of transnational organizations since 1945, using hand-drawn dates and arrows on a conventional Mercator projection. The effect is to build a cartographic frame-narrative of the emergence, complexification and crisis of US hegemony since 1945; but at the same time, through gesture and movement, to act out the ways that geopolitical flows traverse living bodies and become part of tactile consciousness, entering what might be termed 'felt public space.' Intellectual work becomes intensive when it is unmoored from normalizing frameworks, acted out as a social experiment in a self-organized seminar, in a squat or an occupied building, at a counter-summit, on a train hurtling through Siberia... As supranational regions engulf ever-larger populations and the passage of shifting borders becomes an ever-more common activity, geopolitics is increasingly experienced in the flesh and in the imaginary, it is traced out on the collective skin. This is when geopoetics becomes a vital activity, a promise of liberation.

How to interpret artworks and artistic-activist interventions so as to highlight the forms taken by the geopoetic imaginary? Through analytical work on the dynamics of form and the efficacy of symbolic ruptures, one can try to approach the diagrammatic level where the cartography of sensation is reconfigured through experimentation. This level comes constantly into play whenever it is a matter of translating analysis back into intervention. Because of the transverse nature of global flows, it is possible to draw on the experiences of far-away acts of resistance in the midst of one's own confrontations with power, both in its brute objective forms, and in its subtle interiorizations. The relation between the Argentine pot-banging *cacerolazos* and the almost continuous urban mobilizations in Spain, from February 15, 2003, all the way up to the ouster of the mendacious and powerhungry Aznar government in March of last year, is a large-scale example of this process of transfiguration. And this is the generative side of the contemporary continental drift. To sense the dynamics of resistance and creation across

the interlinked world space is to start taking part in the solidarities and modes of co-operation that have been emerging across the planet since the late 1990s.

Just doing it

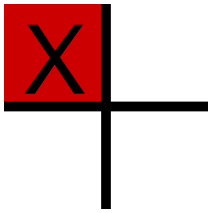
If you want to accomplish anything like this kind of research, don't expect much help from the existing institutions. Most are still busy adapting to the dictates of neoliberal management; and the best we could do for the first big round of meshworked critique was to hijack a few of their people, to divert a few of their resources. What is more, the open windows that do subsist are likely to close down with the neoconservative turn. Self-organized groups will have to generate a collective learning process about the effects of social atomization and economic subjugation – essentially, a new understanding of the forms of contemporary alienation – and they will have to explore the reactions to these trends, whether intensely negative (the fascist and racist closure of formerly democratic societies) or positive and forward-looking (activist interventions, the invention of new modes of social self-management, cultural reorientations, ecologically viable forms of development). Another goal of the critique is to raise the level of debate and engagement in the cultural and artistic sectors – the vital media of social expression – where a narcissistic blindness to the violence of current conditions is still the norm. But the most important aim is to help relaunch the activist mobilizations that were so promising around the turn of the millennium. 'Help' is the right word here, because there is no intellectual privilege in the activist domain. Activist-researchers can contribute to a short, middle and long-term analysis of the crisis, by examining and inventing new modes of intervention at the micropolitical scales where the even largest social movements begin.

Who can play this great game?

Whoever is able to join or form a meshwork of independent researchers. What are the pieces, the terrains, the wagers and rules? Whichever ones your group finds most productive and contagious. How does the game continue, when the ball goes out of your field? Through shared meetings in a meshwork of meshworks, through collective actions, positions, projects and publications. And most importantly, who wins? Whoever can provoke some effective resistance to the downward spiral of human coexistence at the outset of the twenty-first century.

the author

Brian Holmes is a writer and activist-researcher, a member of Tangent University and an initiator of the networked seminar Continental Drift. For documentation, see www.u-tangente.org.



Action without Reaction: A Mongolian Border Intervention*

Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter

For academics, activists and artists with means – various as they are – to global mobility, an encounter with national border inspections is, in many senses, a routine experience in which passage to the next destination is rarely refused. It is all too easy for social networks immanent to digital communications media to hold a delirious sense of unconstrained possibility – a condition which needs to be carefully untangled from the notion of organisation without ends. Within the upper echelons of the symbolic economy, individuals trade so often in ideas that amount to nothing beyond self-gratification and the possibility of career enhancement. Is this the same as organisation without ends?

The staging of a border action is one instantiation of how limits might operate as an experiential resource for thinking the organisation of organisation without ends. A network without limits is a network of inaction. But what happens when the relationship between determinacy and indeterminacy occupies a space of indistinction? And to what extent can a border zone – defined precisely in its distinction from the freedom of movement – be understood in terms of indistinction?

There can be little doubt about the coordinates of departure and termination on the fixed line of the Trans-Siberian Railway: Moscow arrives in Beijing. And within these constraints contingencies abound: sorties can be made from stops along the way, and myriad disruptions, experiences and encounters are more likely to happen than not. Indeed, it is even incorrect to speak of the Trans-Siberian Railway as a fixed line in this instance, since one must transfer to the trans-Mongolian line if the terminal is Beijing and not Vladivostok. The trans-Manchurian line would be yet another option. Thus while a network of lines composes the linearity of movement, an historical phantasm perhaps shaped the collective certainty of passage on the Trans-Siberian Railway.

* The border action was conceived by Bernardo Giorgi in conversation with Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter. Thanks to Helen Grace for some incisive input to the text. Thanks also to those who made the patterns and, in particular, Carlos Fernández, who added a sonic dimension to the border zone.



Images: Helen Grace, video freeze frames from the performance 'border action-with(/out)-reaction', on the night of 17 September 2005, Naushki (Russia).

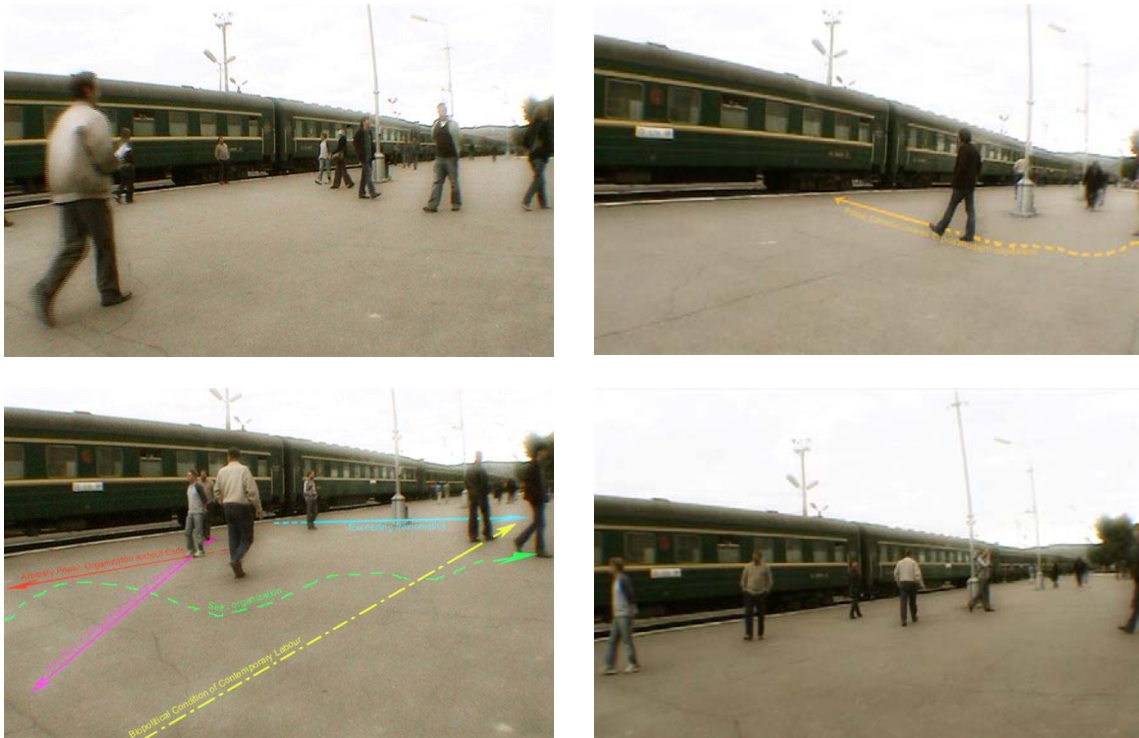
Naushki, the train station where the exit procedures for Russia are carried out is, in many respects, no different from any number of stations that precede it. But of course a border crossing is never without distinctions and possible consequences. Differences, in this context, are of a temporal, mythic and procedural order. Each time the train stops the body undergoes a rhythmic equivalence of a drug addict's withdrawal process. Unlike the usual 10 or 15 minute train stop – a refrain at once irregular in terms of the uneven distances between stations, yet also regular insofar as the repetition of the stop marks the interruption of movement – both this last station in Russia and the first station in Mongolia take time. The equivalence between motion and a temporal present gives way to stasis marked by an extension of time in the transition between national territories; movement is subtracted from the body's recently acquired kinaesthetic comportment as the body constantly adjusts to the sway and speed of locomotion.

Leaving Russia for Mongolia, the process goes like this: the train stops at Naushki, the Russian border guards enter and collect the passengers' passports and other documents handed out earlier by the conductors, then the passengers alight to buy products from the locals near the platform (kebabs, dried noodles, vodka bottled from a flask concealed in a tent). At a certain point, the conductors give the signal to reboard. The Russian guards re-enter the train to return the passports, search cavities for human bodies, and harass the Mongolian traders transporting products like urine bags and dialysis tubes. And then the train makes its way into Mongolia, crossing the imagined line sometime during an indistinct half an hour. Then there is another delay. But this time there is no alighting. The Mongolian border guards enter, marked immediately by a different aesthetic order. In place of the dull uniforms and overalls of the Russian officials are patent leather boots, made-up faces, and stern expressions. The border crosser is told to stand while the face is surveyed. There can be little doubt here of the contiguity between the affective pull of colonialism's tropes of servitude, the always sexualized dynamic of power, and the state's governance of human mobility.

Independently of whether, at the border, one is confined to the cabin or not, there is always a restriction of movement. One is confined and beholden to a procedural system that conforms to the family of border controls. But this system varies in different sites and, in this case, on either side of the metaphysical line that constitutes the border. At Naushki, the passengers can get off the train. By this time, however, their passports have been collected for processing in the customs house adjacent to the platform. In these moments, the travelers are, in a certain sense, *sans papiers*. They are free, it is true, to get off the train and even to wander into the city or the territory at large. There is no visible policing of mobility from the station. But, in another sense, they are bound, physically attached to the border, by an imaginary line (a tether) that connects them to the place and to the documents not in their immediate possession.

Who are the border crossers, in these moments? What is their juridical status? Free to move without documents, yet tethered, each along a different global vector (depending on the passport that has been removed), to an international state system, which supposedly grants them rights. In this time and space, the traveller is no longer him or herself. Free to move but unable to cross the border, he or she is actively detained and, in this detainment, made to encounter the ephemerality of those same rights. Still, in this time and space, actions are possible. Action, in these circumstances, is predicated on not

knowing, of being uncertain about what is to follow. Organisation becomes structurally unhinged from any causal temporality. Indeed, it is precisely this ‘not knowing’ that serves as the precondition of experiencing action as that which can only ever be temporally present. Here we get a suggestion that the time of the present has multiple registers and dimensions. It is within this temporal cartography that action is without reaction.



Photos and artwork by Bernardo Giorgi

Action then divorces itself from the mechanics of cause and effect. And the point of such action, which is importantly not yet and maybe never ‘activist’, is to execute a certain de-motivation of the border – both this border and all borders. There on the platform at Naushki, where traders and suspected Chechen sympathisers are regularly held back, duties collected, and tourists given a few moments to stoke the local economy, there emerged a series of bodies, which slowly and deliberately, sometimes with joy and sometimes with solemnity, traversed lines back and forth, some tracing an arc, before the customs house.

To be sure, this action had no effect. Its only purpose was to mark and remark the border through movement in multiple directions, independent bodies each ambulating on its own path. Together, they created a kind of pattern generator, fabricating curves and interruptions, relations of proximity, distance and touch, illegible to the techniques of the border but somehow enabled by its very being. At stake was a kind of encryption. But one that begs for no decoding, as if in retrospect it could be revealed and labelled as an act of transgression (or as breaking the rules that, in the very act of breaking, restores the grammar of the border and all the metaphysical subtleties it carries to human thought).

This border action was an experiential experiment, a political and emotional making of lines as a preparation to cross (or not to cross) the line. Furthermore, it was a strike against the tendency to celebrate border crossing in concept alone, the kind of disposition that preaches resistance and then has a crippling encounter with the sublime right at the very edge. What came into being was a bending of lines, a menagerie of motions that exceeded any single path, and, in so doing, marked the very arbitrariness of borders – both their geographical locations and the powers that institute them. Here, there was a movement into the very space where rules are generated, an intervention into the grammar of the border, a manipulation of its genetic codes, or, if you like, a refusal to take the rule as anything but a command.

