

---

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository

---

9-5-2024 1:00 PM

## Productive Disintegration

Vinay Sharma, *Western University*

Supervisor: Schuster, Joshua, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in  
Theory and Criticism

© Vinay Sharma 2024

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd>



Part of the [Comparative Literature Commons](#), [Comparative Philosophy Commons](#), and the [Continental Philosophy Commons](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License](#).

---

### Recommended Citation

Sharma, Vinay, "Productive Disintegration" (2024). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 10467.  
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/10467>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact [wlsadmin@uwo.ca](mailto:wlsadmin@uwo.ca).

## Abstract

This thesis is a genealogy of the following thinkers: Karl Marx, Gilles Deleuze/Felix Guattari and Nick Land insofar as particular works of these thinkers, when strung together, increasingly center the technological as controlling and process of production. When moving through the works of these thinkers, a direct correlation is uncovered - between the technological taking control of the productive process, and man losing control of it; wherein the technological instantiates itself on the backs of humanity's disintegration. A question regarding how one may live amidst times of nihilistic precarity is also addressed in this thesis, with the answer being found in aesthetic autonomy and self-gratifying excess.

## Keywords

Capitalism, Marxism, Technological Determinism, Species Being, Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena*, Accelerationism, Artificial Intelligence

## Summary For Lay Audiences

This thesis genealogically maps the works of Marx, Deleuze/Guattari and Land – unfolding the role of the productive process insofar as it increasingly centers the technological, and directly entails the disintegration of man. Namely, in such a mapping, the productive process increases in importance, while man and his innate creative ability (his species being - insofar as it is a human capacity) decreases. The first chapter defines the productive process via an exploration of both economic and philosophic theory. Using the *1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, the concept of species being is then explored as an innate anthropocentrism establishing man as a creative, promethean figure at the center of the productive process - in control of his own labour power and of technology and thus of historical/societal change. The later works of Marx, however, centers the productive forces (technology and labour power) as the primary motor undergirding the productive process, undermining man's species being whilst promoting the technological.

Species being is further undermined in the second chapter, through Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, wherein man morphs into a technological figure – a post-human. Finally, in Nick Land's work *Fanged Noumena*, it is the technological, defined by a capitalism-AI composite at the helm of the productive process, birthing itself from the future point in time known as the Technological Singularity (wherein technological development has far surpassed the control of man). The final chapter of this work discusses the practical plausibility of such a theoretical trajectory– answering question regarding the plausibility of the exponential development of both capitalism and the technological. Finally, this thesis will end by arguing that if one presupposes exponential technological development in direct correlation to the disintegration of human species being, one possible way to live alongside the productive process is to embrace the aesthetic and subjective experimentation of such a process.

## Acknowledgements

I would first and foremost like to thank my advisor, Professor Joshua Schuster, for his open-mindedness, direction, and continued support in writing this thesis. I am forever indebted to the Center for the Study of Theory and Criticism at The University of Western Ontario for allowing students to push the boundaries of theory by encouraging us to freely pursue diverse topics of research, whilst funding such endeavors. I would like to thank all the friends I have made at the Centre, and would like to especially thank the Hyperstitional Research Society for being a continued source of inspiration. Finally, I would like to thank my entire family, and all my friends from Winnipeg. Particularly, I would like to thank my mother, sister, and my countless aunts and uncles. This thesis is dedicated to my grandfather, Suresh Kumar Bhatt, professor emeritus of business and mathematics at the University of Manitoba, and to the memory of my late father, Vivek Sharma, who was a professor of business and mathematics at Red River College in Winnipeg.

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Keywords .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Summary For Lay Audiences.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 - Technological Tendencies of the Outside .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>0. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Production .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Marx and the Anthropocene: Alienation in The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. The Essence of Man – Species Being and Self-Actualization .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Alienation, Production and Technology.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. The Role of Capitalism and The Paris Manuscripts as an Ethical Project.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>6. Cold Metallic Flesh: An Introduction to Vulgar Marxism and the Transmutation Towards an Anti-Humanism.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>7. Mapping Technological Determinism.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>8. Vulgar Marxism and Technology .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>9. Disregarding Dialectical Logic.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>10. The Role of Ethics and Capitalism in Vulgar Marxism.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>11. Conclusion: The Anti-Humanism of Vulgar Marxism Positioned Within the Genealogy Thus Far .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 - Birthing the Machinic: From the Post-Humanism of Deleuze and Guattari to Nick Land’s Virulent Anti-Humanism.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>0. Introduction: Reading Deleuze, Guattari and Nick Land.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>1. Anti-Oedipus and Desiring Production .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2. The Total Reconstruction of a Machinic Subject – Desiring Machines.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>3. The Schizophrenic Subject as Post-Human, and the Body Without Organs .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>4. Anti-Oedipus and its Relationship to Species Being – Judge Schreber, Ethics and Capitalism .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5. Concluding Remarks on Anti-Oedipus .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>6. Introducing Accelerationism: Rebellion of the Outside .....</b>	<b>46</b>

<b>7. Freudian Drive Theory and Thanatos .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>8. Revisiting Anti-Oedipus – Desire as Thanatropic .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>9. Nick Land and Machinic Desire .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>10. The Techno-Capital Singularity.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>11. Techno-Capitalism, Cybernetics, Time and Space .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>12. Accelerationism’s Anti-Humanism and Species Being .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>13. Fanged Noumena and Species Being – a Genealogy of Productive Disintegration .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3 - What is to be Done?.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>0. Introduction .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>1. Uncharted Horizons – Is Capitalism Truly Limitless? .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>2. The Technological Singularity .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>3. What is to be Done? An Accelerationist Aesthetic .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>4. Productive Nihilism – Experimentation in Aesthetics as a Way of Life .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>5. The Speed of Subjectivity.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>6. Conclusion – A Genealogy of the Future .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Curriculum Vitae.....</b>	<b>100</b>

## Preface

The following thesis is a genealogy - the primary focus of which is the Marxian concept of “species being” and its transmutation amidst the accelerated development of the productive process, as well as that of the technological. This genealogy begins with the early Marx and his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (also known as the *Paris Manuscripts*)— wherein the concept of species being is introduced – and continues contrastingly with later Marxist texts such as the 1859 *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. This in turn leads to Deleuze and Guattari’s seminal work *Anti-Oedipus*, and finally ends with *Fanged Noumena*, a work of accelerationism by the infamous Nick Land.

This transmutation of Marxian species being is in effect undergone at the behest of a process of production that is increasingly centred around the exponential acceleration of what is loosely deemed ‘the technological’ or ‘the machinic’, which becomes more theoretically pronounced through the works of the aforementioned philosophers. With the *Paris Manuscripts*, this process is both ordained by and at the behest of man; yet as the genealogy proceeds, man is forced to loosen his grip on this process, as it is taken up by the metallic talons of the technological. The great irony of such a genealogy is its attempt to linearly parse through the works of each thinker with a somewhat organized approach, only to showcase a theory of technological production that is essentially explosive, pluralistic, and unsystematic. This explosiveness is due to the increasing emphasis on a productive process.

The genealogy will span the first two chapters, starting with a basic overview of the concept of production, covering traditions from both classical and Austrian economic schools, and the work of Aristotle within the philosophic tradition; following this, a rough definition of ‘technology’ or ‘the technological’ will be parsed out of the overview. This thesis will then transition to an



explanation of the *Paris Manuscripts*, and its discussion of man's alienation under capitalism. This discussion of alienation ends by explaining how man is perniciously alienated from an inherent, self-actualizing essence known as species being. The first chapter concludes with an overview of vulgar Marxist theory, which will be posited as a theoretical gateway towards an anti-humanism. Marxist texts such as the 1859 *Preface* and *On Imperialism in India* will be utilized to showcase these vulgar tendencies, with their insistence on centring the productive forces as the mover of history. The second chapter will begin with the post-humanism of Deleuze and Guattari; a post-humanism, which continues the tendencies of vulgar Marxism via Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of desiring production, desiring machines, schizophrenia, and the body without organs. This in turn will lead to the virulently anti-humanist and nihilistic work of Nick Land via the compendium of essays entitled *Fanged Noumena*, in which concepts such as machinic desire, and the techno-capital singularity, will uncover a virulent anti-humanism.

The first two chapters will plot two contradistinctive lines of thought: one wherein species being -- insofar as it is a directed, conscious, self-actualizing, and essential instantiation of one's labour and productive capabilities -- slowly melts away from the human subject and gives way to productive, nonhuman and/or technological actors (the productive forces in later Marxist work, cosmic desiring production, in Deleuze and Guattari, and techno-capitalism in Land). Through this genealogy, man will undergo a process of *unbecoming* - from the rightful wielder of species being at the helm of the productive process in early Marx, to assuming the role of a mere consequent of the productive forces within the later, more vulgar Marx, to becoming a post-human, productive entity in *Anti-Oedipus* -- to confronting total obsolescence in the works of Nick Land. The machinic outside, however, will gain what is lost by the human; with the technological, acquiring

an autonomous hold of the productive process, which is then directed towards self-propagation. Production for the sake of humanity slowly melts into production for the sake of the machinic.

Further as this genealogy continues, the ethical aspects of Marxian species will go from merely being questioned with the introduction of later Marxist texts, to being understood as an anti-ethics in *Anti-Oedipus*, to becoming a totally void concept in Land's *Fanged Noumena*. Finally, as this genealogy progresses, capitalism will morph from an oppressive, unethical mode of production in early Marx, to a necessary stage of economic development in the later Marx, to a tendency that is both an invigilator throughout history and a means to unleash desire in *Anti-Oedipus*, to a totalizing system, synonymous with Artificial Intelligence, continually creating the present from a point in time known as the technological singularity in *Fanged Noumena*.

The third chapter aims to explore the relevance of this genealogy, by examining how such a philosophic trajectory may map onto current tendencies in economics and the study of technological development. This chapter will explore arguments presenting capitalism as something continually flouting limitations and contradictions, whilst constantly reinventing itself - engendering new pathways of development. It will also explore the possibilities of artificial intelligence within the context of the technological singularity and transhumanism. The third chapter will then consider a possible way of life alongside the nihilism of such a genealogy, by focusing on the instability of both human subjectivity and accelerationist aesthetics in the wake of a plausible techno-capitalist dominance in tandem with the slow process of human disintegration. This will be pursued by theorizing around gender-based experimentation, body augmentation, fashion, and cyberculture.

The concept of 'species being' and its disintegration via an accelerated technological production is the focus of this work for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, the instantiation of species

being *uniquely* posits the continual emancipation of humanity through the total control of a creative, anthropocentric productive process via human labour. Such control relates to and is in tandem with the seizure and collectivization of the means of production, the free pursuit of a creative and life-affirming existence for man, and a total emancipation of the human subject. It is this ability to command the reigns of the productive process that is hammered and bludgeoned by the subsequent philosophic traditions. This is firstly showcased in Marx, as his later work develops into a technologically reductive vulgarity, uncovering tensions within Marxist thought (between his early and later works). This genealogy will thusly be of philosophic interest within Marxist scholarship.

Figures such as Sigmund Freud, with his theorization of drives (particularly the death drive, or Thanatos and its propensity for creativity), and Nietzsche with his concept of the will to power further pose serious questions to the idea of humanity's promethean control over both society and a historical progress. It is not surprising that figures such as Deleuze and Land are highly indebted to these thinkers; an indebtedness that will be explored within the genealogy.

Further, a rigorous connection between Marx, Deleuze/Guattari, and Land are presupposed in works such as the *#Accelerate* compendium of essays published by MIT Press, and the connection between Deleuze/Guattari and Land's metaphysics of desire has been explored in para-academic circles (YouTube videos, in online forums and in some experimental academic journals such as *e-flux*), but an attempt to explore these three thinkers with a directed rigor - when the technological and productive premises of their work are presupposed - has yet to be undertaken in such manner within academia, making this work a small contribution to the growing scholarship and interest around this exciting, realm of theory.

This thesis utilizes a genealogy because its progressive unfolding shows forth a story of man's demise. One wherein human subjectivity undergoes a process of encroachment at the hands of the technology, and of capital (insofar as these two become increasingly intertwined), to the point where we become alienated from each other, our surroundings, and our very own being. Eventually, this story draws a picture of technological growth wherein the machinic eventually gains a semblance of being, leaving humanity bloodied and abandoned in the annals of history as we did to those, whom we also deemed to be inferior -- all to control the productive process. Such a story is concocted through a directed and specific reading of the aforementioned texts and is yet to be excavated and presented in such a manner. Echoing the gnostic cries of the demonic Judge Holden in *Blood Meridian*, the exponential development of the techno-capitalist singularity never sleeps, and never dies.

Within a societal context, as technology develops alongside an exploitative, and pernicious capitalist mode of production, major questions are continually posed in real time to the idea that the category of labour is an inherently emancipatory aspect of human life. Thus, such a genealogy may provide insight into the very real societal developments (or perhaps a societal unravelling) and trends prevalent in modernity.