Let us speak with absolute precision, without fear or suasion. This was not a jump. There was no leaping of fences or tearing them down, no falling into the cinders of modernity – as necessary and as liberating as such actions can be. Nor was it an action that moved the group on the train forward or backward in any way. Certainly, there had been some ad hoc planning and discussion as the train approached the border. And with this there came a scintilla of contention, both from those concerned that movements illegible to the border control would spark reprisal and from those who thought the action altogether without fire. But, even though the group had earlier expelled an individual who had lost a passport, precisely because his passage across this line could not be guaranteed, there was, in these movements, no effort to atone, to displace or condense. To be sure, this would happen in other times and places. But, at this point, another dynamic and potentiality were at play. The border imposed an urgency in which the group's own exclusions could not be made to stand, like some kind of algebraic symbol, for those constitutively outside it. There was a line on the ground, but it was not here that the group reached its limit.

Perhaps this is because to cross the border, one must be who one is. Whether this is established through the passport photo or through some more sophisticated biometric device is hardly the issue. Any movement, any movement at all, is enough to precipitate one's being called aside. Thus, upon return to the train, one individual was taken aside and interrogated by the Russian officials, since his mere presence in another cabin to the one he had occupied when he had handed over his passport rendered him suspicious. The event was innocuous and forgettable enough. But its relevance is not to be underestimated. To cross the border, as became clear in Sukhbaatar, the Mongolian border town, one must stand and say who one is. And so the group chose to rise and face itself as at once highly mobile and free to move, even as each stood before the guards as an individual and a citizen.

This crossing of the Russian-Mongolian border was a routine process with a routine outcome. Let us remember though that contemporary capitalism cannot be reduced to the culture of speed and deterritorialisation. And the border, while an older technology than the current networks of informatic mobility, remains instrumental to the smooth functioning of the global system. It is a block to separate zones where labour attracts different costs, a means of controlling populations who resist proletarianisation, and a device to allocate the access of capitalist speculation to geographical space. This is too easily forgotten in the metaphorisations that make border crossing an act of aesthetic-epistemological rupture. In towns like Naushki, all this hits the ground. In the

lineaments of the passage, right there on the platform, another time and space was conjured. There is nothing here to be celebrated or remembered. No stab at posterity or utopia. Just a number of bodies in motion, feeling the thud of the repetitive tug, back and forth, this way or that, again and again, for several minutes only, for an eternity of delay, between one point and another, in a straight line or curve, as the train endured its stop, and waited to return to velocity.

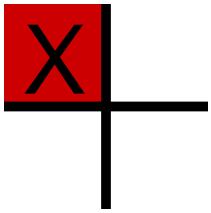
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the artists

Bernardo Giorgi plans and realises relational work. His work investigates the boundary between author and user and the limit that divides art and life. It attempts to circumscribe a common area where artists and anyone else can connect through mental and material exploration of places, territories and different cultures. Bernardo's research is therefore focused on borders and identities, using journeys and the mapping of territories as instruments of investigation. www.borders.de Major exhibition: 2003 Biennale di Venezia. in the [ve]01: border counter, Utopia Station; Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella // 2002 Adriano Olivetti Foundation, Roma; Kunst Haus Dresden; Italian Cultural Institute, Prague // 2001 Palazzo delle Papesse Contemporary Art Center, Siena // 2000 Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw // 1999 K ntlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin
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Between Movement and Position: Tracking and Its Landscapes of Readiness

Jordan Crandall

I am sitting in a hot hotel lobby, hoping to catch up on email. Next to me are a woman and a man, huddled together, peering intently at their laptop. The woman is speaking to the man and clicking away with forceful pushing motions, causing the computer, perched on her knees, to sway perilously. She is ‘flying’ the computer like a fighter pilot. I listen intently to what she is saying.

On all fronts, she says, she has to constantly battle interruptions. She employs a research technique that is designed to ‘cut through the clutter’ and save time. To quickly find relevant material, she simply types in phrases in Google and then scans the web, telescoping in and out as necessary, zeroing in on the bits and pieces that she needs.

After typing and clicking furiously, the woman suddenly pauses for a moment and sits back, as if to catch her breath. She glances at her companion and grabs a pencil for emphasis. According to her, she says, this search-and-target method allows the pinpointing of relevant content with greater exactitude. ‘It’s more pre-CISE,’ she emphasizes, thrusting the sharp end of her pencil toward the computer screen as if it were a missile honing in on its target. Drawing out the sound of the ‘sssss,’ she seems to propel the pencil forward with the force of her enunciation, as if it could puncture the computer screen itself – or rather, the abstracting field of language – to apprehend her Real quarry.

This is one of the forms that reading takes at the close of the year 2005. One could see it as an effort to reach beyond language, tap into its technological support, or directly connect to the material and affective reality to which it refers. One could see it as part of a larger drive to augment and automate human capabilities; to develop new human-machine composites; and to eliminate gaps between symbol and event. What form of analysis is appropriate to it? Semiotic analyses fall short, because they seldom account for the technological vehicles that *drive* acts of viewing. Such an act of viewing is always produced through the machinic capacities of a time: a machine capacity that can no longer be ignored, especially as viewing becomes increasingly machine-enabled.

Perceptual activity belongs to the individual body, yet it belongs as well to our technologies, which provide its conditions of emergence.

Above all, this machine-enabled perception is driven by the relentless time pressures that have always defined the modern era. It is driven by the need to eliminate time and space intervals. To cut through the clutter. It aims to reduce the intervals between detection, analysis, and engagement, or desire and its attainment, in order to arrive at a real-time perceptual agency. Such a real-time agency is one in which multiple actors, both human and machinic, are connected through high-speed networks and able to act in concert. This is the motor of military history and much else.



Jussi Niva, from the series *Bow*, 2005, oil on board, 85 x 122 cm. Photo by Jussi Tiainen.

In such a landscape, one could say that cooperation reigns. We're all in this together, after all, building the utopian dream of the global village, the wired world, the global brain. And yet: competition plays an equal, if not more primary role. We don't necessarily want to see on a level playing field alongside everyone else. We need to see faster, better, and more precisely – whether in the name of convenience, profit, or protection – in order to outwit competitor and combatant alike. Even though we seldom acknowledge it, we are driven equally by such acquisitive and aggressive impulses. They derive from the production demands of both consumerism and warfare – to the extent that these become mutually reinforcing components of the same economic engine. The engine is also a subjective and somatic one. *When, in a competitive, real-time consumer-security culture, machine-aided perception moves toward the strategic, the panoptic, and the pre-emptive, then we no longer see but track.*

Tracking arises as a dominant perceptual activity in a computerized culture where *looking has come to mean calculating* rather than visualizing in the traditional sense¹ and where seeing is infused with the logics of tactics and maneuver – whether in the mode of acquisition or defense. When we track, we aim to detect, process, and strategically codify a moving phenomenon – a stock price, a biological function, an enemy, a consumer good – in order to gain advantage in a competitive theater, whether the battlefield, the social arena, or the marketplace. In an accelerated culture of shrinking space and time intervals, tracking promises an increased capacity to see the future. Leapfrogging the expanding present, it offers up a predictive knowledge-power: a competitive edge. It promises to endow us with the ability to outmaneuver our adversaries, to intercept our objects of suspicion and desire.

To track is to endeavor to account for a moving object – which could be one's self, since we track our own activities and rhythms – in evermore precise terms so as to control or manage it, lest it become unruly, wasteful, dangerous, or unattainable as property. When the suspicious and acquisitive eye tracks its objects, it fixes its sights on them as targets to be managed, eliminated, or consumed.

While tracking is fundamentally about the detection and strategic codification of movement, it is at the same time a reaffirmation of precise categorical location, whether in terms of geography or identity. It is about a semiotics of mobility, yet is also a reassertion of temporal and locational specificity – studying how something moves in order to predict its exact position in time and space. It signifies the dynamic between position and movement-flow – what we might call *inclination-position*. Based on my previous patterns of writing and the literary conventions that it follows, I am likely to write three more sentences in this paragraph. Based on previous patterns of key strokes, I am likely to take a break at 3:10. The tracked object may be THERE, but it is moving like THIS and will be in THIS future position at THIS future moment. This is a landscape in which *signifiers have become statistics*.

It is how computers think, and how we begin to think with them.

Tracking emerged out of the midcentury demands of war and production.² It emerged through the development of computing, the wartime sciences of information theory and cybernetics, and the development of structuralism. It helped to generate a semiotics of war and a wartime subjectivity. It coalesced out of a fear of the enemy Other, and

1 Lars Spuybroak, cited in Hansen, M.B.N. (2004) *New Philosophy for New Media*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 123.

2 One could begin with the development of radar during World War II, or even much earlier. But my emphasis is on computer-enabled tracking.

helped bring a modality of both friend and enemy into being.³ Its first manifestation was the military command, control, and communications system known as SAGE.

This was a system that automatically processed digitally encoded radar data generated by linked installations around the perimeter of the U.S., and integrated it with information derived from analog communications, weather, and other military data. Abstract information about position and movement was integrated with geographic data and superimposed upon schematic maps. Each SAGE control center tracked all aircraft in its sector and could automatically direct jets to intercept hostile incoming objects.

Within the matrices of SAGE, tracking emerged as a form of machine-aided, calculated seeing, studying movements of objects in order to prepare for their possible interception. It was a vigilant seeing accompanied by a demand for 'preparedness,' both in terms of one's own body and the collective machine-body of the military: an individual and collective alertness on the 'edge' of action. An analytical perception combined with an incipient mobilization. SAGE created demands for new patterns of organization, vigilance, and action: new modes of awareness and perceptual activity that could enframe and make sense of the volumes of abstract information that were suddenly at hand. It created new landscapes of preparedness, which traversed individual body, nation, and culture alike. We are not only speaking of a technology, then, but of a subjectifying and socializing technique, which impacts on language as well as the entire sensorium of the body.

According to Paul Edwards, SAGE was an archetypal 'closed world' system. From within its isolated confines, abstract images of the world were generated on banks of computers, managed through the control orientations that the technologies helped set in place. The systematic, logical rules of computing helped produce the sense that everything – warfare, ground realities, markets – could be formalized, modeled, and managed. Reality was figured as mathematical and 'capturable' through a formal programming logic. The world became a predictable, manipulable entity, and the future something that could be dominated.⁴

Such an orientation carries over into popular media, where the spectator is infused with an artificial sense of control over the machine and an exterior world represented on the screen. Reality is subsumed within the dictates of the interface. An unruly or unproductive situation is dominated, over and through the technology, and a de facto power relation is established between observer and observed. Moving through a world of information and communications technology, information is increasingly seen as more essential than that which it represents. Pattern is privileged over presence.⁵ The history of structuralism is part of this technical-discursive ensemble: an orientation

3 Galison, P. (1994) 'The Ontology of the Enemy: Norbert Wiener and the Cybernetic Vision,' *Critical Inquiry*, 21(1): 228-266. See also Galison, P. (2001) 'War Against the Center,' *Grey Room*, 4 (Summer): 6-33.

4 Edwards, P.N. (1996) *The Closed World: Computers and the Politics of Discourse in Cold War America*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1-15

5 Hayles, K. (1999) *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 19.

where reality began to be seen as determined by linguistic codes, and attention turned to the codes and conventions that produce meaning.

Such orientations of control are not produced by computing, but develop in conjunction with it: as computing creates the technological possibility of war, so war shapes computing. Technologies are always clusters of tools, procedures, and metaphors, functioning at the level of language, materiality, and belief.⁶ As Guattari would point out, information and communication machines do not merely convey representational contents, but contribute to the development of new assemblages of enunciation.⁷ A 'technoscientific semiotics' becomes stored in the operational strata of organization and practice.⁸

One could suggest three intersecting areas, descending from this wartime technical-discursive ensemble, that are bundled into tracking from the start. *First*, the perpetuation of an idealist orientation where humans have no access to unmediated reality and the world is actively constructed in terms of relational information systems. Here the world is scripted as inherently controllable, filtered through a scrim of information that modifies both system and materiality. *Second*, following from the first, is an emphasis on data patterns over essence: an evergreater abstraction of persons, bodies, and things, and an emphasis on statistical patterns of behavior, where the populace is pictured as a calculus of probability distributions and manageable functions. *Third*, a fundamentally agonistic orientation, deriving from a world built on confrontation and oppositional tactics, of tactical moves and countermoves.

SAGE unleashed a wave of command-control projects, which eventually formed the core of an emerging worldwide satellite, sensor, and communications web geared for panoptic global oversight and instantaneous military response.⁹ Contemporary descendents of this system – 'networkcentric' or 'next generation' warfare systems – aim to link sensors, weapons, communications systems, commanders, and soldiers into one giant computing grid, offering a comprehensive picture of the battlefield that can be viewed and acted upon collaboratively in real time.

Today the military traffics in panoptic visualization ideals. Plans are underway for the development of a 'Global Information Grid' – a secure, wireless network that will fuse US military and intelligence services into one unified system, making volumes of information available instantly to all military and intelligence actors. Proponents of this 'war net' say that it will change the military and warfare the way that the Internet changed business and culture. The consortium established to build it includes a who's who of military contractors and technology innovators. According to the chief executive of Lockheed Martin, one of its primary partners, this system will allow every member of

6 Edwards, *op. cit.*

7 Guattari, F. (1992) 'Regimes, Pathways, Subjects,' in Crary and Kwinter (eds.) *Incorporations*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 18.

8 Guattari, F. (2000) *The Three Ecologies*. London: Athlone Press, 48.

9 Edwards, *op. cit.*, 75-111.

the military to have ‘a God’s eye view’ of the battlefield.¹⁰ Tracking orientations are always entangled in beliefs and mindsets. In 1997, the Chief of Staff of the US Air Force predicted that by the year 2000, “we shall be capable of finding, tracking, and targeting virtually in real time any significant element moving on the face of the earth.”¹¹ Tracking as the ultimate panoptic ideal, propelled by a sense of divine right, could not be more explicitly stated.

Such a paradigm involves erasing the distinctions between media,¹² between agencies, and even between rhetorical forms.



Jussi Niva, *Twist - Blue*, 2005, oil on board, 122 x 153 cm. Photo by Jussi Tiainen.

Tracking generates abstract data that must be filtered through new forms of computer-aided visualization, oriented toward the viewers who must interpret and act on it. These graphic systems have not developed in isolation: they have developed in conjunction

10 ‘A Network of Warfighters to Do Battle in 21st Century Conflicts,’ New York (AFP) Nov 13, 2004, from SpaceDaily.com, 15 Nov 2004. Thanks to Irving Goh for this forward.

11 General Fogelman, speaking to the House of Representatives, cited by Virilio, P. (2000) *Strategy of Deception*. London: Verso, 17-18, from an article by F. Filloux entitled ‘Le Pentagone la tête dans les étoiles’ in *Liberation*, 20 April 1999.

12 Kittler, F. (1999) *Grammophon, Film, Typewriter*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1-2.

with popular news and entertainment media. There is a constant flow between these media as well as across the divisions between military and civilian. Tracking has been integrated into a wide-ranging culture of spectacle. It is an assemblage of enunciation that no longer heeds media distinctions, or civilian-military divides.

To understand tracking, then, we are compelled to look at *the combination of media forms and agencies* that it produces and registers. For quite obviously, tracking has been integrated into a regime of networked spectacle. It plays out across all manner of visual and rhythmic media, whether used for entertainment, communication, or locationing, by the military, policing, or civilian sectors. There is nothing outside of this system, and especially as it is increasingly able to tap into the affective dimension, where danger is eroticized. It produces a subject who is prepared for both disaster and desire, as both are subsumed into a larger cosmos of affective stimulation: a citizen indoctrinated to 'be ready,' in both a physical and cognitive sense, for any call to action.

According to Virilio, the real-time interface has replaced the interval that once constituted and organized the history and geography of human societies. Problems of spatial distance have been supplanted with problems of the time remaining.¹³ One could say that tracking was motored by the need for an instantaneity of action, where time delays, spatial distances, and 'middlemen' are reduced through computational systems that facilitate the sharing of human and machinic functions.

A new form of agency emerges within this coordination and command network, spanning spatial distance and merging information from multiple sources. A combinatory field of perception arises within a distributed field of shared functions. This is not something that is particular to the military: it operates across the board in a generalized and extended condition of visibility that has been called a 'machinic vision' – a condition where all perception necessarily passes through a technological circuit, and thereby emerges in a shared space between human and machines. In the most extreme case, which we find in the ideal of fully automated vision, the human can be left out of the loop.¹⁴ However, the human is never replaced by technology but continually co-evolves with it, modifying itself in response to technological change.

As Ryan Bishop suggests, the integrative history of military technology – a history of prosthetic extension, especially that of sight – has been paralleled by the rise of mass media and its manipulation of vision to create illusions of simultaneity, movement, presence, and depth. Not only are instruments designed to collapse distance and time, but they aim to close the gap between the perceiving subject and the visible world. In this sense they are haunted by the fundamental problems of representation, which concern the illusory correspondence between model and reality and the impossibility of

13 Virilio, P. (1997) *Open Sky*, trans. J. Rose. London: Verso, 10, 19, 30.

14 John Johnston, cited in Hansen, *op. cit.*, 99.

eliminating the referential gap. This problem is not confronted – rather, a return to a mythologized time of unproblematic perception is substituted.¹⁵

Abstract strategy games were always necessary for testing military operations and tactics. During the Cold War, increasingly powerful modeling and prediction technologies were needed in order to reach into the future and anticipate events. They were of vital importance since actual outcomes were too catastrophic to consider. Simulation was actively used in contrast to actual weapon technology that could not be used. Predictive simulations aimed to see the future through sophisticated scenario-planning techniques. They fueled an orientation of pre-emptive seeing: a form of vision that was always slightly ahead of itself, which not only anticipated probable events but, in some corner of the imaginary, seemed to mold reality to fit the simulated outcome. Simulated worlds paralleled real worlds, and beliefs about each were reflected in both. To be prepared was to anticipate the worst, and the worst could only be modeled. Once modeled, it is introduced into reality.

In a sense, there exists a probable construct – a kind of idealized scenario – that stands in relation to reality as its *tendency*. It configures as a statistical inclination, which hovers like an ideal form awaiting a reality that will fill it. It becomes a silhouette that models future positions, a ghostly forbear into which reality ‘snaps.’ The DARPA ‘futures market’ – a system whereby investors could bet on the probable occurrence of eruptive global events, with the idea that such markets could anticipate actual situations – was an outcome of this predictive formalism, as is the ideology of pre-emptive war itself.

To speak of pre-emptive simulation in this way is to speak of the formation of a disaster imaginary, which traffics across the worlds of fact and fiction, promiscuously borrowing its parts and depositing them across a wide range of cultural phenomena. Preparedness became something that could only be accomplished by way of simulation. Assumptions, beliefs, and mind-sets arise out of the technical-semiotic machinery of simulations as they are practiced, as such orientations in turn get embedded in its operational strata. Through these a subject is trained in new forms of movement, combat, and identification.

As simulations flow back and forth across the commercial sector, in various combinations of serious use, entertainment, recruitment, promotion, and proprietary engagement, perhaps ‘simulation’ is becoming less a modality of representation than a mechanism of translation – or at least, a form of incipience or potentiality, moving across various stages of enaction. In new training scenarios, live units are connected to simulation units, allowing a switching back and forth between virtual and real situations – a process that will have analogues in the civilian realm.

15 Bishop, R. and J. Phillips (2002) ‘Sighted Weapons and Modernist Opacity: Aesthetics, Poetics, Prosthetics,’ *Boundary 2*, 29(2): 158-159.

We are here in the territory of what John Armitage, after Virilio, calls the “logistics of perception management”¹⁶ – the realm of spin and ‘reality control,’ where facts, interpretations, and events are mutually shaped to conform to strategic doctrines; where reality is positioned as something that is inherently pliable; and where the public becomes a surface for the production of effects.

Fundamental contradictions remain. With the seemingly boundless opportunity, safety, and convenience that comes with tracking technologies and their assemblages, their user is increasingly able to be targeted and managed within new control regimes – a mobile focal point of a distributed Panopticon. At the same time that individuals are objects of a controlling gaze, they are also able to mold and ‘perform’ their visibility, identity, and connectivity within new social networks, in a reverse panoptics of pleasure.

In media-saturated societies, surveillance has gradually been made ‘friendly’ and transformed into spectacle, to the extent that it is no longer a condition to be feared. Rather, it is a condition to be courted: witness the phenomena of reality television, blogs, friendship networks, and webcams, and the rise of the media mise-en-scene as the primary form of social authentication.¹⁷ This ‘friendly’ control can be regarded as self-regulating: we are an integral part of systems that self-adjust through market dynamics or adaptive behaviors, allowing for the emergence of new forms of maneuver and masquerade. Within new ecologies of mind, we benefit from machine-human interactions all around us, a pervasive web of shared resources that offers boundless opportunity for identity refashioning. Further: in a database-driven culture of accounting, one needs to appear on the matrices of registration in order to ‘count.’ To be accounted for is to exist.

New technologies of production aim to narrow the intervals between conception, manufacturing, distribution, and consumption. Aiming toward instantaneity in shopping and media-entertainment development, they shrink the delays between detecting an audience pattern and formatting a new enticement that can address it. These technologies and their discourses aim to increase productivity, agility, and awareness, yet they vastly increase the tracking capabilities of marketing and management regimes. You are able to get what you want faster, but your behavior is tracked and analyzed by marketers who also can provide this information to police and military sources, who increasingly depend upon the business sector for a large part of their intelligence.

After the Civil War, the U.S. military was prohibited from future interventions into the domestic realm. Since most spy satellites are owned by the military, the military outsources some of its domestic intelligence needs to commercial satellite providers,

16 Armitage, J. (2004) ‘Beyond Postmodernism? Paul Virilio’s Hypermodern Cultural Theory,’ in A. and M. Kroker (eds.) *Life in the Wires: The CTHEORY Reader*. CTHEORY Books, 354-368. See Virilio, P. (1989) *War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception*, trans. P. Camiller. London: Verso.

17 See Weibel, P. (2002) ‘Pleasure and the Panoptic Principle,’ and Frohne, U. ‘Screen Tests: Media Narcissism, Theatricality, and the Internalized Observer’, in T. Levin, U. Frohne and P. Weibel (eds.) *[CTRL]SPACE: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 215-219; 253-77.

while relying on data gathered through the private sector on a number of fronts, especially to meet the sudden growth in intelligence demands after 9/11. Information from buying habits, travel locations, and audience demographics can be integrated into one comprehensive system, which aims to target consumers at the one-to-one level, offering individually-tailored enticements. Tracked, the user becomes a target within the operational interfaces of the marketing worlds, into whose technologies state surveillance is outsourced.



Jussi Niva, *Twist - Yellow*, 2005, oil on board, 122 x 130 cm. Photo by Jussi Tiainen.

We internalize conditions of surveillance and tracking. They enter into the logic of perception. We are both origin and object: the one who tracks and who keeps track. These conduits are not particular to the domain of policing, for they not only compel a watchfulness of the state, but a civilian watchfulness, where a suspicious or concerned eye is cast upon one's self and one's fellow citizens. Think of the way that one is compelled to assume a position of extreme vigilance – to 'track' or scan rather than simply see – in the reporting of 'suspicious activity' at an airport. Looking for such 'suspicious activity,' I suddenly realize the most insidious part of the drill: What about *me*? With this realization, I am transformed. I am the person at Sartre's keyhole, caught

in the act, who knows that he is seen at the moment that he sees. I have now become an object for the gaze of another. Looked at, I look at myself. Concerned that I could be 'suspect,' I modify my actions accordingly.

If tracking moves toward an instantaneity of action – eliminating time and space intervals and connecting multiple actors, human or not, as if they were one – then in the extreme case, as Virilio would have it, this real time arena is one in which 'coincidence' takes the place of communication,¹⁸ and the emphasis shifts from the "standardization of public opinion" to the "synchronization of public emotion."¹⁹ In a real time world where there is less and less *time* to act, or where action plays out in barely measurable fractions of seconds, interpretive attention must turn to the realm of the micro – those semi-'interior' states that accumulate at the border of action, just under the horizon of visibility. This is the realm not of visible action, but of a *disposition* to act, or a certain readiness to act. It is the realm of the affective. It is a domain of contradictions, where scopophilic pleasures and surveillant anxieties cohabit, irresolvable within the scrims of representation. For we are not only talking of meaning but of *motivating power*. Affective intensities are deeper than semantics.

This is primarily a non-discursive activity, which does not function through linguistic mediation but as a direct stimulation of the body, as one finds in athletic training, and as such is engaged in qualities of movement or rhythm over calculi of symbolic positioning.

According to Deleuze, affect fills the interval between perception and action. It is a modality of perception that ceases to yield an action and instead brings forth an expression. It is not about movement, but rather the quality of a lived interior state, which marks a pure coincidence between subject and object. It is a movement that is not engaged outwardly but absorbed inwardly – a tendency or interior effort that halts just this side of doing. It is about how one experiences oneself as oneself, or senses oneself from the inside.²⁰ It is the perception of one's own aliveness, vitality, and changeability, which can be sensed as 'freedom'²¹ – the body's sense of the aliveness of a situation, which also moves across the intercorporeal world.²² It is about the incorporealization of information, not its representation: a corporeal 'thinking' that is preconscious and pre-active, and which does not resolve to a statement.