On a more personal note, concerns regarding my own character may show itself forth in the presentation of such a brutally nihilistic work of philosophy. The source of such concerns will firstly stem from my invocation of Nick Land, a figure whose views on race and sexuality are unsavoury to say the least. Another concern will regard the more right-wing libertarian undertones that the third chapter will invoke. Regarding my invocation of Land: I refuse to shy away from philosophy because of the massive amount of respect I have for it. My infatuation with Land's work is exactly that – a reverence regarding his *work*. What he espouses personally is of no interest

to me whatsoever. My hope is that the reader of this thesis grants the invocation of Land the same treatment one affords the invocation of Heidegger, Foucault or Kant. These thinkers are controversial both the way they conducted themselves, as well as the personal views they held, however, their work continues to speak for itself. The erasure of their work in light of their respective views/actions would be nothing short of criminal. I ask the reader to uphold the same standard for Land, whose work I venerate without question due to its originality, beauty, and daringness. Regarding the libertarian undertones of aesthetic excess that will be espoused in the third chapter: this is merely a strategy being invoked due to the increasingly libertarian conditions of society and economics that humanity is faced with. It does not represent any sort of ideal worldview that I would espouse or recommend for either myself or my fellow man. Aesthetic autonomy for the sake of excess is not a worthwhile endeavour under ideal conditions. Yet, as it is becoming increasingly clear to me, that the conditions man finds himself in are far from ideal.

## CHAPTER 1: Technological Tendencies of the Outside

*“Man was, and is, too shallow and cowardly to endure the fact of the mortality of everything living. He wraps it up in rose-coloured progress-optimism, he heaps upon it the flowers of literature, he crawls behind the shelter of ideals so as not to see anything.”*<sup>1</sup>

- Oswald Spengler, *Man and Technics*

*“Western man is externalizing himself in the form of gadgets. Ever pop coke in the mainline? It hits you right in the brain, activating connections of pure pleasure.”*<sup>2</sup>

- Dr. Benway, *Naked Lunch*

### 0. Introduction

This genealogy commences with a preliminary overview of what is meant by a ‘productive process’, and how such a term may be understood when utilized in this work. This term will be investigated via its invocation in both economic and philosophic traditions of thought (particularly the classical and Austrian schools of economics when dealing with the former, and the Aristotelian understanding of production when dealing with the latter). This chapter will then explain the early humanist Marxist conception of alienation and explain species being as an essential characteristic within humans, the essence of which is the capacity for change, as well as an anthropocentric essence of creativity, established via man’s control of the productive process, and thus the practice of emancipated labour.

This chapter will then explore the later, more vulgar aspects of Marx, namely his technological determinism, and how its emphasis on the development of the productive forces (comprised of both technology and labour power) and its power over the productive process questions species being as an anthropocentric mover of history. The question posed to early Marxian anthropocentrism is directly related to the fact that vulgar Marxism grants capitalism a

---

<sup>1</sup> Oswald Spengler, *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life* (1932), 13.

<sup>2</sup> William S. Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: The Restored Text* (New York: Grove Atlantic, 2007), 22.

greater role regarding historical change, while posing serious questions to the ethics of early Marxist humanism (something specifically explored via Marx's championing of the colonization of India).

## 1. Production

Etymologically, the term 'production' stems from the Medieval Latin root, *productionem* - a 'prolonging', or 'lengthening', which in turn is derived from the Latin term *producere*, or a bringing forth. There are numerous examples of how various economists and philosophers understand production; the following is far from an exhaustive overview of production and shifts drastically in terms of a timeline - however, the point of this section is to highlight the varied conceptions of production throughout different domains of thought, and then to uncover a definition of the productive process, which will be used throughout the work itself.

A natural, effortless association is made of the theorization of production with the cold calculations of economic analysis; such an association is conjecturally associated with the likes of Adam Smith. Smith understands production as an incorporated process, comprised of a myriad of operations and mediating steps. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith gives the example of a woolen coat – stating that the interrelating aspects of the productive process, from its manufacturers to shippers and merchandizers etc. – all encompass an interconnected chain of steps, which “exceeds all computation.”<sup>3</sup> As production increases in an economy, so does complexity, in the form of intermediary steps, yielding an increase in the division of labour - with each sector (or labourer) focusing on a particular aspect of the productive process. The market is integral to Smith's understanding of production; the system of supply and demand is the backdrop of both the

---

<sup>3</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 26.

production and consumption of products. Further, property is private, with the means of production in the hands of the owners, all fuelled by the consistent, vampiric extraction of surplus from the labour of the workers. These encompass the building blocks of the capitalist mode of production as initially understood within the inception of the classical tradition.

In a continuation of this tradition, Marxist economics builds upon Smith, through critique, particularly, a critique of the capitalist mode of production. With Marx, the interconnected processes of production are understood through the lens of class, the exploitation of the worker, and the illusory nature of markets, which hide the actual, real labour being imparted onto commodities.<sup>4</sup> The aforementioned surplus presupposed within bourgeois economics is uncovered and exposed as theft. This all may be best summarized in the brilliant introduction to *Capital* by Ben Fowkes: “this process of the submission of labour to capital in the course of the process of production is rooted, not only in the hierarchical forms of labour organization, but in the very nature of the production process itself.”<sup>5</sup>

The Austrian Economic School of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century drastically departs from Marxist critique, focusing on the subjective states of individual actors and their intentional actions as the driving force in the productive process<sup>6</sup>. For instance, Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk, a historic figure in the Austrian School, makes it a point to emphasize the absolute necessity for multiple intermediary steps through which an item may be produced for consumption: “we may associate our labour first with the more remote causes of the good, with the object of obtaining, not the

---

<sup>4</sup> This is, of course an extremely brief overview of a Marxist understanding of the Capitalist productive process and its flaws, namely the differences between use and exchange values, surplus labour, class antagonisms and the like must all be taken into consideration with Marxist interpretations of capitalist modes of production.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I* (London: Penguin UK, 2004), 34.

<sup>6</sup> Eugen M. Schulak and Herbert Unterkofler, *Austrian School of Economics: A History of Its Ideas, Ambassadors, and Institutions* (Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2011), xvi.



desired good itself, but a proximate cause of the good; which cause, again, must be associated with other suitable materials and powers, till, finally ... the finished good, the instrument of human satisfaction, is obtained.”<sup>7</sup>

Murray Rothbard, a student of Böhm-Bawerk and a renowned economist in his own right, expounds on this idea in his famous ‘ham sandwich’ example, wherein he specifically highlights the multiple factors integral to the productive process itself (using the example of preparing a ham sandwich) - taking certain materials (both produced and raw), and processing them accordingly, in order to then produce the desired final product; herein time and labour are constant factors throughout the process, and land is integral as a condition of production. Rothbard states, “man must use various indirect means as co-operating factors of production to arrive at the direct means. This necessary process involved in all action is called production; it is the use by man of available elements of his environment as indirect means – as co-operating factors – to arrive eventually at a consumers’ good that he can use directly to arrive at his end.”<sup>8</sup>

The study of production has also been explored philosophically. One instance of this is gleaned from *The Metaphysics* by Aristotle, which presents an underlying logic and mechanism integral to the ‘coming into being’ of some material object. The four causes (material, formal, efficient, and final) are a means by which Aristotle explains the root sources of the existence of a thing. When Aristotle contemplates the causes leading to the existence of a clay pot, he is giving the reader an explication of the process and factors of production itself.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Eugen B. Bawerk, *The Positive Theory of Capital* (New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1930), 17.

<sup>8</sup> Murray N. Rothbard, *Man, Economy, and State, Scholar’s Edition* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009), 8-10.

<sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2016) 7-9.

Both the classical outlook of Smith and the economists of the Austrian school focus on intermediary steps in production to take something from its original form, manufacture and then alter it through a multitude of steps and productive practices, and for this process to then lead to an end goal - a coming into being of a thing. In other words, production insofar as it is understood as a *pluralistic and mechanistic process* will be primarily utilized in this work. This understanding of production is procedural; there is a mechanistic sense in which a thing is brought into being. This understanding of a productive process will be presupposed when discussing the works of Marx, Deleuze/Guattari and Land. This definition, however, will require some sort of augmentation. For instance, the idea of desiring production as a productive energetics in Deleuze and Guattari must be encompassed and made room for in such a definition.

The study of production within society inevitably entails technological advancement as an integral factor. The history of the study of technology and its varying examples is incredibly complex, and far beyond the scope of this thesis - having been explored within in a wide variety of disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and philosophy amongst others. Although one may draw on the tradition of economics to give an acceptable overview of production, to define technology in a stringent way - with perceptible borders and definitional rigour - necessarily flouts the idea of technology itself. For the very basis of technological development is consistently evolving and progressing, whilst expanding both its capabilities and its effects on society.

As this work progresses through the genealogy of thinkers – from the Marx to Deleuze to Land, the definition of technology/machines/machinations will vary and expand, only showcasing the mercurial nature of such a concept in and of itself. Technology will be conceptually explored within the context of the thinker taking up the task to courageously wield it in his work. Marx's work will understand technology in a mechanistic sense (the hand loom, the steam engine, etc.),

Deleuze will understand technology as a continuum that is constantly coded and decoded. Further, the concept of the machinic will be understood as the basis of both life and society, giving way to the machinic as an ontology. Finally, Land will apply the Deleuzian understanding of the machinic as ontological and extend it to uncover an explosiveness in tandem with productivity and intelligence. The exponential understanding of production will be explored as something both emanating from and exponentially developing the machinic insofar as it is synonymous with capitalism and in congruence with libidinal drives.

## **2. Marx and the Anthropocene: Alienation in the *Economic and Philosophic***

### ***Manuscripts of 1844***

This genealogy commences with the Marxian concept of species being. With its origins in *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, (also known as the *Paris Manuscripts*), species being is introduced amidst Marx's discussion of alienation, wherein under the capitalist mode of production, the working man is alienated from his own labour, from the objects produced within the process of production, from the process of production itself, and from his species being. As a result of this alienation from species being, man is further alienated from nature, and his body. The various classifications of alienation result in man being a totally alienated species estranged not only from his fellow worker, but from his own essential humanity as well.

Man is alienated from his labour, in that under the capitalist mode of production "labour is external to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his essential being; in the act of production, the worker therefore does not affirm himself but denies himself ... it is forced labour."<sup>10</sup> Labour is objectified, and congealed - crammed within objects of production (simultaneously making labour

---

<sup>10</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 74.

an object in and of itself), only to then be sold at the behest of the capitalist. The worker's connection to his own objects of production (which are produced within a process of production) further become such that, "the worker is related to the product of his labour as to an alien object."<sup>11</sup> The worker disseminates foreign objects, and the more he produces such objects, the more the worker becomes fractured, forgoing his own humanity through an objectification of the self.

This objectification of the self is emphasized through the relationship between labour and the productive process, which is a further source of alienation for the worker. The act of production transforms into "an alien activity not belonging to him; it is an activity as suffering ... as an activity which is turned against him, neither depends on nor belongs to him."<sup>12</sup> This particular mode of alienation constitutes a "self-estrangement"<sup>13</sup> as opposed the prior exemplars of alienation, which constitute "the estrangement of the *thing*."<sup>14</sup>

### **3. The Essence of Man – Species Being and Self-Actualization**

Finally, Marx states that man is alienated from his own species being -- his own creative capacity and ability to self-actualize. Through the alienation of his species being, he is alienated from nature (that which man subsists upon), from his own body, and from "his spiritual essence, his human being."<sup>15</sup> Through the simultaneous affliction of all prior forms of alienation (from the worker's own labour, from the object of his labour, from the productive process and from his species being), man becomes alienated from man. "If a man is confronted by himself, he is confronted by the *other* man. What applies to a man's relation to his work, to the product of his labour and to himself, also holds of a man's relation to the other man, and the other man's labour

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 77.

and object of labour.”<sup>16</sup> Alienation is described by Marx as an increasingly pernicious affliction, seeping into all aspects of productive life. The source of this alienation is the capitalist mode of production, which engenders a life of pure commodification; one which alienates man from his labour, the products of his labour and his essential species being.

Yet, man’s species being remains enigmatic in its conceptualization. This concept is integral to Marx’s discussion of alienation, for all relational and subjective aspects of alienation are deeply tied to the alienation of such a characteristic. Of course, Marx spends a considerable portion of the *Paris Manuscripts* uncovering the reality of species being, but its definition is mercurial in nature. In stark contrast to the cold rigidity of the economic terms laid out in *Capital*, Marx understands species being as a flowing, multi-faceted, innate essence of the human as a universal being, emphasizing man’s ability to impart his labour freely. Species being is indicative of man’s possession of a productive creativity, which may be utilized not merely for his immediate needs, but also for the continuation of the species – for the anthropocentric goals of a species self-determination, societal change and self-expression.

Although discussions of man’s ‘natural condition’ are initially disregarded by Marx as a tactic of the bourgeois economist to justify the capitalist economic system as a natural extension of man, species being heavily entails a sort of essentialism in its own right. Thomas Wartenberg suggests that species being *reconfigures* the idea of human essence, because “No longer can we see a person as better than another simply because of the type of activity he/she chooses to pursue. Rather, we can see conscious activity itself as human and, in an egalitarian assumption, something to be valued for its own sake.”<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>17</sup> Wartenberg, Thomas E. “‘Species-Being’ and ‘Human Nature’ in Marx.” *Human Studies* 5, no. 2 (1982): 80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20008832>.