As Nigel Thrift suggests, this is a site that has become increasingly analyzable and explicitly political through practices and techniques that are aimed at it specifically.²³ It has become measurable through new technologies of tracking and filtering that are able

18 Virilio, *[CTRL]SPACE*, 112.

19 Virilio, P. (2005) 'Cold Panic,' *Cultural Politics*, 1(1): 29.

20 Hansen, *op. cit.*, 134-135.

21 Brian Massumi, cited in Thrift, N. (2004) 'Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect,' *Geografiska Annaler*, 86 B, 61.

22 Thrift, *op. cit.*

23 Thrift, *op. cit.*, 65.

to probe into the intimate and nearly instantaneous states of bodily movement, orientation, disposition, mood, arrayed as calculations, statistics, and simulations, cross-referenced with databased records of consumer or citizen behavior: a newly constituted body of measurable states and functions, whose *inclinations to act* are quantifiable and understood as predictable.

According to John Armitage, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's 'Be Ready' campaign operates on this space of imminent mobility. The 'readiness' it promotes has no real object, and is simply perpetuated in a kind of self-generating machine. Yet it is a profoundly operational space, where the individualized 'desire for mobility' – the consumerist impulse – is recoded and displaced onto the theaters of embodied threat.²⁴ Desire and fear cohabit here at the threshold of action, as such concepts as 'freedom' do double duty, promoting a freedom of mobility as well as a sense of freedom that can only result from 'defending our way of life' – that is, the right to own and consume. Buying, then, functions as both pleasure and defense: a form of bodily and social enhancement, and a form of defense against that which would threaten it.



Jussi Niva, *Twist - Green*, 2005, oil on board, 122 x 160 cm. Photo by Jussi Tiainen.

This is an interlocking mechanism of acquisition and defense that becomes the very condition of mobility – a 'freedom of mobility' that is about defending the right to own

24 Armitage, J. (2003) 'On Ernst Juenger's "Total Mobilization": A Re-Evaluation in the Era of the War on Terrorism,' *Body & Society*, 9(4): 204.

and circulate objects, to constitute oneself as an object to be marketed, to defend these objects from harm, and to forge new pathways within unruly, ‘dangerous,’ or adventurous market territory. It is a process of defining the self in terms of an unbounded menagerie of attractions and fears, which leaves it forever lacking. Through an interlocking mechanism of selling and consuming, looking and buying, acquiring and defending, one grazes along endless arrays of enticements offered up for the desirous and protective eye – enticements that are aimed at the replication of desire in the eyes of others, or of drawing the groundlines of defense. What is needed in order to address this landscape is, following Foucault, Agamben, and Thrift, not only a biopolitics but a *microbiopolitics*.²⁵

If new technologies of networking, speed, and tracking have opened up this site of the micro – an affective space-time of bodily awareness, disposition, and readiness – then this is a space that can be politicized. The state of ‘readiness’ opens up a new site of operations in the intervals between perception and action. We can define it as a condition of heightened awareness and alertness, where the vigilant and optimized machinebody is roused and poised to act. In this state, one is not only cognitively but affectively engaged. Through the scrim of readiness, we can understand tracking as characterized by a shift toward real-time engagements and continuous, heightened states of alertness and preparedness in such a way as to generate an embodied state of receptivity for both conflict and libidinous consumption. It produces the body as a receptive site for both fears and attractions, and thereby integrates combat and commodity. It functions as a hinge between war and consumerism.

To enter this domain is to acknowledge the circuits of intensity that traffic under the symbolic register, continually confounding politics of representation. It is to enter the domain of contradictions, where violence can be both horrific and pleasurable, and where surveillance can be voyeurism: a realm where one secretly thrills to the potential spectacle of crime, and where danger is not only avoided but also secretly courted. This is the realm of the disaster imaginary and the criminal unconscious, played out in the ‘adventure factor’ in military recruitment advertisements, immersive games, and extreme sports. It manifests in the ‘morbid curiosity’ we feel when, present in the aftermath of a violent act, we have to look, but we don’t want to see. It requires the acknowledgement of danger as a constitutive element of attraction: the unpredictable, dangerous web of intrigue that pulls us into the narrative world.

Here we are also in the dimension of the Lacanian Real: the hidden fantasmatic underside of our sense of reality, which cannot be assimilated into the symbolic order of language or into the domain of shared images. It provides the fundamental support of reality, yet it cannot be incorporated into it. It results in the construction of sublime

25 Thrift, *op. cit.*, 69.

objects – impossible-real objects of desire – or simply in the *jouissance* one feels in the face of the catastrophe.²⁶

Tracking is the result of a machine-aided process of disciplinary attentiveness, embodied in practice, and bound up with the demands of a new production and security regime²⁷ – yet it is not repressive in a disciplinary sense, but also ‘excessive’²⁸ and thus spills over any conception of disciplinary power. In the end, the workings of tracking – born of a formal programming logic, of the primacy of pattern over presence, and of the agonistic calculus of tactics and manoeuvre – cannot be understood by formal linguistic meanings alone. It requires a vocabulary in which the limits of logical reasoning and ideology are recognized.

the author

Jordan Crandall is an artist and media theorist, and Assistant Professor of Visual Arts at University of California in San Diego, USA. His recent project was *Under Fire* at the Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam. His most recent books include *Under Fire: The Organization and Representation of Violence* (2004) and *Drive: Technology, Mobility, and Desire* (2002). He was going to participate at the pre-conference *Capturing the Moving Mind: Management and Movement in the Age of Permanently Temporary War*, held in Helsinki on 7 September 2005. Due to the serious natural catastrophes and human tragedies caused by Hurricane Katrina on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico last August he had to cancel his participation and postpone his trip to Finland until next year. Jordan Crandall’s contribution thus concretizes the theme of this issue on an utmost personal level.
<http://jordancrandall.com>

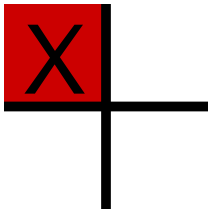
the artist

Jussi Niva (born 1966) lives and works in Helsinki. Niva’s principal medium is painting. His massive and intensive oils from the series *Twist* have a strong dynamic character. The movements of the brush are easy to sense on the board. Niva’s artistic point of view lies somewhere between the abstract and the figurative. The figurative elements suggesting the landscape are still present, but the landscape has lost most of its familiarity and recognisable character. Niva’s paintings are like fast glimpses of the surroundings, caught through the window of a fast moving car or other vehicle. With sufficient speed, the passing familiar landscape turns into an abstract view with stunning, bright colours and formal elements.

26 Lacan, J. (1978) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. A. Sheridan. W.W. Norton. See also Žižek, S. (2002) *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*. London: Verso.

27 Crary, J. (1999) *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

28 J. McKenzie, cited in Thrift, p. 64.



What is the Moving Mind and How Can it be Captured?

A partial thought distributed across a longer conversation*

Gillian Fuller (riffs on Andrew Murphie's thread)

What is a moving mind? Like all forms, conceptual or otherwise, it's hard to tell where they begin and where they end. So let's take it as given that our moving mind was and is a complex thing – a series of connections and feedback loops differentially distributed across technical, biological, socialised, mediatised (and more) modes of perception and cognition. Let's therefore also take it as given that this moving mind is embodied, that its stability is formed through complex sensing across, and making sense of, the multiple worlds through which it lives – the industrial worlds of trains and past empires, the informational worlds of impending ones, through different people, histories, agendas, mother tongues. Let's also assume that this mind has been conceived in order to 'think', which in our case may or may not mean the same as 'to produce'.

I wrote the above paragraph to the mobicast team and a colleague, Andrew Murphie, as a way of starting conversation about networked media, mobility and 'minds'. The conversation begun with the question of production, because on the Trans-Siberian 'conference' it loomed large, and sometimes uncomfortably, in an event designed for emergent practice. Was production to be the method by which a moving mind would be captured? The coupling of capture and mind seems to evoke not just notions of thought, but also of production, which when so coupled, become increasingly implicated in the more politically charged concept of 'cognition'. What kind of cognitive model posits that a moving mind can be captured? I turned to a paper of Andrew's in which he frames cultural questions of cognition like this:

It is a framework in which politics – whether of the state or of everyday life – is increasingly colonised by a rapid cultural propagation of cognitive models and practices. This propagation is found in many new images of thought (Deleuze, 1994: 129). It is also found in the fever surrounding the many new archival *technics* – from cognitive devices such as databases to new systems of regulating human cognitive performance. These transform the very substance and

* The longer and ongoing conversation includes, Adam Hyde, Andrew Murphie, Netta Norro, Stephen Shukaitis, Sophea Lerner and Gillian Fuller.

experience of thought (Derrida, 1996). I will assume that cognitive science and philosophy are no longer just science and philosophy (if indeed they ever were).¹

This propagation of both new images of thoughts and methods of cognitive control suggests that the idea of capturing a moving mind is an emerging practical concern for politics and not mere keywording. On one level, the complex cognitive technics of the Trans-Siberian moving mind/s was strongly geared toward to capture on multiple levels. Bodies captured in trains, locked onto rails, an intense focus on digitally capturing the minutiae of the experience from every angle, and when technically possible, uploading the data to the web by mobicast, when not, saving for 'the archive'. Documentation and distribution seemed to part of the 'cognitive model' of the 'conference' thus sharing with the digital economy, a technics of abundance – a situation which, Terranova notes, creates "an immediate interface with cultural and technical labour whose result is a diffuse, non – dialectical antagonism and a crisis in the capitalist modes of valorization of labour as such".² It's difficult to measure network abundance. And measures are increasingly tied to production. For many on the Trans-Siberian event, the measure would be publications, exhibitions, papers delivered, data captured. For others, it would be other. Production is a pretty complex thing. The train made it more complex. But, before one can 'celebrate' the complexity, Terranova reminds us that emergence is necessarily entangled with control.

The issue of cognition as 'model of production' of thought, not as thought itself, becomes pertinent if mind and capture are conceptually collocated in an experiment wishing to create as Deleuze and Guattari might say 'something else'. If a moving mind didn't consider the role of capture in cognitive models did it not risk being colonized by cognitivism? Andrew replied in one email.

* there is a lot of benefit in 'capturing' a mobile mind, or those aspects of it we feel we can – one can capitalise it's flows, and so on. but there is perhaps as much benefit in at least looking like one can capture a mobile mind (telling it is not so mobile, that it is other than it is). this is perhaps one of the main game plans of contemporary cognitive science, and its relations with social science, media studies, education etc ...

* of course, this is not just a reactive politics, it is a question for all of us ...

A moving mind can be captured in many ways, but mainly by what it thinks itself to be. So how to capitalize on its flows? Perhaps it needs to encounter itself in the misrecognition of its movements, suggested a later email. That might be a start. The potential of mobicast, for instance, to upload and download from the web from 'theoretically' anywhere and thus create feedback into movement of 'the mind' from other 'nows' and other modes of mobility offered one chance for such an encounter which might rupture what Varela calls the 'transparent' routines of thought and movement. Firmly locked into a remote railway infrastructures and economies, such connections/ruptures remained however, logistically difficult for much of the trip. Place and space did not merge as smoothly in Siberia as it did in Helsinki.

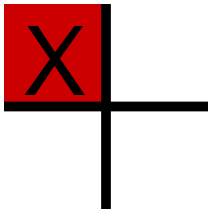
1 Murphie, A. (2005) 'The Mutation of "Cognition" and the Fracturing of Modernity: cognitive technics, extended mind and cultural crisis', *Scan Journal*, 2(2) [http://scan.net.au/scan/journal/display.php?journal_id=58].

2 Terranova, T. (2004) *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age*. London: Pluto Press, 96-7.

The chances for local feedback loops to form were, for most participants, never much more than those of the curious tourist passing through. In recognition of the misrecognitions, perhaps the conference should have pushed the connections with perpetual war and moving minds in its itinerary as well as thematics, and sped up. War is both thoughtful and thoughtless. It is capable of both thought as an operation that creates distance from the moment, and other perplexing, shocking encounters that deregulate the moment into something much closer and embodied and not quite thinking yet. In this moment, moving at logistical speed, new mobilities need to be invented on the fly. In the half haze of multiple time zone changes and strange constraints of being locked in movement, they may not entail much 'thought', but they may produce other 'nows', which may be sufficient production enough itself.

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The Trans-Siberian Radio Project: Enacting Polymorphous Radio

Natilee Harren

Inhabiting the Trans-Siberian train, you become part of an odd culture where your relationship to the world is turned on its head. Rather than a life of rushing around the city, an insignificant pedestrian amidst a blitz of cars, bicycles, and other humans, you as a train passenger become one with Siberia's singular means of cross-country travel. The jerking, clicking, rushing and sighing of the train become part of your own bodily movements. It seems odd to walk towards the back end of the train – that which has suddenly become the *wrong* direction. Everything moves forward.