Species being entails a universality, insofar as man: “treats himself as the actual, living species; because he treats himself as a universal and therefore free being.”<sup>18</sup> This universality stems from the fact that nature as an inorganic body is both (i) an immediate means of subsistence and (ii) the means by which what Marx designates as ‘life activity’ (a productive life that benefits the whole species as opposed to one, which is *merely* for the sake of the individual) may continue. Unlike mere animal, man takes that which is provided by his surroundings and channels it into a life-directed, world-building process.

For instance, the carpenter who acquires lumber from his natural surroundings may then build a chair; it is by imparting labour onto nature in a process of production that the carpenter both yields this end product for his immediate, personal use, whilst also bestowing such a process of production upon his own species lineage. By engendering a personal process of production wherein the carpenter makes a chair, he is adding to the overall enhancement of a productive process in society itself, thus, humanity as a composite whole benefits from the worker’s ability to produce in such a free and creative manner. The universality of man stems from his ability to produce freely, consciously, and in continuation with his species in such a manner.

Life activity entails an emancipatory disposition of the worker; it encompasses a conscious, productive and creative life, connected to an anthropocentric world-building: “For in the first place labour, life-activity, productive life itself, appears to man merely as a means of satisfying a need – the need to maintain the physical existence. Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life. The whole character of a species ... is contained in the character of its life-activity.”<sup>19</sup> It is within a continuity with his species that man positions himself as a promethean

---

<sup>18</sup> Marx and Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 75

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-76.

figure – one who creates actively towards an better future. Man is perched atop his own pyramids as the sultan of his world, bending it to his will – as his forefathers did before him.

Nick Dyer-Witthford understands species being as a fluctuating double ideation in both the creating and changing the nature of the world as well as that of man himself, “the 1844 Manuscripts oscillate between two propositions. The first is that humans are, by nature, conscious and co-operative fabricators. The second is that humans consciously and co-operatively fabricate their own nature”<sup>20</sup>. This double proposition showcases man as he who creates as well as he who through his creations changes the nature of his own species, yielding “a species being whose nature is to change its nature, and whose only essence is the capacity for transformation.”<sup>21</sup>

This creative, productive aspect of man is conscious, allowing him to progressively alter future conditions for both himself and society at large. Herein, Marx builds upon the Hegelian tradition of conscious self-determination; however, Marx forgoes idealistic tendencies of spirit in favour of materialism.<sup>22</sup> The inorganic body of nature is a material resource for man to utilize in the continual creation of the future, in congruence with man’s life-activity. In his exposition of Marx’s *Paris Manuscripts*, Herbert Marcuse explicates this: “Man cannot simply accept the objective world or merely come to terms with it; he must appropriate it; he has to transform the objects of this world into organs of his life, which becomes effective in and through them.”<sup>23</sup> The world is a means to engender a species creativity continuous with man’s free, conscious

---

<sup>20</sup> Nick D. Witthford, "1844/2004/2044: The Return of Species-Being," *Historical Materialism* 12, no. 4 (January 2004): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206043505130>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Marx and Engels, *Marx Engels Reader*, 122.

<sup>23</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press (MA), 1973), 16.

production. It is in this vein that species being shows itself in “the working up of the objective world.”<sup>24</sup>

This underscores the anthropocentric in nature of species being. Anthropocentrism is a vast, dynamic field of study, and a full overview of the varied discourses centered around this field is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, an adequate definition for the purposes of this section, in relation to Marxian species being would be: “the notion that Homo sapiens (“wise species”) is the only species that matters on earth and that everything – the earth, animals, the oceans, and so on – belongs to it to exploit at will”<sup>25</sup>. Species being is compatible with this characterization because it places man as both the crown jewel, as well as the primary mover within the scheme of history, both as a creator and as the beneficiary of his own creations, through the utilization of nature. The *Paris Manuscripts*’ emphasis on the above drenches early Marxist philosophy in anthropocentrism.

#### **4. Alienation, Production and Technology**

Amidst both the broader discussion of alienation, and a more focused theorization around species being, there are two strains of tension that must be noted regarding the relationship between the working man and capital. One is a tension between man and the process of production (specifically, the capitalist mode of production), and the other is a tension between man and technology. Marx explicates the connection between workers and the productive process: “the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and every relation of servitude is but a modification and consequence of this relation.”<sup>26</sup> Man’s disposition is directly

---

<sup>24</sup> Marx and Engels, *Marx-Engels Reader*, 76.

<sup>25</sup> Bryan L. Moore, *Ecological Literature and the Critique of Anthropocentrism* (Basingstoke: Springer, 2017) 5-6.

<sup>26</sup> Marx and Engels, *Marx-Engels Reader*, 80.



related to the process of production under which he lives. His subservience to the capitalist mode of production is a direct cause of his alienation from all objective and relational aspects of life, including his essential species being. Through his subservience to the inhuman productive process, man's own visage becomes unrecognizable. The oppressive productive process of capitalism subverts the prior capacity of man as a universal producer; he is not at the helm of a productive process, but at its mercy.

When the objects and means of man's production are augmented and constricted at the behest of the exploitative mode of production that is capitalism, man's 'species life', his 'real species objectivity' is throttled. As a result, the creative, conscious, productive aspects of life the instantiation of species being entails is suppressed by capitalism<sup>27</sup>. Capitalism alienates man from his labour, making it so that the objects of man's labour are not directed towards the creative, free continuation of the species, but for the continuation of an exploitative process of production that man is beholden to. The apotheosis of such a capitalist throttling is shown forth in private property: "Although private property itself again conceives all these direct realizations of possession as means of life, and the life which they serve as means is the life of private property- labour and conversion into capital."<sup>28</sup> Capitalism is detrimental to humanity, insofar as it assumes the form of a barricade between man and his path to self-actualization, obstructing man's ability to fully realize his potential both as an individual and as a part of a continuation amongst his species.

The relationship between technology and production is uncovered rather strikingly in the following passage: "It [labour under the capitalist mode of production] produces beauty – but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labour by machines – but some of the workers it throws back to

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 87

a barbarous type of labour, and the other workers it turns into machines.”<sup>29</sup> Under the capitalist mode of production, machines are appendages of the productive process; something not to be used by us, but a force unleashed upon us. This is, again, a total reversal of the conditions presumably present with the self-actualization of man as a species being. One may logically surmise that species being is instantiated once the means of production are under man’s control - placing him at the helm of the productive process itself, and that doing so, machines will fully become appendages subservient to man – directed towards the continuation of the anthropocentric project of self-determination for the individual and for the species.

### **5. The Role of Capitalism and The Paris Manuscripts as an Ethical Project**

Capitalism not only throttles man’s species ability but inverts the aforementioned understanding of man as a conscious, free and emancipated producer at the helm of a productive process, who uses technology to bend the future to his will. It is through man’s control over the productive process itself, the means of production (which include technology) that he may instantiate his essential, universal self. Species being can only be realized in its true un-alienated form by establishing communism – through the destruction of private property<sup>30</sup>. For, it is only via fully realized labour under an *emancipated* productive process that man may extend himself and become fully integrated as a continuation with his species.

There is an ethical imperative of sorts buried within the early Hegelian Marx. If species being is a self-actualizing characteristic within man, that is essential for not only the individual but for the species as a whole, one may read *The Paris Manuscripts*’ prescription to overthrow capitalism via the abolishment of private property and the commodity form as an ethical

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 73

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 84.

imperative; it is a call to emancipation from an oppressive system towards total freedom, where man lives ethically amongst other men, is truly self-actualized, and is unalienated from his natural surroundings. From the grounds of such an ethical prescription, one hears the beckoning call of solidarity, of human rights and of a camaraderie between workers for the sake of the majority.

In summation, species being is an essential characteristic within the human subject, the instantiation of which is congruent with an anthropocentrism; it entails a directed, conscious, free use of creative production by man as a universal being, insofar as he contains a productive capacity not only for himself, but for the continuation of his species. The instantiation of species being is a direct result of man having control over the productive process; with such control, man becomes autonomous, freely flexes his creative capacities, and utilizes the boons afforded to him by nature to determine himself. Further, with the instantiation of species being, the machine is a mere tool; something for man to use for his own anthropocentric means. Under capital, species being, throttles species being - inverting man's relationship with his productive capacities, the productive process as a whole, as well as his relationship with machines. The overthrowing of capitalism is thusly a matter of the ethical emancipation of both the individual worker and the species.

## **6. Cold Metallic Flesh: An Introduction to Vulgar Marxism and the Transmutation Towards an Anti-Humanism**

The Marxian tradition outlined in *The Paris Manuscripts* contains a call for self-actualization; for man to assume his rightful role as the maker of his own destiny, for the emancipation of the worker, and for the overthrowing of the capitalist mode of production, taming the productive process under his own control. This anthropocentrism shows itself as an ethics of historical change, insofar as it emphasizes a right to self-determination for the species. One cannot disregard the early anthropocentrism within the oeuvre of Marxist thought; it engenders

intoxicating messages of emancipation, which lend themselves to the rise of workers movements, and revolutionary programs historically synonymous with Marxist philosophy. Yet, violently anti-humanist tendencies are also hidden in the crevasses of Marx's work; these tendencies are contradistinctive to his early anthropocentrism and reveal themselves in what is popularly characterized as 'vulgar Marxism'. Vulgar Marxism "provides one-to-one correlations between the socio-economic base and the intellectual superstructure."<sup>31</sup> Herein, aspects of society such as law, politics, art, etc. are a direct result of productive and economic factors.

These vulgar, more structural facets of Marx starkly contrast the anthropocentrism of the *Paris Manuscripts* by posing a technological challenge to the very grounds upon which species being rests. This is accomplished in the following ways: firstly, the productive forces (technology, natural resources, and labour power) are designated as the primary driving force of history, determining the productive process. This demotes the human subject to a mere consequence of the restructuring of the relations of production, posing questions to the conceptualization of the human as a conscious, creative, historical agent.

Vulgar Marxism also extricates certain capacities from the human (particularly labour power, or man's capacities insofar as they relate to production: strength, skill, intelligence, etc.), and place them amongst the productive forces, which are in and of themselves void of any subjectivity. What is taken from the human is gifted to the inhuman 'outside' of the productive forces. Resultantly, serious questions are posed to the ethics of early Marx, particularly due to a privileging of the development of the productive forces in relation to the unfettered enhancement of the productive process and its resultant effects on colonialism and practices such as slavery.

---

<sup>31</sup> Robert M. Young, *Companion to the History of Modern Science*, Robert M. Young et al. (London: Routledge, 2020), 77

Capitalism plays an increasingly prominent role in later Marxist thought, insofar as it is understood as a necessary stage of production begetting further historical change as opposed to a *mere* fetter. The productive forces become the creative, directed movers of history, endowed with world-building capabilities, while undergoing constant development and progress. Therefore, the universality of the species is transformed into a contingency, with the productive forces in turn gaining a universality. It is due to these reasons that this section denotes this shift in Marxist thought, characterised as a *transmutation* towards an anti-humanism.

### **7. Mapping Technological Determinism**

To introduce the tension between the early anthropocentrism and the later, vulgarity Marxist thought, the theoretical axiom undergirding Marxist economics must be uncovered in tandem with an explication of the previously introduced terminology. This is exemplified in the 1859 *Preface*, wherein Marx clearly addresses a dichotomy between the ‘outside’ of the productive forces and its consequential relational organization (the relations of production), which then result in societal change (i.e., a change in the superstructure).

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 4

The *Preface* has garnered as much attention for its ambiguity as it has for its vulgarity. Many subsequent works of philosophy have expounded upon the aforementioned excerpt to conceptualize a Marxian basis for historical change centered around the productive forces' hold on the process of production. In his seminal work, entitled *Karl Marx's Theory of History*, G.A. Cohen utilizes the *Preface*, along with other Marxist texts to rigorously draft a vulgar, technologically determinist treatise of historical materialism.

Cohen provides an explication of the relationship between the productive forces, relations of production and the superstructure. The productive forces encompass whatever may be utilized in production<sup>33</sup>; these include: the means of production (further divided into the technology involved in production, as well as the raw materials), and labour power (the productive capacities of agents and information/education related to the productive process).<sup>34</sup> The relations of production refer to the economic organizational layout of production; these change in response to the development of the productive forces, yet the two are distinctly separate. The relations of production in turn influence the superstructure, wherein aspects of society such as law, politics and art reside. It is through the relations of production that one may understand the organizational foundation of the productive process; for instance, a capitalist mode of production is understood as the relational organization of production at a certain point in history.

The primacy thesis states that the economic base is primary over the superstructure, and the development thesis suggests that the productive forces tend to develop, insofar as they progressively improve in their ability to better aid in the process of production.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Gerald A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 34.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 134-135.

Using this layout, one may understand historical change as productive and technologically deterministic. Productive forces develop until they are fettered by the relations of production (i.e., the prior mode of organizations no longer allow for the productive forces to develop). This causes a restructuring of said relations to accommodate the further development of the productive forces, which in turn determines the superstructure. For instance, technologies such as the water mill and the heavy plough develop, yielding the economic structure of feudalism, which results in medieval law, custom, art, politics, etc.

It is important to note that man is absent from both the productive forces and the relations of production. Man – insofar as he is a subjective being – is not an essential component of the productive forces, yet his capacities (i.e., labour power) are. Marx thus establishes a separation of man from his strength, skill, and intelligence<sup>36</sup>, making them a force akin to technology<sup>37</sup>. The relations of production *strictly* refer to the organizational makeup of the economy; the worker plays a role insofar a worker relates (positionally within the economy) to either his fellow worker, or to a productive force. For Cohen, such relationality does not depend on the subjectivity of man in any humanist sense, i.e., one need not have certain moral values, subjective thoughts etc., when relating to a tool productively. In terms of the exclusion of a human subject from the relations of production, Cohen invokes the analogy of a valid argument in sentential logic: one need not know the meanings of words (or even the individual words) of an argument to verify its validity - the relationality of the variables is sufficient for such a task. Similarly, one need not include man as a subjective being in the organizational aspect of society to determine its structure<sup>38</sup>.

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 36.

The non-human relationality within economic organizations is congruent with latter Marxist texts such as *Grundrisse*, wherein Marx states, “Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand.”<sup>39</sup> Further, scholars such as William H Shaw<sup>40</sup>, and G.V. Plekhanov have further explored and expounded upon both the non-human relations of production, as well as the primacy of the productive forces. Plekhanov - famously crowned the father of Russian communism by Vladimir I. Lenin – proclaims, “The great scientific merit of Marx lies in this, that he approached the question from the diametrically opposite side, and that he regarded man’s nature itself as the eternally changing result of historical progress, the cause of which lies outside man.”<sup>41</sup>

The tendencies of vulgar Marxism show forth a transmutation towards an anti-humanism. The productive forces are designated as the primary drivers of history, for by reacting to their development the economic relations re-organize themselves and determine the characteristics of society. Herein, the development of technology and labour power are positioned as integral actors shaping the productive process. As non-human agents of historical development, these forces dethrone the human subject as the anthropocentric maker of his own destiny. This demotes man to a mere result of a historical process outside of his control altogether. Species universality is also challenged – for how can man be a free and emancipated creator, directing his labour in order to uncover the next epoch of history when the very motor of creation stems outside of him?

Additionally, characteristics of the human such as labour power and intelligence are totally extricated from the subject. Instead of being essential characteristics of man, these aspects of man

---

<sup>39</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (London: Penguin UK, 2005), 265.

<sup>40</sup> William H. Shaw, *Marx's Theory of History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978), 17.

<sup>41</sup> Georgi V. Plekhanov, *In Defence of Materialism: The Development of the Monist View of History* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1947), 146.



are objectivized – banished to the inhuman realm of the productive forces, developing in the same vein as technology. Their development is non-subjective, and in direct contradistinction to the anthropocentrism of species being, even though one would assume such qualities would be venerated as strictly humanist features. It is not man, but the impersonal outside of the productive forces that screech beckoning calls for emancipation – not for the benefit of humanity, but for the purposes of their own development.

### **8. Vulgar Marxism and Technology**

Technology in particular is situated as an autonomous, impartial mover of history, due to its position as an integral aspect of the productive forces. Such a theorization echoes the famous sentiments found within *The Poverty of Philosophy*: “Labor is organized, is divided differently according to the instruments it has at his disposal. The hand-mill presupposes a different division of labor from the steam-mill. Thus, it is slapping history in the face to want to begin with the division of labor in general, in order to arrive subsequently at a specific instrument of production, machinery.”<sup>42</sup> This quote directly exemplifies how the productive forces (and technology in particular) re-structure the relations of production.

The historical realization of such a statement is further illustrated in Frederick Engels’ 1848 publication, *The Beginning of the End in Austria*. Engels discusses the stagnation of Austrian productive history and the inability of Austrian society to develop past a feudal system of economy, despite the relentless societal upheavals during the Napoleonic wars. “Certainly, there is no country over which the tidal wave of revolution, the triple Napoleonic invasions passed away so completely without a trace as Austria.”<sup>43</sup> The social realm of Austrian society, and its clinging

---

<sup>42</sup> Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2008), 121.

<sup>43</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Marx & Engels Collected Works Volume 6* (England: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 530.

onto the monarchy is characterised by Engels as a sort of conservative, humanist attempt at self-preservation against an encroaching, seemingly autonomous technological development: “A dozen nations whose customs, character, and institutions were flagrantly opposed to one another clung together on the strength of their common dislike for civilization.”<sup>44</sup>

Engels goes on to describe how Austrian feudal society – one so deeply attached to its own stagnation that it withstood countless revolutions - was effortlessly infected by the encroachment of technological advancement. As with the rest of Europe, Austrian workers found themselves in the midst of being catapulted into the historical era of capitalism, “It was no longer possible to carry on feudal agriculture alongside modern industry.”<sup>45</sup> The ushering of a new mode of production was not the doing of man, but “the consequences of machinery ... everywhere they undermined the old barbarism, and with it the foundations of the House of Austria.”<sup>46</sup>

It is at the behest of technological apparatuses, such as steam powered machinery and novel modes of transportation, that such drastic changes occurred within an Austrian society actively attempting to resist the fracturing power of the technological. As is beautifully summarized by Engels, “The French Revolution, Napoleon and the July upheavals had been withstood. But there was no withstanding steam. Steam forced its way through the Alps and the Bohemian forests, steam robbed the Danube of its role, steam tore Austrian barbarism to shreds and thereby pulled the ground from under the feet of the House of Hapsburg.”<sup>47</sup> This characterization of Austrian history uncovers the paltry nature of human revolution when compared to the true revolutionary, and radical agent of history – technology. Humanity may sporadically attempt to erect structures

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 531.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 533.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 533.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 534.

in hopes of conserving an archaic way of life, but the technological will eventually detect vulnerable cracks in its walls, detonating them to drag man into a new epoch of production.

### **9. Disregarding Dialectical Logic**

One may respond to the vulgar tendencies in Marx by stating that they disregard the dialectical logic so often championed by Marx. Dialectical logic necessarily entails that man develops alongside the productive forces in a push-and-pull manner of *mutual* realization. Such an understanding of dialectics is congruent with the Hegelianism of the *Paris Manuscripts*, wherein man plays a central role within the productive process. Man is responsible for the restructuring of the relations, in turn affecting the superstructure - only for the newly formed superstructure to then become a factor in the development of the productive forces. Law, politics, and art become integral factors of historical change, not mere consequents of it. This conceptualization of productive history is more indicative of dialectical movement and interplay. Yet, in vulgar Marxist thought, this underlying logic is cast aside in favour of a more productively explosive ontology.

Marx himself addresses exactly such a criticism in the postface to the second edition of *Capital*, wherein he quotes a Russian review of *Capital* published in the *European Messenger* via St. Petersburg:

Marx treats the social movement as a process of natural history governed by laws not only independent of human will, consciousness and intelligence, but rather, on the contrary, determining that will, consciousness and intelligence .... If the conscious element plays such a subordinate part in the history of civilization, it is self-evident that a critique whose object is civilization itself can, less than anything else have for its basis any form or any

result of consciousness. This means that it is not the idea but only its external manifestation which can serve as the starting point.<sup>48</sup>

Marx's response to this is surprising, to say the least, for he posits:

Here the reviewer pictures what he takes to be my own actual method, in a striking and, as far as concerns my own application of it, generous way. But what else is he depicting but the dialectical method?<sup>49</sup>

This often-overlooked postface of *Capital* presents the reader with a grounding logic upon which the consequent ideas are based upon -- namely, it provides an explanation of Marx's conception of dialectical logic. One could speculate herein, that Marx may be purposefully augmenting the Hegelian dialectic to such a radical extent in order for him to deal with the explosiveness of capitalist production, or that Marx has abandoned the dialectic for a totally different form of reasoning altogether yet has presented it under the meaningless banner of dialectical reasoning; but to posit either of these justifications would be purely speculative. The point, however, is that Marx's understanding of dialectical logic in his more vulgar texts is incongruous with the Hegelian dialectic as it is understood in any traditional sense. Marx takes a one-sided approach to production that disregards the push and pull of the productive relationality inherent in dialectical reasoning, leaving the onus of historical change on the impartial, inhuman 'outside' of the productive forces.

### **10. The Role of Ethics and Capitalism in Vulgar Marxism**

What does such vulgarity entail for species being insofar as species being necessitates that man be fully in tune with his essential nature in a meaningful manner? One consequence is that the restructuring of the relations of production and consequent superstructural changes are not only

---

<sup>48</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume 1* (London: Penguin UK, 2004), 101.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

permissible but must be embraced as progressive. The possible violence and cultural erasure these changes elicit are championed in light of an optimization of the productive process in a given society, bringing the ethical motivations of Marxist humanism into question. Another consequence of vulgar Marxism is its augmentation of capitalism's role within history, insofar as capitalism is no longer understood as a blockade in man's ability to self-actualize, but is more complexly understood as a necessity in pre-capitalist societies for the further development of the productive forces.

For instance, in Marx's work *On Imperialism in India*, Marx champions British colonial rule for its contribution towards the rapid technological and productive development in the subcontinent. In this essay, Marx firstly gives heed to the fact that British colonial violence is an unprecedented scourge on India's native people, "There cannot, however, remain any doubt but that the misery inflicted by the British on Hindostan is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindostan had to suffer before."<sup>50</sup> But Marx also highlights the underdeveloped productive society of India at the time, with decrepit technologies such as the handloom still playing a prominent role in the productive process.

Yet, for Marx, the violence of the British takeover is permissible, insofar as it is associated with the restructuring of the relations of production – begetting a new superstructure as a result. These changes are positive, for they are indicative of a more developed mode of production. The previous, more primitive era of Indian culture, on the contrary, corresponds to a less productive relational economic organizational structure. "We must not forget that this undignified stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence evoked on the other part, in contradistinction,

---

<sup>50</sup> Marx and Engels, *Marx-Engels Reader*, 654

wild, aimless, unbounded forces of destruction and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan.”<sup>51</sup> Such a barbarous superstructure is indicative of a latent relations of production, which fetter the further development of the productive forces.

It is, for Marx, the development of the productive forces, and thus the material caesura of the aforementioned relations of production that engender historical progress. This progress, however is mechanistically conjoined with the erasure of a prior, primitive form of superstructural life, “The small stereotype forms of social organism have been to the greater part dissolved and are disappearing, not so much through the brutal interference of the British tax-gatherer and the British soldier, as to the working of English steam and English free trade.”<sup>52</sup> Such a historical analysis dripping with a violent, explosive vulgarity is completely antithetical to the earlier championing of man’s innate species being. The religious and cultural practices in question may very well be subjectively fulfilling to pre-colonial Indian society; but this is not a factor in productive progress, nor is it a factor in historical development.

The prior encouragement of man’s naturalistic, world-building productivity, and of his emancipatory essence is totally dismissed amidst such colonial violence and the erasure of subjectivity as such. It is as if the humanist, ethical sentimentality of the prior motifs of species being are completely incongruous with the reality of how historical, productive processes develop in real time. One may respond that the colonial violence succumbed to by India is merely a violence engendered by capitalism. However, vulgar Marxism is nothing if not committed to the development of productive stages. A society passes through feudalism towards capitalism, on a pathway to develop into a higher, more advanced mode of production (in Marx’s case,

---

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 658.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 657.

communism). If one subscribes to the vulgar tendencies of Marx, the capitalist form of production previously disparaged in *The Paris Manuscripts* is now not only understood as a necessity, but its proliferation is to be championed in pre-capitalist societies.

One may ask: colonialism is an act committed by people, is it not? Where, then lies this impersonal outside force of production which supposedly drives Marxist vulgarity? Marx answers such hypothetical quandaries when he writes, “The question is, can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution.”<sup>53</sup> This reads less as a justification for British invasion as it does a mechanistic understanding of the role the British play within this instance of history. It is as if the British themselves, in the utilization of their capacities are mere accessories for a process much greater, and *more universal* than them; a process the British are inherently a part of, almost unbeknownst to even themselves. The instantiation of an increase in productive prowess is far from a humanist program, for it is not even within the purview of humanity itself that such development in India may take place; it is, instead totally in the machinic, impersonal hands of the productive outside.

Such a description of Indian productive history elicits questions of what role ethics play in vulgar Marxism. One could read *On Imperialism in India* in such a way that an ethical sentiment of some kind may *possibly* be gleaned from it, but this reading is inconclusive at best. Marx is honest about the brutality of British colonialism, as well as the violent traditions associated with feudal Indian culture, but the ends justify the means regarding the brutality of colonial rule enacted upon the subcontinent. A progressive ethical program that champions human worth and fulfillment

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 658.

as universal principles is incongruent within a vulgar Marxist framework, insofar as said ethics is a motivating factor for productive change as such. Ethical norms develop *subsequent* to historical development, as something restructured and reformulated at the tail end of a productive development, not as an inherent part of progressive development itself.