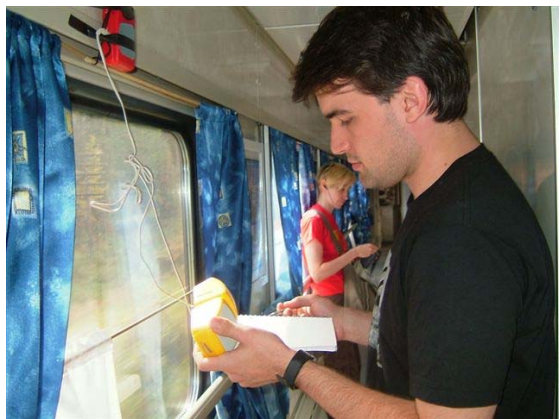
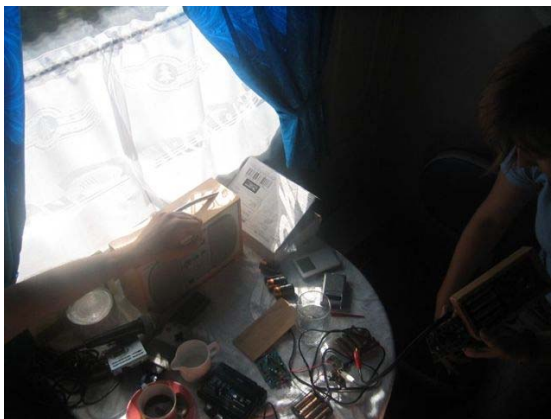
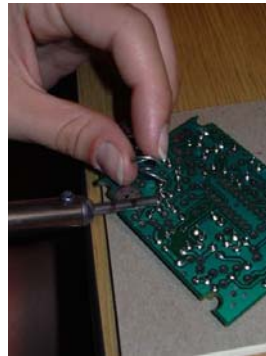
At the same time, there is a strange feeling of mental stasis within the train since there is nowhere to go. Sure, one is always in motion, but the most natural of human actions become impossible. Walking movement is directed in a strict, linear expanse by the train cars. Running is not appropriate. Everything looks the same. You can go to the next car, but the feeling is that you have not moved at all.

How to mark home in a moving container, one that through and through reminds one of its culture of impermanence, constant change and exchange (of staff, passengers, currency, cars)? How to establish for ourselves a temporary home in these unreal settings, which make it impossible for us to go through a day in any of the normal ways we know how?

The Trans-Siberian Radio Project looked for a response in media, specifically a medium of our own making, and more specifically that of radio.¹ The train cannot maintain connection with any of the communities through which it passes. One can catch snippets of AM and FM signals here and there or grab a newspaper whenever possible, but soon enough, with the passage of time and kilometers, the media becomes

1 The Trans-Siberian Radio Project, created by Natilee Harren in collaboration with David Rose, equipped the Capturing the Moving Mind conference with its own microradio station. Public broadcasting of the on-train seminars was made possible with low-power FM transmitters, and interested participants were instructed on how they could use this simple technology to create their own broadcasts. At night, Trans-Siberian Radio turned a train car into a nightclub, and to conclude the conference, hosted a final broadcast in the Dashanzi artists' district in Beijing to premier newly commissioned audio works by Scanner, Nathan Davis, and Angel Sánchez Borges. www.trans-siberianradio.org

obsolete and loses its grip on the train and on our present reality as passengers on it, until we come into the next station and grab a piece of home there. But those homes are fixed to the earth and we will always outrun them. We are fixed in motion, and so our media must come with us. We are our own, temporary spatiotemporal matrix.



With the *Trans-Siberian Radio Project*, we mark the space with a collective sound that is both created and received by us. The source and subject are wrapped into one. This is radio on a micro scale, created by transmitters that are fractions of a watt apiece. The oppressive metal architecture of the train forbids a mass broadcast to all conference participants at once, which was the initial desire and intention of the project. These circumstances forced us to adapt our mission to that for which our equipment was best suited: a model of polymorphous radio, as articulated by Japanese radio activist Tetsuo Kogawa.

Polymorphous radio recasts radio as a highly localized, short-range, listener-controlled media. Rather than creating a one-way relationship where a singular, inaccessible broadcast power relays information for a large group of people to digest, polymorphous radio multiplies the number of transmitters nearly to equal the number of receivers. Tetsuo Kogawa writes, "If you had the same number of transmitters as receivers, your radio sets could have completely different functions. Thus radio transmission technology could be available for individuals to take control of their transmission and reception ... Radio stations which can only cover areas within walking distance might already exist as a form of a particular unit of polymedia, a chaos unit. Polymedia are not intended simply to link smaller units into a larger whole: instead they involve the

recovery of electronic technology so that individuals can communicate, share idiosyncrasies and be convivial.”²

This folding of listener and broadcaster into one body, caused by fracturing a broadcast area into several, easy-to-operate mini stations, keeps radio from growing out of control or beyond its best use, which is to foster communication within a community, however unstable it may be. It is also accessible to all since microtransmitters can be purchased inexpensively or built with basic soldering. They are transportable (*The Trans-Siberian Radio Project* being an exemplary case), so a radio community can arise anywhere where basic short-range communication is desired. Schools, churches, malls, protests, campsites, parties, caravans, boats, festivals, etc., are all appropriate. Kogawa’s idea of microradio stations as chaos units may seem revolutionary, but in actuality it is simply a backwards-looking redirection to the simplest, first and best uses of radio. Not only are microtransmitters easy to acquire, operate and maintain, they are (often) legal and flexible enough to be adapted to any situation that requires organizing communication.

And so it is to no surprise that for the purposes of a conference taking place in the environment of the Trans-Siberian train (controlled yet always shifting, not-quite-modern, makeshift), polymorphous radio proved to be the only sustainable model.

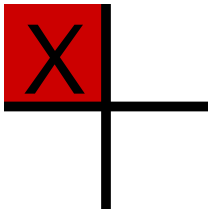
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2 Kogawa, T. ‘Toward Polymorphous Radio,’ [<http://anarchy.translocal.jp/non-japanese/radiorethink.html>], accessed 6 October 2005.



Mobicasting: Let 1000 Machines Bloom^{*}

Stephen Shukaitis, Sophea Lerner and Adam Hyde

Let us suppose that life is a dance, a chaotic unfolding of bodies in motion, repetitive but utterly unique gestures tracing lines of flight over the unfolding of the new earth these steps create: the resistance of fleshy bodies and their collisions embodying the limitless nature of human experience, from the antagonism of the unexpected blow to the warmth of the gentle caress. Each interaction always exceeding our capacity to enunciate its experience but paradoxically embodying the very basis from which we come to communicate, to relate, to describe in common.

Stepping back from the metaphor consider: is the art of political communication all so different from this? Moments of creation, resistance, and expression, from the collaboration of gardeners growing a patch of vegetables in a community garden to mass actions in the streets, are constituent elements in an on-going process of creating new forms of sociality and community, new forms of life. But in the same way the experience of motion always exceeds our ability to express them, forms of political communication stumble on the gap between an ever-present sensation of movement and our attempts to describe it. The intricate weaves of affective bonds, experiences, and memory tatter and fray from their immediacy in the shaping of representation. And all too often attempts to describe become methods of capture, transforming vibrancy into pallid reflection.

The tension between the inside and outside of experience, between the *emic* and the *etic*, has long frustrated attempts to communicate the immediacy of experience beyond itself. From the bodies in streets proclaiming their collective desires to busy hands of artists

* The mobicasting system is free software and is documented at <http://www.streamingsuitcase.com>. The system was realized in the context of the Trans-Siberian web documentation project produced in collaboration with m-cult and Kiasma [<http://www.kiasma.fi/transsiberia/stream.php>].

and philosophers shaping singularities with creative techniques, we find ourselves caught in a dynamic where the description of an experience or event forces one to step outside of it into the logic of removed narration. When asked 'so what happened?' one can attempt to piece together a sense of the event through collections of its bits and pieces or to grasp the whole through description, binding oneself away from the event through the separation of inscription. Such dynamics find themselves seeping into even the most earnest forms of independent media where all too often logics of professionalization and attempts to gain legitimacy lead to communication constrained by format and expectations.



Mobicasting is a new platform of media technology developed by Adam Hyde and Luka Princic for 'Capturing the Moving Mind' that provides opportunities to address these dynamics. It is at once two ideas. The first is technical: build a system to deliver 'pseudo-live' video from any device capable of delivering images by email. The second is tactical: build a system that enables the production of video reports positioning the mobile phone as a networked 'outside broadcast' studio. The first goal is an exercise in developing models of 'broadcasting' that employ the simplest technologies possible. Simple technologies are the ones we already know how to use. So simple is the idea: send a sms or an email with attached images, sound, text or video. In the subject line of the email put the name of a video program. This is your new 'program.' This material is then compiled into a video as either a 'live' stream or as a downloadable video file. That is the technology, but the pay-off is the tactical side, for which the tool was built. With this mechanism it is possible to make collaborative online video content from any device capable of sending email. This can be used for capturing moving minds, or it can be directly used as a device for reporting on events that are normally out of reach of wired or wireless Internet connections.

Sitting in tension between the fragmentary ingestion of experience and the formation of a narrative flow, this represents an attempt to move beyond the logic of post-production. As a pragmatic solution to challenges around a limited bandwidth, instead of a smooth stream, which always represents an almost-recent-now over a fragile connection, fragments of media can be aggregated from numerous sources into a continuously flowing output subject to repetitions, sporadic updates and an *ad hoc* alphabetical editorial algorithm. It is both processed and raw at the same time. An open archive of media materials formed from the multiple experiences and perspectives embodies of a wealth of ingredients that can be creatively redeployed, mixed, interspersed, and scrambled proliferating into journals, art exhibitions, films, manifestos, and forms of media art. Not knowing what others will be contributing or what they are intended for, Mobicasting is a platform designed with a high degree of user hackability; it creates an interface for the flexible shaping, reshaping, and ordering of media materials for creative uses, many of which may not have been anticipated beforehand.

Rather than shaping the description of an event afterwards into an accepted narrative framework, Mobicaasting allows for the on-going *modulation* of an event representation as part of the production of relations and interactions that construct the event itself and networks of relations formed out of it. As a social technology of dispersal and transmission Mobicaasting exists in their interstices between the technical apparatus of media production and corporeality and immediacy of experience. It creates a space and method where an emergent collectivity and the flesh of the event can construct and shape its representation in a process immanent to its own unfolding.

The goal is not to construct a high tech other within the created social space, but rather to open up a space for the collective shaping of self-representation and narration as a part of the unfolding event whether a conference on a train making its way across Siberia or any other gathering at which Mobicaasting could be useful. It is a platform for the enabling of emergent narratives, an indeterminate media form in that the frameworks, structures, and memes generated are open to the situation in which they find themselves created and are shaped out of them. It allows for forms of media production that are enmeshed within the aesthetics and affective conditions of their creation. Things like Mobicaasting in this sense could not just be one more trick up the sleeve of media activists but potentially offers a format for collective mediation shaped through the technological environments we find ourselves in. By enabling collective participation in the shaping of an event's representation and the technology through which this is done it transforms the dynamics of attempting to capture experience into those of creation beyond and through the collectively created experience.



This is not to say that tension between capture and representation, between experience and articulation, has been finally and successfully addressed through the promises of yet another piece of high tech gadgetry. Far from it. And perhaps the very dynamic that new forms of independent media attempt to address the ones that are the most important are the hardest to handle: why does one want to capture a moving mind in the first place? What fuels this desire for mobile communications to transcend distance as if they could become transparent and now for the first time create an ideal speech situation and democratic public sphere? Emerging from today's cybernetic salons to develop new privileged forms of mobility that desire constant connection with distributed forms of community created by their own movements; these traces and reflections, recorded through mobile media forms, often constitute its own self-referential and self-contained audience. The dividing line between reality TV style titillation and collective documentation, between the corporate media logic of rolling news coverage and grassroots media, increasingly blurs and breaks down. It may very well be in that trying to capture a moving mind we are captured by our very desire to form coherent forms of self-representation; have we formed a polyvalent and participatory media panopticon where the inmates all watch each other, recording every motion, utterance, and moment from multiple angles and modes of inscription? Mobicaasting by building itself on an open platform suggests opportunities for reshaping its usage and deployment in new

forms that are open to the multiple and fluctuating forms of desire, motivation, and connections we bring to media communication.

The multiplication and expansion of new forms of movement, experience and life must find ways to escape, to move through and beyond a logic of representation which confines them in updated versions of the same old story. It is a form of walking while asking questions, not only about the world and our shared experiences, but also about how we ask and represent these questions to ourselves. It may stumble awkwardly trying to find its footing, perhaps even tripping over its own immaturity at points, but is ultimately strengthened within the molecular proliferations from which it emerges. Rejecting both uncritical techno-utopianism and naïve Luddism, the task is to seize upon opportunities for political communication by working from the social dynamics of technology and the technical forms extended across the entire social field. Let then a thousand machines of life, dancing, celebration and movement bloom across the endless fields of human experience.