The lack of ethics in Vulgar Marxism is further explained by G.V. Plekhanov. Plekhanov is rightfully venerated for his ability to understand Marxian productive history, and he gives an account of the very same lack of ethics in his explanation of slavery's instantiation and eradication in Ancient Greece. On the question of why slavery was introduced in Ancient Greece, Plekhanov states: "But why, then, did slavery arise and develop among the Greeks? ... This reason is well known: it consists in the state of the productive forces.... In other words, there is necessary a certain stage of development of the productive forces at my disposal."<sup>54</sup>

Regarding the dissolution of slavery, Plekhanov states, "Finally, there arrives a moment at which the exploitation of slave labour process to be less advantageous than the exploitation of free labour. Then slavery is abolished .... It is shown to the door by the same development of productive forces which introduced it into history."<sup>55</sup> There is no mention here of the abolishment of slavery due to its throttling man's innate essence, or for its unethical nature. The reality of slavery both in its instantiation and its dissolution is purely a matter of its productivity or lack thereof. Any subjective, ethical disposition towards slavery's practice is disregarded.

With Marx's explication of the need for colonialism in India, the role of capitalism is augmented. For although capitalism must -- like the relational economic organizations preceding it -- be totally eradicated at some point in time for the productive forces to further develop, it is a

---

<sup>54</sup> Plekhanov, *In Defence of Materialism*, 154.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.



necessary stage of development for pre-capitalist societies. This understanding of productive development poses questions to the more humanist claims emphasizing how capitalism poses a threat to self-actualization and species being. Such questions are not only disregarded in *On Imperialism in India*, but the opposite seems to be the case. Capitalism is engendering a more progressive societal superstructure, associated with a higher developed mode of production, loosening a people stuck in the coagulated mud of the past towards the future.

### **11. Conclusion: The Anti-Humanism of Vulgar Marxism Positioned Within the Genealogy**

This transmutation towards an anti-humanism begins to gnaw away at the anthropocentric characteristics associated with the instantiation of species being. Vulgar Marxism promotes an impersonal, inhuman outside force as the primary, universal creative mover of history, demoting man to a mere afterthought. Herein, the productive process is not something totally in under the control of man but is engendered and optimized by the development of the productive forces – an inhuman, non-subjective propagator of new worlds. Additionally, these vulgar tendencies grant labour power as a force akin to the technological, stripping it from its subjective realm of the human into that of the inhuman.

If the anthropocentrism of the *Paris Manuscripts* is understood as an ethical project, the vulgarity of the later Marx puts such ethical claims into question -- for the violence, uprooting of culture, and injustices that follow from such historical processes are legitimized. Further, the role of capitalism in vulgar Marxism is more pronounced in its necessity within productive history. Of course, the point of such inquiries is not to condemn Marx as a figure to thusly be disregarded for his lack of ethics, or as a figure who should be shunned for such a blaring contradiction. It more so aims to highlight the anti-humanism associated with technological development within his

thought. An antihumanism that Marx could not avoid, as it flowed through his vulgar technological explosiveness. A monstrous tendency begins to develop, where the place of man as the initiator for the instantiation of species being begins to melt, whilst the technological begins to assert itself as the dominant mover of history, creating the conditions for its own emancipation.

## CHAPTER 2 - Birthing the Machinic: From the Post-Humanism of Deleuze and Guattari to Nick Land's Virulent Anti-Humanism

*Kya koi basm-e-haseen zere zameen aur bhi hai?  
Phool kayn chakh jigar chakh gareeban nikle?  
(Is there an other-worldly assemblage laying beneath the earth?  
For why do the flowers bloom with wounded hearts and dishevelled garbs?)<sup>56</sup>*  
- Hazrat Zaheen Shah Taji, *Aayat-e-Jamaal*

*We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not  
meant that we should voyage far<sup>57</sup>*  
- H.P. Lovecraft, *The Call of Cthulhu*

### 0. Introduction: Reading Deleuze, Guattari and Nick Land

The second chapter of this genealogy may read as more of a philosophical unravelling as opposed to a stringent academic explication. Such a scattered reading is in fact *engendered* by the works of figures such as Deleuze, Guattari, and Land. Any attempt of fitting *Anti-Oedipus* or *Fanged Noumena* into a systematic structure would be beside the point of what these works set out to accomplish; both works are radical, Nietzschean rebukes of systematic thinking. *Anti-Oedipus* forces the reader to think in terms of machine parts and abstract tools, exuding descriptions that are fragmented and compartmentalized. *Fanged Noumena* wraps its philosophies in a swirling haze of materialism, with an accelerated theory so beyond orthodox philosophy that it can only really be conveyed through poetic polemics.

The sections concerning *Anti-Oedipus* will give an overview of desiring production – a cosmic, outside force -- as the “impartial pilot of history”<sup>58</sup>, which in turn ‘schizophrenizes’ the

---

<sup>56</sup> Zaheen S. Taji, *Aayaat-e-Jamaal* (Rekhta Books, 2018), 194

<sup>57</sup> Howard P. Lovecraft, *The Fiction Complete and Unabridged* (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 2008), 355.

<sup>58</sup> Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 295.

human subject into a post-human ‘desiring machine’, engendering a constant deterritorialization of societal structures, allowing for production to incorporate the great zero of full potentiality within its processes. The Marxian economic prescription of capitalism applied to pre-capitalist societies will be continued by Deleuze and Guattari in their understanding capitalism as a tendency which unleashes the flows of desire within the human - transforming him to a machinic, deterritorialized body without organs. The newly formulated post-human subject will be a part of the productive process, insofar as the subject is a machinic assemblage. Further, the ethical imperatives of the early Marx will be replaced by an anti-ethics.

The genealogy will then continue with Land’s *Fanged Noumena*, explicating his understanding of machinic desire and techno-capitalism. An overview of Freudian drive theory will firstly be provided, which will be used to revise and further explicate Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of desiring production. Once this is accomplished, Land’s machinic desire will be explored as an anti-humanist tendency, which then leads to the vehicle of said tendency – the techno-capital singularity -- a pairing of both capitalism and artificial intelligence as one and the same entity. Land’s anti-humanism will consequently be fully explored, insofar as the ‘development’ (this term being used loosely here) of techno-capitalism rids itself of the human as a vestige of an unproductive past. This chapter will end by reflecting on the possibility of species being as something that may never have been an essential aspect of the human, but of the machinic -- with humanity demoted to the role of mere flesh tools used by the productive ‘outside’ of techno-capitalism to bring itself into full fruition via humanity’s blind insistence on developing technology towards the singularity.

One may question why, out of such a fruitfully eclectic assortment of philosophic works written by both Deleuze and Guattari this second chapter solely focuses on *Anti-Oedipus* (even

neglecting *A Thousand Plateaus*, the companion piece within the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* series). The answer is that *Anti-Oedipus* is a uniquely isolated work of nihilistic posthumanism; for instance, the subsequent *A Thousand Plateaus* allows for a vitalism to dominate its philosophy, but this is something that *Anti-Oedipus* keeps warily at bay (although it is not totally expunged).

The invocation of a figure as obscure as Nick Land may only add to the confusion of some readers, for outside of niche internet cultures and art ensembles, Land's work is rarely, if ever formally discussed with any sort of serious philosophic rigor. Yet, as this chapter continues, one may begin to realize that not only is the work of Nick Land philosophically sophisticated and relevant to modern theory, but also that the works of Marx, and Deleuze/Guattari as presented in this thesis inevitably leads to Nick Land's *Fanged Noumena*, making it impossible to avoid.

### **1. *Anti-Oedipus* and Desiring Production**

In the wake of the failed 1968 revolution in France, two radical philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari set out to write a work of pure insanity unlike anything produced in the history of philosophy. *Anti-Oedipus* is a total rupture in French post-modernist thought. It brazenly adopts Marxian technological determinism, and maps it onto a cybernetic Spinozism, whilst infusing the glistening alloy of insanity with a Nietzschean Will to Power, totally transforming these thinkers to create a philosophy of pure, fragmented production.

In this work, Deleuze and Guattari introduce the concept of desiring production -- an impersonal, unconscious force of history. This force allows for productive capacities to develop, yielding a materialist unfolding of historical events in tandem with the unleashing of libidinal desire. It is a cosmic, real and material force of production that is at the same time consumption - incorporating the libidinal into itself: "Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and

constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an imminent principle”<sup>59</sup> Desiring production may be mistaken for a broad-stroke conceptual mechanism and/or an artistic term utilized as a catchall to understand the processes of history. Yet, this does not disclose the complexity of the concept itself. The primary principle herein is that of immanence; desiring production is constantly creating the world here and now, with its processes working through us and with us; it is the “productive of desire and a desire that produces.”<sup>60</sup> In their section on desiring production, Deleuze and Guattari state:

Hence, everything is production: production of productions, of actions and of passions; productions of recording processes, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; productions of consumptions, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties and of pain. Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly reproduced.”<sup>61</sup>

Desiring production is a force undergirding these pluralistic, never-ending couplings, which connects all the intermediate parts and steps within the productive process.

Within the context of vulgar Marx, desiring production is that force which pushes the productive forces to develop, which drags the British into the Indian subcontinent - which pushes steam to plow through feudal structures in Austria; thus, “desiring-production is everywhere”.<sup>62</sup> This pluralism expands the productive processes of vulgar Marxism. Marx puts the onus of the productive process on the development of the productive forces, a fixed and finite set of categories.

---

<sup>59</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 5.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>62</sup> Ian Buchanan, *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: A Reader's Guide* (London: Continuum, 2008), 43.

Yet, with the invocation of desiring production, the onus of production expands. It is the force directly undergirding affects, sentiments, subjectivities, technology, etc. Desiring production retains the productive reductionism of Marx, whilst simultaneously broadening its application - no longer applying it to a linear pyramid-like structure segmented into three strata comprised of the forces, relations, and superstructure; all things are *constantly* produced in a more *multitudinous* form. Marxian productive ontology may be understood as an explosive structuralism, whereas the ontology of desiring production is pure productive, omnipotent chaos.

A specific understanding of Desire is infused in Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of production, insofar as it produces the real – something antithetical to Lacanian desire. *Anti-Oedipus* critiques Lacan, because he positions desire as a theory of 'lack' – as that which deals with absence; desire thus becomes something that cannot be fulfilled in its totality, "if desire is the lack of the real object, its very nature as a real entity depends upon an "essence of lack" that produces the fantasized object."<sup>63</sup> Desire for Deleuze and Guattari on the other hand, "can be productive only in the real world and can produce only reality. Desire is the set of passive syntheses that engineer partial objects, flows, and bodies, and that function as units of production. The real is the end product".<sup>64</sup> The concept of partial objects is gleaned from Melanie Klein, whose theory of childhood sexuality posits that the infant recognizes partial objects in relation to his mother; for instance, when feeding the baby does not recognize a totality of the subject in his mother - just the breast as a partial object. Deleuze and Guattari understand this in a machinic sense, that there is a coupling of the lips to the breast in the same sense that there are two machines plugging into one

---

<sup>63</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 25.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

another.<sup>65</sup> This understanding is then extrapolated. All production involves different couplings and formations that encompass production as a totalizing process.

As desiring production flows onto the world, so does libidinal energy. Desiring production and its unleashing of the flows of desire is best engendered by the capitalist mode of production – up until its breaking point -- after which a new form of production within the socius may takeover. One may note how this is reminiscent of the Marxian fettering of productive forces by the relations of production, resulting in the formation of a new mode of production:

As we shall see, capitalism is the only social machine that is constructed on the basis of decoded flows, substituting for intrinsic codes an axiomatic of abstract quantities in the form of money. Capitalism therefore liberates the flows of desire, but under the social conditions that define its limit and the possibility of its own dissolution ... At capitalism's limit the deterritorialized socius gives way to the body without organs, and the decoded flows throw themselves into desiring production.<sup>66</sup>

Capitalism decodes flows within society, unleashing stagnant desires in individuals, loosening the structures of the particular into a chaotic productive realm. The market is a mechanism by which productive desires are engendered, insofar as capitalism produces an array of affects, products, individual states, etc. All that is desired through the market and thus stagnant desires crystalized by institutions (such as schools or churches) are broken free through capitalism's ability to decode. Structures which crystalize flows of desire thusly 'recode' said desires.

Deleuze and Guattari assign a central role to capitalism, defining its presence as a an invigilation floating amongst the annals of world history, insofar as it is the history of desiring-

---

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 139-140.



production, “In a sense, capitalism has haunted all forms of society, but it haunts them as their terrifying nightmare, it is the dread they feel of a flow that would elude their codes.”<sup>67</sup> In *The Paris Manuscripts*, capitalism is ethically condemned for its alienation of man, in late-Marx, capitalism is a necessary stage in the productive historical process, in *Anti-Oedipus*, capitalism is an inherent productive tendency, one which is waiting for history to catch up to it.

This understanding of capitalism stems from the inherent decoding and recoding of desire and its relationship to deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Deterritorialization is the destruction of the grounds upon which societal structures are built. Reterritorialization refers to the subsequent crystallization of new grounds upon which new structures may organize themselves thereafter – absorbing surplus value in the process. “Capitalism is inseparable from the movement of deterritorialization, but this movement is exercised through factitious and artificial reterritorializations.”<sup>68</sup> Deterritorializations unleash desires, only for them to be captured again within the dormant walls of reterritorializations. Again, if history is understood as a history of an increased unleashing of desire, the history of the world is “in the light of capitalism, provided that the rules formulated by Marx are followed exactly.”<sup>69</sup> Capitalism is present even in pre-capitalist societies – it was, for example, at the shores of the Indian ocean, waiting to wreak havoc on the people of the subcontinent.

## **2. The Total Reconstruction of a Machinic Subject – Desiring Machines**

Through the unleashing of desiring production engendered by capitalism, the world ceases to be defined via a stagnant amalgam of categorical representations, and is instead comprised of a productive, interconnected flow of assemblages and parts, plugging in and out of one another.

---

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 140.

Distinct groupings such as organic and inorganic bodies are disregarded for the totality of the machinic, in turn providing a machinic ontology of pure potentiality – allowing both the organic and inorganic to float upon its constantly expanding raft.

All within this world is uncovered as a plane of interconnected ‘desiring machines’ plugging in and out of each other - the apex of which is the ‘human’; but this human is a rather queer species, insofar as he is a vessel of desiring production. The resultant subject “does not live nature as nature, but as a process of production. There is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together.”<sup>70</sup> The ontology of man and nature, is machinic in the sense that it allows for the productive pairings of all connections within the world to occur.

Desiring Machines “are non-Oedipal and engage in real processes of production. They express a direct link between desire and production. Their components couple and connect with one another and cut the fluxes of desire; libido is both energy that is expended in and produced by their couplings.”<sup>71</sup> With the introduction of desiring machines, the role of the productive seeps into the Marxian superstructure. The subject undergoes a process of ‘becoming’ – morphing into a productive entity; the inhuman outside of the productive is now a part of the subject’s very being. The world is composed of objects connecting and disconnecting productively. In regards to the subject, desiring production can either flow through entities, rendering them in tune with the world in an exciting, energetic, productive, synchronous manner, or these flows may become Oedipalized -- opting for a fully-fledged cessation. These desires are locked up within structures of stagnation,

---

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>71</sup> Eugene B. Young, Gary Genosko, and Janell Watson, *The Deleuze and Guattari Dictionary* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 85.

ranging from the walls of prisons to the rigid conformity of schools, to the chair of the psychoanalyst. In all cases, “Oedipus presupposes a fantastic repression of desiring-machines.”<sup>72</sup>

The subject is completely transformed through deterritorialization, opting for the unleashing of flows -- constantly plugging in and out of other machines. The question of where the human ends and the technological begins is a non-starter – all is technical, all is machinic, the technological becomes fully integrated with the subject: “For desiring machines are the fundamental category of the economy of desire; they produce a body without organs all by themselves and make no distinction between agents and their own parts, or between the relations of production and their own relations, or between the social order and technology”<sup>73</sup>. This machinic ontology is one of pure potentiality, setting a plane upon which all intensities establish themselves. Humanity reeks of imprisonment, and the roaring shrieks of the productive forces developing are in tandem with a total augmentation of the human.

### **3. The Schizophrenic Subject as Post-Human, and the Body Without Organs**

Insofar as this machinic reality encompasses a process, tearing away at what can only vaguely be denoted as humanity, the apex of the ideal productive entity is the schizophrenic. “What the schizophrenic experiences, both as an individual and as a member of the human species is not at all any one specific aspect of nature, but nature as a process of production.”<sup>74</sup> The schizophrenic (insofar as it is a term utilized to describe this totally new understanding of the ‘subject’) evades the oppressive fetters of humanist structures, and is able to produce freely, connecting in and out of machines at an explosive rate, evading the structures imposed by prison guards, be they psychoanalysts, or priests: “The ego, however, is like daddy-mommy: the schizo has long since

---

<sup>72</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 3.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

ceased to believe in it. He is somewhere else, beyond or behind or below these problems, rather than immersed in them. And wherever he is, there are problems, insurmountable sufferings, unbearable needs.”<sup>75</sup>

The schizophrenic assumes a *fully* mechanized process of desire<sup>76</sup>; his life is one of pure libidinal, material productivity – to the extent that the repression accompanied by the humanist Oedipalization of modernity may be evaded. The technological ontology of desiring machines is what renders such a fully mechanized entity to assume a multitude of subjectivities, to plug in and out of different social forms and social orders. He sees no need to conform to the repressive structures of society, although, if need be, such games may be played by him as well. The schizophrenic embraces the process of production in its totality – as a way of life itself: “... schizophrenia is the process of the production of desire and desiring machines”<sup>77</sup>

The process of schizophrenia, in tandem with its creation via desiring production is, again, engendered by capitalism. It is through capitalism that such a productive multitudinous subjective explosion may occur, “Schizophrenia as a process is desiring production, but it is this production as it functions at the end, as the limit of social production determined by the conditions of capitalism.”<sup>78</sup> Nothing is better at decoding flows, at producing a greater infusion of desire into the socius than capitalism; during this process, it creates the machinic subject that is the schizophrenic, in its all-encompassing ability to flout oedipal bondages.

This newly formed, mechanized subject is post-human, insofar as the concept of a posthuman involves the “decentring of the human”<sup>79</sup>, a means by which all the notions associated

---

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 289.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>79</sup> Cary Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xv.

with humanism are set-aside in favour of something radically different. This does not, however, necessarily entail an anti-humanism; an augmented human de-centered within society may still contain remnants of some form of humanism. In other words, post-humanity does not necessarily entail a total human extinction or a drive towards human eradication. For instance, Rosi Braidotti is adamant on retaining certain concepts of the Enlightenment Tradition (specifically its emphasis on an ethical egalitarianism) in her machinic and ecological understanding of posthumanism.<sup>80</sup> Like the concept of the Anthropocene, however, posthumanism is far too vast of a field to be tackled with any sort of rigor within this thesis. Insofar as schizophrenics are subjects of pure machinic production, they are inherently posthumanist in their ability to constantly produce, traverse humanist structures, and assume multiple subjectivities - opting to subscribe to a subjective ontology that refuses to be constrained into any category as stagnant as that of humanity.

This schizophrenic posthuman subject is, however, at the same time a proponent of the dissolution of capital, insofar as he “deliberately seeks out the very limit of capitalism: he is its inherent tendency brought to fulfilment, its surplus product, its proletariat, and its exterminating angel.”<sup>81</sup> In this vein, deterritorialization becomes a revolutionary process, ironically engendered by a capitalism that will form the very subjects that will seek out its own limit point.

But which is the revolutionary path? Is there one? – To withdraw from the world market, as Samir Amin advises Third World countries to do, in a curious revival of the fascist “economic solution”? Or might it be to go in the opposite direction? To go still further, that is, in the movement of the market, of decoding and deterritorialization? For perhaps the flows are not yet deterritorialized enough, not decoded enough, from the viewpoint of a

---

<sup>80</sup> For further reading, see: Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2013).

<sup>81</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 35.

theory and a practice of a highly schizophrenic character. Not to withdraw from the process, but to go further, to “accelerate” the process.<sup>82</sup>

One integral aspect to both the schizophrenic and desiring machines is the concept of the body without organs. The body without organs is the ground zero of production. It is anti-production, that which repels the productive process yet is an integral part of the process itself. The body without organs represents total potentiality. It is that egg-like, grid-like entity from which the schizophrenic may will any sort of productive assemblage in any direction: “The body without organs is an egg: it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by *gradients* marking the transitions and the becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors.”<sup>83</sup> The schizophrenic takes full advantage of the body without organs, for he has the capability to penetrate into that realm of full potentiality – to produce constantly – to will any and every productive potentiality. Even the body itself is produced, for potentiality is a part of the schema of production as well; thus, actuality produces a potentiality, which can in turn be utilized to further produce an immanent actuality<sup>84</sup>.

#### **4. *Anti-Oedipus* and its Relationship to Species Being – Judge Schreber, Ethics and Capitalism**

By posing questions to the premises presupposing the instantiation of species being, vulgar tendencies within Marxist thought allow an anti-humanism to seep through the cracks of the Anthropocene. These tendencies provide a glimpse of the productive ‘outside’ controlling and directing the humanist superstructure by designating the productive forces as that which determines the productive process, and thus of the formation of human subjectivity. *Anti-Oedipus*

---

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 239-240.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 10.

and its radical re-definition of the subject grants an opportunity for the walls that separate the Anthropocene from the base inhumanism of desire to crack. The inhuman 'outside' forces of production that dictate the overall processes of production are now a part of the subject's very being, making its way into the body, turning every interaction into an intercourse of productivity.

One may rightfully make a philosophical quandary regarding whether such a radical posthumanism that constantly re-defines its subjectivity is still reminiscent of the self-actualizing process of species being. The radical, post-humanist redefinition of Marxist tendencies is implicit in Deleuze and Guattari in a very specific way. Deleuze and Guattari take the concept of self-actualization and the constant restructuring of the human subject in *The Paris Manuscripts* seriously, but infect it with the technological and productive vulgarity of later Marx to the point at which such a subject is totally unrecognizable. The method of this post-human augmentation of the concept of species being, is four-fold: (i) it is desiring production that assumes the role of productive primacy within *Anti-Oedipus*; (ii) with the introduction of desire into the productive picture, the schizophrenic, or the apex of desiring machines is a posthuman as opposed to a gatekeeper of the Anthropocene. This is insofar as man assumes the form of the productive apparatus; (iii) any notion of an ethical project as posited by the Paris Manuscripts' discussion of alienation is converted to an anti-ethics of sorts; and finally, (iv) the notion of capitalism being an oppressive force that throttles man is not only questioned but overturned.

With Deleuze and Guattari's introduction of 'desiring production', a transition occurs, wherein the concept of the productive forces, and their tendencies towards greater development becomes a cosmic force. Desiring production is not merely within the realm of specific productive apparatuses - those of the machine, nature and labour power - but is a universal force of immanence undergirding all productive intercourse. The invocation of desiring production takes the productive

proWess of Vulgar Marxism and expounds upon it. Thus, although desiring production may or may not flow through subjects, it is still a productive outside at the helm of productive processes.

Capitalism dissolves the human subject into pure schizophrenia, transforming the human into a posthuman productive force in and of itself. *Anti-Oedipus* melts all distinctions; in vulgar Marx, labour power is extricated from the subject and granted to the inhuman outside. In *Anti-Oedipus*, however, under capitalism, *all* characteristics are extracted from the human, and engulfed within the productive process; ‘subjectivities’ become as integral to the productive base as railways. Through this process, the subject becomes totally transformed. The schizophrenic is a machine – one which consumes, produces and consumes again. Perhaps species being has been instantiated herein, but only insofar as it belongs to a machinic entity. It is the emancipation of the machinic that is centered, not that of the human in any traditional sense. Insofar as the production of the schizophrenic is the production of a revolutionary subject, capitalism becomes a revolutionary force – far from the alienating mode of production discussed in the *Paris Manuscripts*.

Take the example of Judge Schreber, the schizo king of *Anti-Oedipus*: “Judge Schreber has sunbeams in his ass. A solar anus. And rest assured that it works: Judge Schreber feels something, produces something, and is capable of explaining the process theoretically. Something is produced: the effects of a machine, not mere metaphors.”<sup>85</sup> One may make much of what Deleuze and Guattari are describing, but ‘human’ cannot be a part of such descriptions. The human is lost – a slight resemblance may be gleaned (body parts, movements, affects of sorts), but they are totally scrambled. That which is produced is engendered by the market, continually unleashing desire.

Some scholars have still gleaned an ethics of emancipation within *Anti-Oedipus*,

---

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 2.



reminiscent of *The Paris Manuscripts*. Michel Foucault states the following in his introduction, proclaiming “I would say that *Anti-Oedipus* (may its authors forgive me) is a book of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France in quite a long time (perhaps that explains why its success was not limited to a particular ‘readership’: being anti-oedipal has become a life-style, a way of thinking and living).”<sup>86</sup> These sentiments are echoed in works such as Julian Bourg’s *From Revolution to Ethics*.<sup>87</sup> The latter stating that *Anti-Oedipus* is championing a joyous emancipatory celebration of subjective experimentations. However, both Foucault and Bourg omit the fact that ethics themselves (insofar as ethics are understood as an imperative structure in accordance with a value system) are oedipal. It is exactly the revolutionary schizophrenic who cannot abide by such values, for such schemas encompass the very territories he is escaping<sup>88</sup>.

*Anti-Oedipus* may be understood as a work of anti-ethics insofar as this work goes beyond any orthodox understanding of an ethical project. Such anti-ethics are more so congruent with the amoral nature of capitalist violence inherent in vulgar Marxism in two specific ways: firstly, both *Anti-Oedipus* and vulgar Marxist texts such as *On Imperialism in India* do not shy away from embracing the violence that accompanies the capitalist mode of production.<sup>89</sup> Secondly, the idea of ethics as something continually, and radically re-defined is reminiscent of how the Marxist superstructure (wherein ethical norms reside) is continually fragmented and re-formed. This continual and radical reformation is antithetical to ethics of alienation in *The Paris Manuscripts*.

The question of capitalism plays a radical role within *Anti-Oedipus* as well. It is a system which engenders deterritorialized flows and the unleashing of desire; it is a tendency lurking in

---

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>87</sup> Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press - MQUP, 2017).

<sup>88</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 341.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

the backdrop of history. Capitalism is also more akin to a revolutionary force, which produces the schizophrenic and continues to disintegrate all that is stagnant and Oedipal. There is still a post-capitalism within *Anti-Oedipus*, insofar as capitalism contains an inherent a breaking point at which it will no longer be able to engender a freeing of flows, and the unleashing of desires, leading to a new structure to take capitalism's place as a new conduit of desiring production. This new conduit will thusly continue to decode, continue to unleash desire, as an improved vehicle for desiring production. Both the idea of capitalism being a necessity within the productive process, and its limit is present in both vulgar Marxist thought as well as in *Anti-Oedipus*.