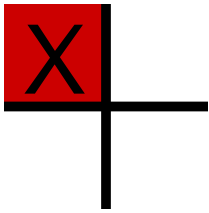
Photographs from Capturing the Moving Mind, Helsinki-Moscow-Novosibirsk-Beijing, September 7 – September 20, 2005. Photos by Adam Hyde, Netta Norro and Sophea Lerner.

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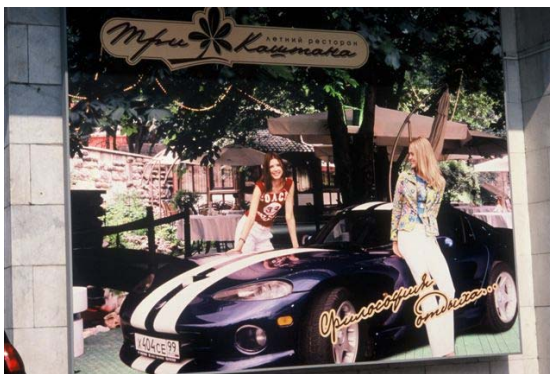
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In Between

Joram ten Brink

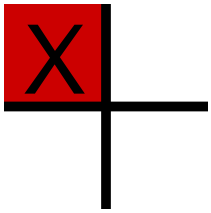




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The Moving Borders of Art

Anna Daneri and Serena Giordano

translated by Simonetta Caporale and Chris Gilmour

If we went to investigate the places where the border between one country and the next unfolds, we would see nothing but earth, asphalt and vegetation: no trace of an outline. The border does not exist, you can't see it, and it is exactly this lack of physical form which paradoxically makes it unquestionable. It is not born from the lay of the land, it is not a natural given, it is not tangible and it is not the consequence of a geological transformation. If this were the case one could remove it, as happened with the Berlin wall, and this physical destruction, tunnelling through a mountain or building a bridge, would result in its definitive elimination.

It is therefore difficult to oppose something which does not physically exist, but which exists in a very concrete way in the conditioning of those who find themselves on this side or that of an imaginary line. It brings to mind the film by Louis Buñuel in which a group of rich bourgeois people at a party find themselves unable to leave. Every time they try to cross the threshold of the house something pushes them back: the doors are not locked, no one has blocked them, but something stops the guests from leaving, something which is *inside each one of them*. Simply, the border is nothing but a set of pre-conceived and internalised ideas which define not so much the portions of territories, but rather identities which are internal and external to that territory. Its function of exclusion and inclusion is played out through definitions of others and of self: the border between man and woman, the border between rich and poor, between Muslim and Christian, between believer and agnostic and so on.

The internalisation of borders is seen in at least two ways, which are only seemingly different. The first is the more obvious and tangible way, of those who deny others access to a defined territory, and every day, foreigners, *a priori* aliens, who can never be citizens of the world, clash against this brutal and absurd border. The second is more subtle, but no less damaging, and is that which separates individuals in the name of the right to difference. This unquestionable right is often used to create imaginary categories, inexistent borders and identities which belong to no one.

Capturing moving borders

The world of contemporary art might seem to be totally free and without borders. The languages are infinite, they mix together, and every artist can express themselves as they best see fit; through transgressions and provocations, abandoning the very idea of the artwork, or negating the condition of the artist. A world in which, apparently, there are no limits to free individual expression or to the continual re-invention of 'new differences' constantly opens up new directions. We are used to reading the history of art as a series of events in chronological order, with one event a direct consequence of another. But we could also consider reading it in a dimension which is not temporal, but rather spatial, thus recreating a geography rather than a chronology. Major states which unite smaller regions bordering on each other, where border crossings by artists are strongly determined by the identity they declare. This identity is determined by a series of commonly accepted conventions, which are unquestionable if considered from a temporal point of view, but which are much more problematic if we look at them in a spatial way. An example: some of Turner's seascapes, when seen from a nontemporal point of view, could be seen as examples of abstract expressionism, but from an exclusively temporal point of view they can only be placed in the field of romantic painting.

As with all borders, those of the geography of art also give rise to two essential phenomena. The first is the construction of collective identities through nationalist rhetoric (movements, trends and related subversions), the second is the exclusion of anyone who does not have a precise role within the geography as defined at that time. We could say that, in order to enter each individual state, one must show an identity card, and if this card is not in order you will be excluded. Another example: let's look at so called *Outsider art*. This label brings together the mentally ill, prisoners, solitary individuals and even the questionable sub-category of 'folk art' (art from places which have been defined by someone who is not familiar with them as being 'exotic'). Examining this phenomenon with slightly more objective eyes, these are certainly artists just like all the others, independent of events in their private lives. They make artwork, they show in private galleries and museums, their prices can be high, they are written about. However, in order to enter the world of 'normal' artists they must present a passport on which their identity as 'outsider' is clearly indicated (the mad, the primitive or the naïve). The simple definition of 'citizen of art' is not sufficient, in the same way that 'citizen of the world' is also insufficient outside the artworld. In both cases it will be necessary to specify a sort of belonging: a race (in the worst cases), a gender, a nationality. Only then, certified as outsiders, will the border open for these artists.

Both worlds live within their own borders, and, when someone crosses over, it is not as an artist, but as a madman. Whilst the immigration of the mad into the world of 'sane' art is impossible, 'tourism' for 'sane' artists in the world of the mad doesn't present any problems. Madness or 'socially unacceptable' behaviour can be worn by 'sane' artists as a tourist might wear a garland of flowers around their neck as they step off the boat in some exotic land. This type of *souvenir* (think of body art and self-harming practices, for example) is much appreciated in the homeland, and the stamp in the passport won by this journey has often been very useful, as we see in the vast range of rhetoric about madness and transgression in art.

As often happens outside the borders of art, in other – much more worrying – worlds, the construction of a collective identity and claiming the right to this identity leads to the construction of a terrible discrimination. The rhetoric of the excluded, the naïve, the deviant, becomes an essential ingredient for winning the right to citizenship. Presenting oneself as a simple artist and asking to be judged in terms of one's work, keeping one's own psychological state private, will not be enough to avoid exclusion: the border is well defined and well guarded. In considering outsider artists, we cannot talk of 'self-inflicted marginalisation', as these people are often manoeuvred by psychiatrists and specialised critics, but there can also be cases in which the artists do consent: consider the last Venice Biennale. This was an exhibition which, starting with the female curators, saw a substantial female contribution. Some of the artists stated that they accepted the invitation only because of the female curatorship, and a small female state was brought into existence. Like all small states this had its own rhetoric, well represented by, for example, the group *Guerrilla Girls*. This female collective, from the inside, states their objection to exclusion, but there is more to it. It is exactly this being excluded which makes them more attractive, and therefore included. The construction of a collective identity allows them to have a type of nationality (dangerously close to the idea of 'race', given that they proclaim themselves to be supporters of the rights of ethnic minorities).

These two examples (outsiders and women) are, respectively, examples of the two objectives of the nationalist rhetoric of the 'united states of art'. The first defines the exclusion of the foreigner, the stranger, the second defines inclusion, made possible by the construction of the borders of a minor state of female art, which groups together a range of different citizens (the artists) under the flag of the so-called 'female-specific'.

The internal organisation of these minor states is like that of a constitutional monarchy, in which a number of art historians play the roles of the king and queen, without power, but essential as representative icons; while critics play the part of true leaders of government with full powers. Furthermore, critics are the unquestionable strategists and geographers of art. They re-draw borders, decide the laws and re-invent the behaviour and identity of their citizens: movements and currents which exist in a more or less peaceful and agreed state of permanent war. The patriotism of art has nothing to do with the anachronistic divisions of the Venice Biennale based on countries, but with other concepts which are just as much of a pretext – conceptual, post-expressionist, transavantgarde, non-expressionist, and so on – rearranging an atlas 'artfully' drawn up by critics. And it is critics, in exchange for protecting their citizens, that gain consensus and space, thus becoming 'the artists of art'. Critics organise their armies, they choose generals and recruit soldiers, but even in the artworld there are forms of 'conscientious objection':

Although these festival (Fluxus) represented the first major public platform for our work we where all at odds with George Maciunas when he tried to organise us into a group, with a common strategy and aesthetic. He himself stood out as the most amazing, self-contradictory mixture of neo-Dadaism and Leninism. He tried manifestos. We all disagreed. He tried to create unity. We all disobeyed. He wanted to appoint us ambassadors of Fluxus. Everyone disassociated. But we where

at the same time rather amused by his innumerable slogan, diagrams designed to show the true connection and all the other propaganda material that gushed from him.¹

Anderson's independent behaviour, and that of many other famous personalities connected with Fluxus, could be the expression of a small revolt, but we can also find genuine revolutions in contemporary art, where some artists have refused to submit to the will of the critics, despite understanding the essential function they play in promoting work for the market. They have not been collective revolutionaries, but individuals, and the most notable is without a doubt Andy Warhol. Simultaneously playing all the parts (critic of himself and artist) Warhol founded 'Warholand', a free state inside the territory of Pop art, politically autonomous and governed exclusively by himself. Like all absolute rulers, Warhol declared war on the countries which he saw as too powerful (abstract expressionism), was hated and feared by foreign enemies (the critics), had many internal enemies (those who described him as cynical and cruel), was loved by others for his generosity (Warhol promoted many artists through his Factory).

The following text illuminates what was his clear-sighted revolutionary project from the start:

In 1960 Leonard Kessler met Warhol coming out of an art shop with paint and canvases. "What are you doing, Andy?" he asked. Without blinking, Andy, answered: "I'm going to start Pop art". "Why?" asked Kessler. "Because I hate abstract expressionism, I hate it!" answered Andy. A few weeks later, while Ted Carrey was expressing his admiration before a Rauschenberg collage at the Museum of Modern Art, Andy spat out: "This is nothing, it's a piece of shit!" Carey replied: "If you really think it's all advertising, and that anyone could do it, why don't you do it?" And he answered: "Huh! I have to think of something different."²

On that afternoon in 1960, Warhol hadn't yet painted anything. The canvases were white and the tubes of paint unopened. Warhol the artist had not even started to work, but Warhol the critic was already active. Warhol didn't know what he was going to paint, but he knew he was going to 'start Pop art', 'thinking of something different'.

Since then, the borders have changed and re-formed many times and the minor states have multiplied under the influence of a few 'superpowers' who decide on their selection and production. We have passed through the cold war between conceptual and new-figurative, which, like all wars, had not been decided on by the citizens (the artists), but by those who redefine the borders (the critics). It is they who created 'war propaganda', which on both sides painted the enemy in simplistic terms, at times resorting to genuine smear campaigns, criminalising the other side with strong words.

These battles often used outdated categories and schemes which we thought were consigned to the past. Ideas such as the supremacy of painting (for which Michelangelo criticised Leonardo long ago) or the necessity to expand artistic activity to the real world (as if it was not part of the real world).

And we as citizens (and we hope also those who read this) do not recognise ourselves in nationalist rhetoric. In the same way, although they may be in the power of the politics

1 Andersen, E. (2002) 'What is?', in S. Solimano (ed.) *The Fluxus Constellation*. Genova: Neos.e, 27.

2 Bockris, V. (1991) *Andy Warhol*. Leonardo Paperback, 111, translated from Italian.

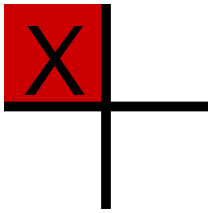
of art which grants or denies their right to citizenship, artists too work in a dimension in which, fortunately, there is still a degree of autonomy.

Language editing by Mike Garner.

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Irreversibility, or, the Global Factory

Imre Szeman

The ever-present danger of epochal analysis is that, as it runs ahead with emergent phenomena, the modes and forms of life that are still dominant are too quickly left behind in the theoretical rust. The proletariat emerged onto the stage of world history in the middle of the nineteenth century, at a time when most of the population was still engaged in subsistence farming. Agriculture remained dominant when the factories of Fordism made their appearance at the turn of the last century. And the forms of post-Fordist, postmodern, affective and creative labour said to characterize our present era are propped up by a global mass of factory workers, miners and oil rig workers, migrant farm labourers and others still engaged in work of the 'body' rather than 'mind'.

Satellite technologies, the Internet and cell phones may have reshaped social experience, but it is at our theoretical and political peril that we forget that people using the technologies of mobility still have their basic experience of the world mediated by the alienation of the time-clock. Rustbelts and silicon economies in North America, seeming to embody the end of old processes and the ascendancy of new ones, obscure the fact that the global economy remains fuelled by older, more basic processes. Indeed, *the* most basic processes of all: the transformation of the wealth of the natural world through industrial systems that remain essential for the creation of those emblematic objects of globalization: post-modern office towers, computer screens, satellites and cell phones. The dynamics of global politics today are essentially nothing but an endgame struggle over the last ecological reserves of raw materials for economies that function only through the fantasy-dream of perpetual growth: oil, coal, natural gas, iron ore, water.