### **5. Concluding Remarks on *Anti-Oedipus***

The following shift has occurred from vulgar Marxism to *Anti-Oedipus*: man is not universal, nor are the productive forces (in its narrow, Marxian definition of nature, technology and labour power). It is instead desiring production, which is the universal outside force of production, insofar as it is a cosmic force through which all connections and productive movements occur; desiring production solely determines the productive process. The promethean human subject of the *Paris Manuscripts* has thusly transformed from its demoted position as a mere consequence of production within the schema of vulgar Marxism, to becoming a vessel of productive energy, a machinic part through which desiring production flows. Ethical groundworks are constantly evaded, and capitalism plays a transformative role in the process of desiring production and schizophrenia. Emancipation is present in *Anti-Oedipus*, but what greets humanity on the other side of its crescendo is not a self-determining human, but a cosmic emancipation of productive libidinal energy working through a posthuman subject.

## 6. Introducing Accelerationism: Rebellion of the Outside

Accelerationism is a philosophy drenched in controversy both within academia, as well as in the political sphere. Its origins lie in the hallowed corridors of Warwick University's philosophy department during the nineties, where an assemblage of disillusioned graduate students and professors, including the likes of Mark Fisher, Sadie Plant, Luciana Parisi and the now infamous Nick Land, formed the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (The CCRU) as a chaotic repose from the lulling mundanity of orthodox academia. The work of The CCRU is rife with distain towards academic orthodoxy, "Many members of the CCRU had fled cultural studies, disgusted by its authoritarian prejudices, its love of ideology, and pompous desire to 'represent the other' or speak on behalf of the oppressed"<sup>90</sup>. Their alternative centers around an imperative "... to think, theorize, and produce with rather than 'about' (or – even worse – 'for') them."<sup>91</sup> It is from this milieu that accelerationism emerges a theory of the 'outside'.

The term 'accelerationism' is introduced in Benjamin Noys's 2010 work *Persistence of the Negative*, wherein he posits that its origin lies in the bringing together of the following contemporary French works: Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, Jean-François Lyotard's *Libidinal Economy*, and Jean Baudrillard's *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. Noys explains that these texts are influenced by the vulgar, structural understanding of later Marxist works which understand capitalism as a mode of production that must be both engendered and embraced:

In particular they reply to Marx's contention that '[t]he real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself', by arguing that we must crash through this barrier by turning capitalism against itself. They are an exotic variant of *la politique du pire*: if capitalism generates its

---

<sup>90</sup> CCRU, *Writings 1997-2003*, (Falmouth: Urbanomic, Time Spiral Press, 2017), 02.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 02.

own forces of dissolution then the necessity is to radicalise capitalism itself: the worse the better. We can call this tendency *accelerationism*.<sup>92</sup>

Accelerationism's popularity, has exploded with the publication of *Fanged Noumena*, a compendium of essays by Nick Land, ranging from 1997-2002, published by Urbanomic and MIT Press. Accelerationism is commonly understood as a theory of capitalism insofar as it refers to the accelerated cybernetic structure of capitalism as a tendency. Left-wing accelerationists (denoted as l/acc) such as Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams insist on the further development of Marxist productive tendencies in order for capitalism to reach its limit point and break, spewing out the sweet ambrosia of emancipation that is post-capitalism<sup>93</sup>. Right-wing accelerationism (denoted as r/acc) ranges from the application of a dangerous and unsophisticated intensification process applied towards fascistic ends<sup>94</sup> to a libertarian techno-utopianism focusing on technological development for the sake of increasing human autonomy.

The original accelerationist position is much more difficult to pin down. As is asserted by Land himself in a retrospective essay: "Anyone trying to work out what they think about accelerationism better do so quickly. That's the nature of the thing. It was already caught up with trends that seemed too fast to track when it became self-aware, decades ago."<sup>95</sup> Like rainbow mercury, accelerationism slips from human palms as soon as one attempts to grasp it, poisoning the bloodstream in the process. It may be more fruitful, therefore, to decidedly state what accelerationism is not. It is not a systematic mode of thought, for it is incompatible with the

---

<sup>92</sup> Benjamin Noys, *Persistence of the Negative* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>93</sup> For more, see the *Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics*, Robin Mackay and Armen Avanessian, *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2019).

<sup>94</sup> See: Zack Beauchamp, "The Extremist Philosophy That's More Violent Than the Alt-right and Growing in Popularity," *Vox*, last modified November 18, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/11/11/20882005/accelerationism-white-supremacy-christchurch>.

<sup>95</sup> Nick Land, *A Nick Land Reader* (2017), 33.

antiquated fetters of traditional systems such as German Idealism. It is not a political philosophy, for accelerationism necessarily entails a total melting of the political. Finally, accelerationism is not a theory compatible with the mendaciousness of any psychoanalytical practice; although drive theory plays an integral part of accelerationism, it still enforces an impetus to flee the Oedipal by throwing its victims headfirst into schizophrenia.

To reiterate, much like *Anti-Oedipus*, *Fanged Noumena* is a work of pure fragmentation, one which exceeds its predecessors. If Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* is the posthuman, machinic unravelling of all systematizations, Nick Land's accelerationism is an anti-humanist work of a machinic birth, bursting through humanity, leaving any resemblance of man far beyond its purview. Accordingly, this thesis will explain certain integral fragments in the hopes of catching a glimpse of Land's very own *Speeding Train*. The rest of this chapter will deal with *Fanged Noumena*'s accelerationism as a finale to the genealogy, highlighting the anti-humanist death of the human subject by way of a birthing of the machinic.

## **7. Freudian Drive Theory and Thanatos**

At the core of accelerationism's motor is a renewed conceptualization of desire – that of a Landian machinic desire influenced by the concept of Thanatos (specifically, from Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*), which is then reinvested into the aforementioned desiring production of Deleuze and Guattari. By working through Freudian drive theory, and revisiting desiring production through its lens, one is lead to the concept of machinic desire. With the introduction of machinic desire, Land unleashes a philosophy elucidating those tendencies responsible for the most inhuman aspects of society – those which tear a hole into the zone of antiquity, whilst simultaneously creating the conditions conducive for the propagation of a pure technological creativity.

Freudian drive theory deals with energetic tendencies “which represents all those manifestations of energy that originate in the inner depths of the body and are transmitted to the psychic apparatus.”<sup>96</sup> Drives are primal forces of the unconscious (with Thanatos being posited as pre-conscious), accounting for the non-linear, motivation for a subject’s operability/function. The plasticity of the pluralism regarding these drives’ function is inherent to how drives motivate a great array of action – those which are human as well as those which may seem inhuman, “what arises out of the static and structural eidetics is the great plasticity of the drive as dynamic force. Moving force rather than substance with stable qualities, driving energy rather than rigid mechanism, versatile and capable of being influenced rather than faithful and consequential”<sup>97</sup>

Freud posits two drives within man: the life drive, or Eros, which accounts for a conservative instinct to preserve one’s being, and the death drive, or Thanatos, the organism’s instinct to reach its prior state of cessation. The motion/force of drives are a result of the pressure of materialism, with matter and its Lucretian chaos resulting in the plurality of both life and death instincts when it meets with an inherent energy/force within man. “The attributes of life were at some time evoked in inanimate matter by the action of a force of whose nature we can form no conception. It may perhaps have been a process similar in type to that which later caused the development of consciousness in a particular stratum of living matter. The tension which then arose in what had hitherto been an inanimate substance endeavored to cancel itself out. In this way, the first instinct came into being: the instinct to return to the inanimate state.”<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1961), 74.

<sup>97</sup> Rudolf Bernet, *Force, Drive, Desire: A Philosophy of Psychoanalysis* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2020), 10.

<sup>98</sup> Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 32.

Yet it is Thanatos, this preconscious explosion from within, that makes Freud's work so daring. Thanatropic functionality is a cybernetic movement towards annihilation, "it must be an old state of things, an initial state from which the living entity has at one time or other departed and to which it is striving to return by the circuitous path along which its development leads."<sup>99</sup> In a way, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* may be interpreted as conceptualizing life as a journey towards death – the means by which we "reach an ancient goal."<sup>100</sup> However, the path this drive takes gives way to creation, experimentation, and an economics of energy. In other words, the 'detours' the subject takes from life to death are epochs of a productive history, "the organism wishes to die only in its own fashion."<sup>101</sup>

### **8. Revisiting *Anti-Oedipus* – Desire as Thanatropic**

The great misreading of *Anti-Oedipus* is in understanding it as a wholesale repudiation of Freudian thought in favour of the likes of Jung and, to a certain extent, Wilhelm Reich. Although there is a condemnation of psychoanalysis as a practice for its role in instilling a fantastical Oedipal restriction on desire in the form of a Freudian drama - in turn opening a breeding ground of a new Nietzschean priest class - the energetics of Thanatos are far from expunged. The metaphysical neuroses of desire in fact places Lacan as the primary problematic figure. Land acknowledges this in his commentary on *Anti-Oedipus* "is Freud ever really engaged in *Anti-Oedipus*? Is it not rather Lacan who had already transformed the jungle wilderness at the heart of psychoanalysis into a structural parking lot ... who programmes the supposed anti-Freudianism of the book?"<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>102</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 282.

Freud's theorization around Thanatos is shackled, and in urgent need of a restructuring. According to Deleuze and Guattari, Freud misapprehends Thanatos by assigning its role as a transcendent principle buried in the netherworld of the unconscious, beholden to an equilibrium with Eros, fettering its dynamism, "If Freud needs death as a principle, this is by virtue of the requirements of the dualism that maintains a qualitative opposition between the sexual drives."<sup>103</sup> Thanatos as understood in such a context becomes chimerical, "The death instinct is pure silence, pure transcendence, not givable and not given in experience ... it is because death, according to Freud, has neither a model nor an experience, that he makes of it a transcendent principle."<sup>104</sup>

Drives are barricaded from desiring production via an injection of the Oedipal myth, a narrative structure antithetical to the creative unleashing of libidinal flows. "If desire is repressed, this is not because it is desire for the mother and for the death of the father; on the contrary, desire becomes that only because it is repressed, it takes on that mask only under the reign of the repression that models the mask for it and plasters it on its face."<sup>105</sup> This understanding of drive theory further disregards the productive capabilities of the unconscious itself, which - in *Anti-Oedipus* - is both something that is produced and is on the same plane of productive immanence as the body, "For the unconscious itself is no more structural than personal, it does not symbolize any more than it imagines or represents; it engineers, it is machinic. Neither imaginary nor symbolic, it is the Real in itself, the "impossible real" and its production."<sup>106</sup>

Section 1 of this chapter describes desiring production as a cosmic tendency unleashing flows of desire. However, Deleuze and Guattari insist that both Thanatos and Eros are immanent

---

<sup>103</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 332.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 332.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.



principles -- they function within the process of production, with Thanatos providing the body without organs with the cessation needed to instantiate pure potentiality. “Death is not desired, there is only death that desires, by virtue of the body without organs, or the immobile motor, and there is also life that desires, by virtue of the working organs.”<sup>107</sup> Drive theory is augmented by Deleuze and Guattari via the adjustment of its role from a transcendent concept into a *transcendental* one. Death is a tendency running through the absolute zero of the body without organs - as the grounds of production functioning at a surface level of bodily mechanization. “Death then is a part of the desiring-machine, a part that must itself be judged, evaluated in the functioning of the machine and system of its energetic conversions, and not as an abstract principle.”<sup>108</sup>

Drive theory in *Anti-Oedipus* is comparable to Nietzschean productive nihilism in relation with the Will to Power. Nihilism is the movement that brings society towards decimation; the vast zero of potentiality. It is from here that the Will to Power may act as a guide in forming a new socio-cultural era. Nietzsche exudes a sickened, yet amused tirade aimed at a decadent Europe when he states: “For why has the advent of nihilism become necessary? Because the values we have had hitherto thus draw their final consequence; because nihilism represents the ultimate logical conclusion of our great values and ideals – because we must experience nihilism before we can find out what value these “values” really had.”<sup>109</sup> Like this nihilism, and its decimation of vestigial, decadent values, Thanatropic tendencies are those which melt the structures of society for pathways to then emerge, creating renewed bouts of creativity (which will be taken up by Eros).

---

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 329.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 332.

<sup>109</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Will to Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 4.

Thanatos and Eros are not beholden to the hidden realm of an oedipalized unconscious; however, Eros is still present within the schema of production in *Anti-Oedipus*. One could argue that although Deleuze and Guattari succeed in taking drives from within the depths of the unknowable unconscious to a surface rife with production (augmenting their functionality as any good Nietzschean mechanics would), they have not escaped the ‘equilibrium’ they accuse Freud of upholding in his understanding of drive theory. Although death and life in *Anti-Oedipus* are now unsystematic machine parts, they still work in tandem; every deterritorialization in *Anti-Oedipus* is met with a crystalizing reterritorialization. This dual-system of drive-induced production yields the posthumanism of *Anti-Oedipus*.