The passage across Siberia, Mongolia and China on the Trans-Siberian lays these processes bare. A journey that fits the genre of adventure travel (however mild it may now be) for all those who are not locals, the train traverses spaces of great natural beauty across two continents. Fields, lakes and forests, unimaginably large, seemingly able to resist by sheer virtue of their colossal size the intrusions of humanity, stretch away to the Polar Regions. The more instrumental origins of the railway are, however, apparent everywhere. Despite its immense length, this is a train journey through a zone of intense factory production – the Ruhr Valley stretched over six time zones, complete with huge cities rendered invisible to the global imaginary by virtue of the fact that they are situated in that great fantasy of emptiness called Siberia.



These are not the factories typically associated with globalization – the export-processing zones and tax havens of Guangzhou or the *maquiladoras*. Instead: coal-fired generating plants, tractor and railcar factories, coal mines, steel factories, aluminium-smelting plants, and a hundred other things besides, each mile another stretch of what only appears to be abandoned buildings, now put back to work in new economic circumstances for ever-greater modes of extraction and exploitation. Zones of intensified production offer clues to the often invisible forces reshaping the human and natural landscape on a global level: the rail line between Omsk and Novosibirsk has the greatest freight traffic density on earth. The view from the train window is of a blighted landscape, of human processes intruding and desecrating the hills and plains that spill away northward to the Arctic Circle. As different as they may have been politically, the economic forces of communism and capitalism share this in common. Still, in a world of six and a half billion people, production and extraction are a necessity, an inevitability, a source of wealth, a way of life. The wealth disappears into the markets; the cities, factories and human dreams that produce it remain fixed in place. Smokestacks and mazes of pipes, which seem to have been accreted almost accidentally onto the roof tops and surfaces of factory buildings (the legacy of multiple and conflicting logics plus time), strive to eliminate poisonous gases from the place of work, only to deposit them into the living spaces of the communities of workers.

These spaces of work and production form some of the basic spaces of human experience in the global epoch. They constitute a vernacular architecture. However much they are meant to be hidden away or expelled from the ‘civilized’ world, a catalogue of human spaces and experience would have to include these boxes sprouting a maze of steel appendages, where two basic activities occur: the life of humanity –



production – and that first extraction of value that begins the drama of what Deleuze and Guattari describe as the nightmare of every social formation: capital.

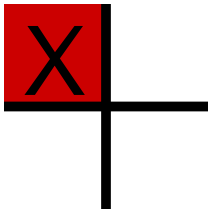
The German architect, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, visiting Manchester in 1825, wrote: “Here are buildings seven to eight storeys, as high and as big as the Royal Palace in Berlin.” The moment when factories grow taller than palaces is for Schinkel a melancholy one: the passing of history from the era of ornamentation and aesthetics into the plainer, more utilitarian world that would follow. But this moment marks another passage, too. When the factory exceeds the palace, we enter a space of social contestation: politics emerges from the world of powdered wigs and enters the streets. It is hardly surprisingly that the mirror-shade aesthetic of globalization seeks to banish smokestacks and factories to the hinterland, in the process trying vainly to drag politics back out of the streets to sequester it in the lifeless hermeticism of the glass-and-steel boardroom. Luckily as fate would have it, the politics of the street are as irreversible as the still glowing embers of the industrial age.

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‘Velkom tu Hell’: Precariat Moscow

Steffen Böhm and Carlos Fernández

It is said that we live in an age of precariousness, the signs of which we can find everywhere: in the labour market, in immigration, in the wars against terrorism, in our daily lives. Many borders that used to hold us in place have become fluid: old borders have vanished and new ones are in the process of being erected – de- and re-territorialization.

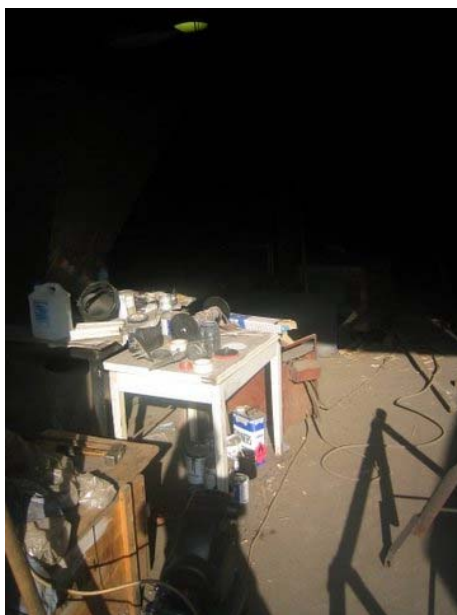
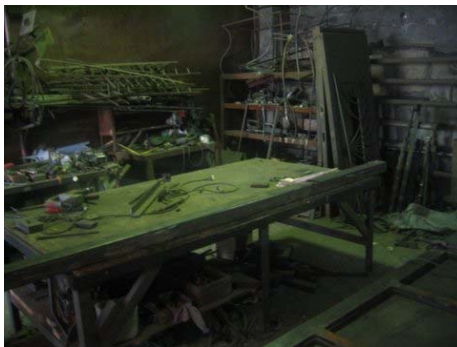
When this new age of precariousness is announced, we are usually referred to developments in the labour market, which, since the early 1990s, has seen an immense expansion of the discourse of flexibility: temporary work, subcontracted jobs, outsourcing, downsizing, seasonal and part-time jobs, project and research work, illegal employment, self-employment, entrepreneurship, McJobs, etc.

This discourse of labour flexibility, which goes hand-in-hand with a flexibilization of global markets, is seen to re-territorialize the social along new lines. In this space of flexibility a new category appears: the precariat. The precarization of work means that most social and labour rights achieved in the 20th century vanish or are re-configured, and uncertainty spreads everywhere.

Precariousness cuts off and divides. Those who still have a fulltime job and a pension can consider themselves lucky – they are the affluent workers. But more and more work is of a precarious nature: the precariat becomes the symbol of today’s so called post-modern or post-Fordist capitalism, in which the mad volatility of markets dominates all aspects of social life.

But how new is this so-called age of precariousness? What does the ‘post’ in post-modern or post-Fordist mean in relation to the historical development of capitalism? Has capital not always de- and re-territorialized social relations in such a way that maximum exploitation of the social is possible? Has Marx’s *Capital* not shown in quite considerable detail the parasitic nature of capital and its absolutist aim of turning the social into ‘total social capital’?

There is a lot of talk about precarity today. What is sometimes missing is a genealogy of precarious labour relations, which would trace the precariat back to the infancy of capitalism. In the days of ‘Manchester-capitalism’, did people not worry about losing their jobs, about losing their houses, about being able to feed their families?



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Did markets not fragment and transform on a continuous basis back then? Have capitalist markets – industrial or financial – not been mad ever since their genesis? Is there not a certain mad precariousness at the heart of capital? That is, should not the very nature of capital be associated with the concept of precariousness?

Another aspect that is often missing in today's thought on precariousness is the fact that we are not simply talking about the precariat as such, as if all precarious labour relations are the same. Surely, there is a difference between the precariousness of Western artists, academics and activists who enjoy the privilege of travelling from Helsinki to Beijing as part of a co-ordinated group experience, on the one hand, and the precariousness experienced by illegal immigrants in, say, the outskirts of Moscow, on the other.

An analysis of the political economy of precariousness has to travel via a critique of today's multiple phenomenon of migration. There are literally millions of migrants on the move globally at any one time: fleeing from war, terror, corruption, poverty, economic meltdown, ecological disasters and other crises of global capitalism.

These migrants travel to the 'first world' searching for relative economic and political security. They become the precariat underclass, washing old ladies' bottoms, cleaning bankers' offices, minding the children of precariat academics and producing cheap toys for Western supermarkets. The privileged precariat of the 'first world' depends on the work of these 'third world' migrants. One precariat labour force exploits the other. 'First world' and 'third world' come together in a precarious space of exchange.

Moscow, the former capital of the 'second world' has become one of these urban conglomerates where the 'first world' meets its dirty underbelly. This vast city has one of the highest concentrations of luxury hotels and cars anywhere in the world. The extremely rich, who have built their wealth on the debris of the melt-down of real-existing socialism and the rise of real-existing neo-liberal capitalism, come together with migrants from within Russia as well as many ex-Soviet republics in one place. Of course, this 'meeting' is often no more than a virtual one, as the migrants – who are mostly illegal – work and live in parts of the city that will never be seen by the rich.

The precariat migrants come to Moscow looking for a stake in the new riches of Russian oligarchy capitalism. Just as Roman Abramovich started as a street dealer, some hope to make it big. But most simply need to make a living and cope with the rising prices created on the back of neo-liberal reforms. So they work as illegal employees in factories that produce cheap goods for the GUS and European markets. The Moscow authorities know that they are there illegally and they know under what kind of 'third world' conditions the workers exist. The authorities are kept at arm's length with bribes.

The workers go home once a year, if they can afford the journey, which normally costs several months' pay. Their families are thousands of kilometres away waiting for the occasional money transfer so they can pay the rising bills. It is not just fathers who never see their children. It is often mothers who are the breadwinners – they leave in search of work in far away places, and only come home once in a while. Precariousness is not simply a labour relation – it's a relation of life itself.

Yes, precariousness is everywhere, but not all precarity is the same. Post-Fordist labour relations are articulated in various ways. There are explicit and hidden hierarchies. The trans-national classes of privileged professionals include precarious labour. Yet, their situation is very different from the precariousness that millions experience in the hellish gulags of the 'third world' districts of urban monsters like Moscow.

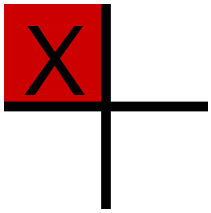
One of the most urgent tasks is for these different types of precariat not just to meet virtually in one city – where one precariat exploits the other – but to come together in a real meeting. What is needed is a class consciousness among all precarious labour that lets all the precariat see their mutuality and inter-dependence. What has to end is the ruinous, exploitative relationship between the affluent precariat of the 'first world' and the 'third world' underclass that is everywhere.

The 'third world' does not just exist on television; it is not just in Africa or in parts of Asia and Latin America. The 'third world' cannot only be found in the South. The South is everywhere. It is a Global South; the 'third world' is right here amongst us. We just have to look at who serves the food in restaurants, works in hospitals, and cleans the street. The affluent precariat of the Global North meets the precariat of the Global South on a daily basis, yet there is very little interaction between them. One of the most urgent political tasks is for such a real meeting between the precariats to take place.

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Intellectual Generals of General Intellect

Pierre Guillet de Monthoux

Three times we met, the artist and me. She was planning a performance, and I was to be part of it. In retrospect, perhaps I should refer to the event as an ‘installation’ instead of a performance. But I get ahead of my story. As a scholar – or at least trying hard to be one – I was as happy as a Dutchman on a cocoa box! I had sent the artist my latest book¹ and she had called it interesting, *en passant*. In return she added me to her mailing list, which entitled all of us to information on her shows. My God, I thought. She certainly is active: one show in London followed by a show in Amsterdam, in Krakow, all over the place. Soon she will be a global phenomenon. Finally, despite our busy schedules, we were able to find time to meet to plan *the* performance.

Our meeting was like a business meeting: you know, a meeting where you feel someone expects something you are supposed to deliver, something for which the client has very special expectations. Still it was not quite a business meeting. The difference between a business meeting and this somewhat strained conversation was the lack of forms, standards, and specifications. I was to be part of this artwork, or performance, or installation, and she would tell me what to do. And that was that. End of discussion. Soon we began talking about the common topic of art and business.

“I like your book,” she began, “but do you realize what it means to have a recommendation from a guy from Harvard Business School on the jacket? Do you realize that your book will never be read by any serious artist?” After an appropriate silence, she went on. “I don’t agree with that kind of simple judgement, of course, but it is a fact. I know what I am talking about. I have worked in management consultancy myself. In fact, I loved that world; it still continues to inspire my work.”

She used to spend long hours in the office, she continued, gaining inspiration from the things going on around her. And always she kept her artistic work out of the business. She realized how her work as a management consultant would hamper her career as an artist. “It’s much the same way the recommendation of someone from HBS would repel most artists from even touching your book,” she pointed out.

1 Guillet de Monthoux, P. (2004) *The Art Firm: Aesthetic management and metaphysical marketing*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Some time later she asked me to come to the bar for a drink before the performance. I arrived and got acquainted with the team she had flown in to cover the show. There was an art critic deeply concerned with the problem of finding a spot 'outside capitalism' in our time of global capitalism! A Benjamin scholar, she lived in Berlin and was a very interesting person. There was also a 'facilitator' from the UK, a smart and interesting man who accompanied an artist who was to create commentary drawings during the performance. His job was to draw a huge cartoon on one of the walls of the gallery. Some local art students, obviously impressed and happy to be part of the event, completed the team.

I too was delighted to be there. This was fun, I thought, although I felt a little anxious about having had no real discussion about what was to come. As nice as the meeting was, I really needed further details. No one said a thing, though, and I remembered that the only instructions I had were those she had given me at our first meeting. She had asked me to tell the audience about a case in my book, and the story she wanted me to tell was about Jacques-Louis David and his work organizing a revolutionary feast in Paris during the terror of the 1790s.

I honestly don't know what happened next. What I do know is that I really did not want to do what she had ordered me to do. Only the devil knows for sure why, but I wanted to sing a little song instead. Seems irrational, doesn't it? Singing a song... and I can barely carry a tune. But there I was. I said a little something and then opened my mouth and delivered my little ditty. Since the piece was not long, I don't think people minded too much. At the beginning of the program, the critic had spoken, then I had spoken and sung, and if I remember correctly, the artists next presented, using the templates from a standard PowerPoint program. The whole program was managed by the facilitator while the draftsman drew his big cartoon in the background. Then everyone enjoyed a drink, as usual, and a very few people asked questions, also as usual.

I left the session with mixed feelings, at least one worth mentioning. Why in the world did I sing my little song? Why not give this professional lady what she wanted: the story of Jacques-Louis David? Why not accept and comply with the orders of the client, who had even included a budget item to provide me with a fee for my work. Had I asked for money? I later felt badly about what I had done, but damn, it felt right at the time. As I sat in that particular environment, directed by that particular facilitator, and listening to that particular critic in quest of an Archimedean point outside what she called global capitalism, I had no choice. Jacques-Louis David, that second-rate painter turned opportunistic revolutionary, no longer was relevant. Or was he perhaps too relevant? Anyway, I had to do something other than perform as the business professor telling the story of a mediocre painter turned political activist. I am accountable. I did what I did, and I am sure I will never again be asked to do something in an art context.

Maybe I should ask the artists to perform to my business students. They would not be a terrifically good audience, though. They are slowly but surely abandoning PowerPoint aesthetics and are feeling less and less compelled to comply with a corporate culture that is eroding and disappearing. They have picked up bits and pieces of Negri and Hardt, and they agree with Boltanski' and Chiapello's diagnosis of project-manic neo-

management sucking the aesthetic energy out of the art world.² They are out there in the labour market and dream of getting the protection and privileges their parents got as corporate condottieris. To the new generation seeking employment, corporate culture is at best a peregrination into rosy nostalgia. Corporate culture, with its set roles, clear cut functions, and methodological success orientation has become dusty history. Regardless of how it is defined, culture in general now constitutes the foundations for aesthetic leadership.³ Oldfashioned management, with its facilitators and PowerPoint graphics, is today best enjoyed at Putin's Russian and Deng Xiaoping's Chinese Cadre-Academies, where the guardians of the wall between art and business defend the domain of the pure political power recently witnessed in the Chodorkovski show trial.

When management, performing as the rites and religion of big business, becomes a well-documented piece in museums of contemporary art, some want to replace it with general intellect, in the service of which artists can then pretend to be Intellectual Generals. And will there really be room for more Jacques-Louis Davids in the Multitude?⁴ Or shall we just forget it all and warble our guileless songs in this strange post-fordist, or better, post-corporative era.

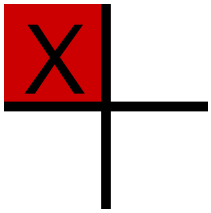
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2 Boltanski, L. & E. Chiapello (2005) *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. London: Verso.

3 Guillet de Monthoux, P., C. Gustafsson & S.-E. Sjöstrand (eds.) (forthcoming) *Aesthetic Leadership: Managing Fields of Flow in Art and Business*.

4 Virno, P. (2002) *Grammaire de la multitude*. Nîmes: Conjunctions & L'éclat.



The Mimetic Turn of Economy

Jussi Vähämäki

Instead of speaking about a linguistic turn in the economy and production in the so called Post-Fordist society, information society or knowledge economy, we should frontally talk about *the mimetic turn of economy* and organizing in general. Mimesis is a Greek word for imitation. It is well known that Plato chased out art from the ideal republic because of its mimetic nature: art is not looking after the real names or real numbers of beings, but imitating only some of their external or visible aspects like colour, sound and form. It is not possible to organize good life on the basis of constantly transforming compositions of individuals and things.

In the mimetic turn of economy art and production of value blend in and become inseparable. This reveals the intimate interconnectedness between the concept of value, art and imitation.

The mimetic turn means that the organization of the elementary human faculties, the general preconditions of human action and knowledge (rather than the actual and specific actions and tasks) become the central question of value creation. What is at stake in imitation is just a general human disposition to react to the things that do not belong into its immediate environment, to the things that do not have any specific and foreseeable meaning. Indeed, what is imitation? It is basically unification or identification that does not have any external reasons, or its reasons are completely trivial.

When looking at the contemporary economy, it is quite evident that the mechanisms of creation of value are changing. This is due to the growing importance of knowledge and communication in the process of valorization. Today knowledge and communication are immediate forces of production and controlling the production of knowledge, its transmission and access to it are central political questions.

The theories of value we find in classical (or Marxist) political economy or in the actually dominant economics tradition are not able to explain the process in which knowledge is transformed into value, because they ignore the *directly social nature of value*. The reason to the immediately social nature of value is a consequence of *vergesellschaftung* of production and labor – even if the word ‘socialization’ is not a good word to explain the change, because it implicates that before the production of

value was not social, but in some way individual, which, of course is not true. The transformation has led to a disappearance of specific place and time for production.

The immediate social character of value and its creation in social cooperation have led economists like André Orléan to speak about the need to have 'humility in economics' (Orléan, 2002). The expression has important methodological connotations. According to Orléan economics has come to the point in which it must include among the conditions that affect economic fluctuations the knowledge of persons, their beliefs and the way they understand their surroundings and justify their actions. Production of economic value and production of society have a tendency to become one.

This means that economy and economics have to move from the limited sphere of rationality towards *the totality of social life*. They blend into the society and become part of the production of society, or part of that what is called 'biopolitical production' (Hardt & Negri, 2000).

In the knowledge economy labor force, instead of being a physical or biological (organic) concept, has revealed its purely mental and potential nature that has no existence outside social cooperation (Lazzarato, 2002; Virno, 2002). This social cooperation has a mimetic nature in the sense that it is based on the elementary human disposition to imitate others.

In the field of economy mimetic behavior challenges the neoclassical assumptions of human beings as perfectly rational animals as well as the idea of market quotation as a complete synthesis of all financial information (Shefrin, 2001).

As Orléan (1999) suggests, it is in the nature of the financial markets to function on the basis of the mass behavior of the investors. To function properly the financial economy depends on the mimetic mass behavior based on the *deficit of information* (Marazzi, 2002). The lack of information has also this meaning: lack of pre-established order. As Gilles Deleuze pointed out information is basically a command or an edict.

What characterizes mimetic behavior is the *deficit of information* or lack of information. In short: *imitation begins where information ends*.

This means that imitation indicates the specific 'place' where value is created in the social cooperation (Orléan, 1999; Marazzi, 2002). This 'place' is a threshold on which human animal reacts (or opens up) to that which is not information and has no predetermined meaning, i.e. to the world that is not ordered and has to be created.

Information in this sense is nothing else but commands or inputs that order human action, and, correspondingly, imitation starts when command, or information, loses its credibility.

Mimesis or imitation does not find its expression in any specific activity but in the *absence of specific activity or information*.

If mimesis is defined as the deficit of information, then mimetic action and the new *mimetic methods* to organize and control this action grow out from *the crisis of transmitting information*.

Typical mimetic behavior takes place when people run in the same direction where the others are running not knowing why they are running and where the others are going. They *trust* that the others know as the others trust that they know. This trust does not have any positive content as information; it is based on *formal expectations* of how people in general act or think. These formal expectations *constitute the general conditions of action and knowledge*. They form the only, even if theoretical, possibility to control and guide mimetic behaviour.

The deficit of information constrains people to navigate in the world with the help of the most elementary human faculties that do not transmit any specific information. This underlines the importance of developing the *general capacities to respond to every possible situation*.

The management of imitation is possible only through the management of these general capacities or general conditions of human action and communication (the faculty of language, the ability to communicate, to think and remember, the ability to learn and to relate to 'the presence of others').

The *general conditions* and attempts to organize them in organizational practices, in politics and social life at large form the basis to the mimetic methods that are used to transform the social cooperation between preordained, meaningful and productive services. It seems to be extremely important to study *how are the general conditions (of knowledge and action) created, what is their role in innovation process, in what ways they measure and condition knowledge and how they are organized and managed*.

If in the industrial era the basic acts of organizing were restricted to the level of assignments, action and information, now the main focus of organization is on the level of possibilities and contexts of actions and information without paying much attention to the outcomes or meanings.

This could be said in the following way: If money functions on the level of completed actions and autonomous products in a sense that money is able to organize only that which is already complete, the new principle of organizing functions on the level of incomplete actions, incomplete information and constantly changing assignments typical to the new societies of control: "In the societies of control we never complete anything" (Deleuze, 1990). This means that the *arkhe, the very origin* of organizing in contemporary economy is *the lack of information*.

From here grow the new methods of organizing work and production in contemporary society. Organizing does not mold, but models action and information. It is mimetic in its nature.

But the lack of information is also the structural precondition for arbitrary power or *Empire* as a political organization. Every empire has to create means of control that do not have a need to 'know everything'. The operations of an empire are always

demonstrative. An empire has to demonstrate or show its power. This structural need to demonstrate power increases the spectacular violence of its police actions, especially in the globalized society of communication.

In the end of the *Capturing the moving mind*, we can ask what kind of counter-demonstration the conference was to the spectacular logic of empire? Or: What could be counter-organizing?

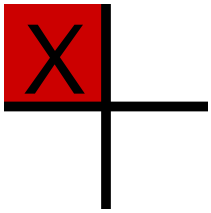
No doubt one of the key concepts of counter-organizing is the concept of intuition. To study the laws of intuition means to study the very laws of the coming political organization that can escape the spectacular logic of empire.

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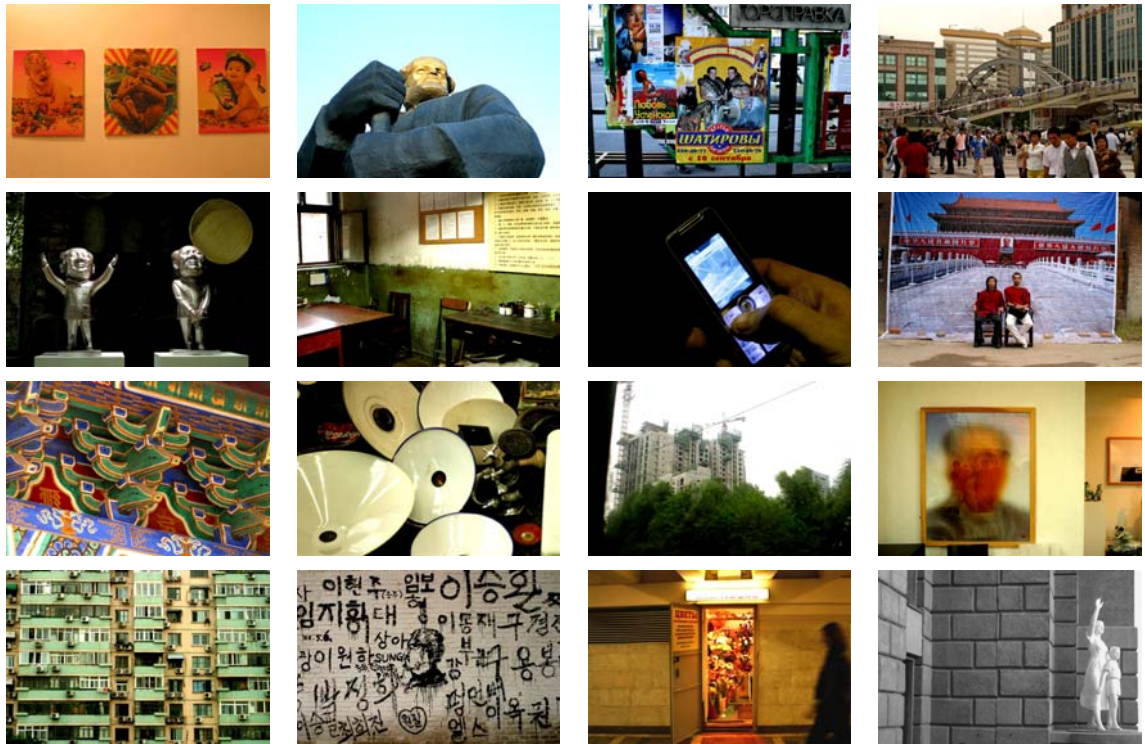


Revolution

Bodó Balázs







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the artist

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