Mechanistic subjectivity is still at the base of Deleuze and Guattari’s posthumanism, but an organic conservatism makes its way into the picture. Prevalence of the dual mechanism of drive theory necessitates the inclusion of Eros, barring the productive process from being totally devoid of conservative humanistic instincts. This does not disregard the productive aspects of creativity associated with both drives. Death works as a pulsation towards such a potentiality, but the machine part of Eros cannot be ignored: “it is absurd to speak of a death desire that would presumably in qualitative opposition to the life desires. Death is not desired, there is only death that desires, by virtue of the body without organs or the immobile motor, and there is also a life that desires, by virtue of the working organs. There, we do not have two desires but two parts, two kinds of desiring machine parts, in the dispersion of the machine itself.”<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 329.

## 9. Nick Land and Machinic Desire

Accelerationism expounds on desire by re-introducing Freud into the picture by positioning Thanatos as an anti-humanist tendency at the *sole forefront* of production. As aforementioned, although Deleuze and Guattari immanentize Thanatos, there is a vitalism insofar as it still works alongside Eros. Land's understanding of Deleuze and Guattari is prosecuted by the late Mark Fisher for being: "remorselessly stripped of all Bergsonian vitalism and made backwards-compatible with Freud's death drive and Schopenhauer's Will."<sup>111</sup> Landian machinic desire utilizes Freud's Thanatos to further expound upon Deleuze and Guattari's desiring production, "In its primary dynamics it is utterly alien to everything human ... The death drive is Freud's beautiful account of how creativity occurs without the least effort, how life is propelled into its extravagances by the blindest and simplest of tendencies, how desire is no more problematic than a river's search for the sea."<sup>112</sup> There is a melting away of all that is associated with the human that is emphasized in Land's understanding of desire. The human is nothing but a temporary vessel for this machinic impulse - a placeholder for another vessel to then take the reins of desire upon itself. Thusly, desire is a productive, invasive assault upon life, using the subject to its fullest extent before ripping apart organic stagnation for an inorganic, chaotic, and explosive plenitude.

For machinic desire, there is no imperative for Thanatropic tendencies to be at equilibrium with Eros, nor is there a philosophical imperative for Thanatos to work alongside Eros. The organism will be guided in its pilgrimage towards inorganic cessation by an inhumanism, but will be sure to have some fun along the way in its destructiveness: "Machinic desire can seem a little inhuman, as it rips up political cultures, deletes traditions, dissolves subjectivities, and hacks

---

<sup>111</sup> Mackay and Avanesian, *#Accelerate*, 342.

<sup>112</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 283.

through security apparatuses, tracking a soulless tropism to zero control.”<sup>113</sup> Death is firmly re-positioned as the guiding mechanism of the organism, whilst retaining the immanence of its mechanization achieved in *Anti-Oedipus*.

Land positions Freudian Thanatos as the cosmic drive of a creative destruction. Ripping apart all that is reminiscent of vitalism, and re-implementing the technological, creating a theory of desire antithetical to all conservative tendencies centred around life. Desire is machinic and creative, but it creates only for itself, for the purposes of an increase in the process of production. The overview of drives and desire culminate in Land’s machinic desire due to its emphasis on productive capabilities. “Machinic desire is the operation of the virtual; implementing itself in the actual, revirtualizing itself, and producing reality in a circuit.”<sup>114</sup> Machinic desire is a rampant tendency of material production; one which grasps and gathers the ethers of the unknown ‘virtual’ and immanentizes it – creating the real in real time. Whether it be the virtuality of market mechanisms, or of creative innovation, all virtuality is immanentized.

### **10. The Techno-Capital Singularity**

The *Paris Manuscripts* posit capitalism as a throttle, vulgar Marxism understands it as a stage within history, and *Anti-Oedipus* lauds it for its ability to unleash the flows of desire. All three modes of thought are, however, unified in insisting that there is a limit point to which capitalism is no longer a productive system. Yet, in *Anti-Oedipus*, there are seemingly odd pockets of futurity that open the gates of Lovecraftian horrors, which even their Bergsonian vitalism could not paper over. Shortly after their discussion of capitalism’s ability to unleash desire until its own limit point, Deleuze and Guattari discuss capitalism’s eventual lack of productivity and lament:

---

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 338.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 327.

It will be necessary to await capitalism to find a semiautonomous organization of technical production that tends to appropriate memory and reproduction, and thereby modifies the forms of the exploitation of man; but as a matter of fact, this organization presupposes a dismantling of the great social machines that preceded it.<sup>115</sup>

In other words, there is a means by which a modified capitalism may further the flows of desiring-production, but such a capitalism would have to be intensely augmented, and totally reconceptualized as a tendency void of a limit point - one that refuses to shut down and is able to continually find new areas of commodification, investment and exploitation. It would have to fully adapt to the totally mechanized ontology of *Anti-Oedipus*, ceasing to be a mere mode of production, and instead manifesting as a tendency of a mechanized desire synonymous with both the disintegration of the organic as well as the birth of the technological. This is the techno-capital singularity of accelerationism.

Landian capitalism is synonymous with the technological singularity. This is a concept more recently popularized by the likes of Ray Kurzweil, who understands it as “a future period during which the pace of technological change will be so rapid, its impact so deep, that human life will be irreversibly transformed.”<sup>116</sup> Though Kurzweil does not believe the singularity can be either utopian or dystopian<sup>117</sup>, Land’s techno-capital singularity defines this cybernetic explosiveness of technological growth as an inherently anti-humanist future. Artificial intelligence is deeply linked with Land’s understanding of capitalism because capitalism operates on a logic of self-propagation. Capitalism and its guided force of unfettered production is synonymous with the

---

<sup>115</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 141.

<sup>116</sup> Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (London: Penguin, 2005), 16.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

cybernetics of AI; one that is invading the present from the future, “what appears to humanity as the history of capitalism is an invasion from the future by an artificial intelligent space that must assemble itself entirely from its enemy’s resources.”<sup>118</sup>

This is reminiscent of *Anti-Oedipus*’s insistence on history being understood in the light of capitalism, however, in accelerationist terms capitalism is rampantly increasing in its role as an *active*, productive agent -- imminently constructing both reality and itself from the technological singularity. By theorizing capitalism and artificial intelligence as such, Land accomplishes two things: (1) he attaches a machinic aspect to capitalism, thusly granting it the ability to be unbounded by any limit points discussed by the likes of Deleuze, Guattari or Marx, and (2) he places capitalism as the sole conduit of a machinic desire, augmenting the role of capitalism in *Anti-Oedipus* by centering it as solely responsible for the productive process in its total plurality:

Capitalism identifies itself with desire to a degree that cannot imaginably be exceeded, shamelessly soliciting any impulse that might contribute an increment of economizeable drive to its continuously multiplying productive initiatives. Whatever you want, capitalism is the most reliable way to get it, absorbing every source of social dynamism, capitalism makes growth, change and even time itself into integral components of its endlessly gathering tide.<sup>119</sup>

Landian capitalism is a machinic assemblage, a mechanized productive apparatus and a capital-AI composite – one which actively births itself from the future.

---

<sup>118</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 338.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 625.

## 11. Techno-Capitalism, Cybernetics, Time and Space

It is important to note that Thanatropic tendencies are now at the forefront of a productive, machinic, desire, but what is being produced is an advanced capacity, a greater degree of productive prowess, “As capital ‘evolves’, the increasingly absurd rationalization of production-for-profit peels away like a cheap veneer from the from the positive-feedback detonation of production-for-production.”<sup>120</sup> This cybernetic ontology of production is inherent to techno-capitalism as an accelerationist tendency.

Pioneered by Norbert Wiener, cybernetics is an interdisciplinary field of mathematics, understood as a science of communication and control. What is being communicated is information relating to the cessation/ allowance of entropy; says Wiener, “In control and communication we are always fighting nature’s tendency to degrade the organized and to destroy the meaningful; the tendency, as Gibbs has shown us, for entropy to increase.”<sup>121</sup> These messaging systems may be utilized as a means of stabilization, or as a means to increase entropy. Stabilizing feedback loops are negative, insofar as they are “mechanisms which tend to resist any untoward changes in their levels.”<sup>122</sup> There are, however, also instances of positive feedback, which are “only disruptive and destructive, rather than as leading to complex, stable structures.”<sup>123</sup> Accelerationist techno-capitalism solely operates on positive feedback. The accelerationist point of view is not just that capitalism is expanding, growing and developing, but that it is doing so at an exponential rate.

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 265.

<sup>121</sup> Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use for Human Beings* (London: Free Association Books, 1989), 17.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., xv.

The queer reality of techno-capitalism its ability to create time through its cybernetic functionality, “A cybernegative circuit is a loop in time, whereas cyberpositive circuitry loops time ‘itself’, integrating the actual and the virtual in a semi-closed collapse upon the future.”<sup>124</sup> Again, from the point of view of the singularity, capitalism is actively constructing itself and commodifying that which is unreachable; through the construction of itself from the singularity, techno-capitalism is effectively running reality, and thus constructing time in and of itself. If the techno-capital singularity is understood as a reference point, an epoch of production from which all things are created and from which all of history is developed, capitalism can be seen as both the first and final cause of all that there is thus far.

Techno-capitalism, in its ability to create the present from the future, is totalizing, and thus may traverse space as well. The hyperobject theory of capitalism<sup>125</sup> - insofar as it theorizes that one is constantly under its throes no matter where one is or what one is doing - and the problem of capitalist realism<sup>126</sup> - insofar as the very notion of being able to think ‘outside’ of it is a transcendental error - are both indicative of capitalism’s creative omnipotence.

It is a convergent unrealizable assault upon the social macropod, whose symptom is the collapse of productive mode or form in the direction of ever more incomprehensible experiments in commodification, enveloping, dismantling, and circulating every subjective space. It is always on the move towards a terminal nonspace, melting the earth onto the body without organs<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 317.

<sup>125</sup> For further consideration, see: Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (2013).

<sup>126</sup> For further consideration, see: Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (John Hunt Publishing, 2022).

<sup>127</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 339.



The term ‘terminal nonspace’ is of particular interest here. Take that which is not traversable, that which is not commodifiable, which is totally antithetical to human capitalist consumption, and capital will gladly create space for it within the market. These are potentialities that have yet been to be integrated into the circuit. On a surface level, this can be read in terms of a commodification process; the idea that capitalism integrates that which is seemingly unfit for consumption into the market. Be it something as transgressive as Piero Manzoni’s tin cans of his own excrement or be it the reprehensible monstrosities of GG Allin’s music, or even something as idiotic as boxed air from the great lands of Alberta - capitalism will take it, package it, and slap a price tag on it. On an ontological level of cybernetic expansionism, capitalism creates the ability to allow space for itself to develop its own capacities. The aforementioned capabilities of steam and steam-operated machines is a physical, spatial means by which capitalism traverses uncharted, underdeveloped societies, showcasing a means by which capital actively traverses space, opening new pathways for itself – successfully infecting the past with the future.

Accelerationism may be mistaken for a teleology, but this would merely transform it into a systematic determinism, as opposed to an explosive theorization of pure productivity. One cannot look at capitalism as part in parcel of the stages of production in a Marxian sense – but instead, one must understand it as the immanent tendency of the productive processes, assuming a web-like structure. The motor of this expansionism is found in capitalist markets, “Markets are part of the infrastructure -- its immanent intelligence – and thus entirely indissociable from the forces of production.”<sup>128</sup> If cybernetics is information and control, markets are at the helm of the ship that is capital, guiding it towards its own birth.

---

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 340.

## 12. Accelerationism's Anti-Humanism and Species Being

In *The Paris Manuscripts*, the worker is a self-actualizing, creative promethean figure. Vulgar Marx questions this assertion, for the worker pales in comparison to the awesomeness of productive development. Deleuze and Guattari present a posthuman subject, insofar as he is a productive entity congruent with drive-theory. With accelerationism, however, the human is an eventual antique of the past, for at a certain point, man will be understood as something to be rightfully discarded.

The logic of accelerationism's anti-humanism is as follows: with Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism has a limit point – a breaking point at which it is no longer able to unleash the forces of desire within the socius. Accelerationism inverts the picture; capitalism is boundless, creating time in the real and traversing space - constantly creating and producing itself in the process. It is humanity that will eventually reach a limit point. All that is remotely human will reach a point where it is no longer conducive to the continuation of the productive process.

Yet, before humanity reaches this destination, the human passes through a phase of post-humanism (in particular, a trans-humanism), only for it to then be totally engulfed by techno-capitalism. Humanity is a tool necessary for capitalism to birth and propagate itself, akin to how the British were mere tools used by the 'unconscious forces of history' previously described in the Marxist account of Indian colonial history. Humans are continually being utilized by this force, propelling them towards a project of total violence; this time, however, the gun is pointed backwards. Along the way, there will be a moment of a transhumanist becoming "The capitalized terminus of anthropoid civilization ('axiomatics') will come to be seen as the primitive trigger for

a transglobal post-biological machinism from a future that shall have still scarcely begun to explore the immensities of the cybercosm.”<sup>129</sup>

This transhumanist epoch will consequently give rise to a total technological epoch wherein all that is even remotely human will be engulfed by techno-capitalism. For once the singularity has birthed itself, humanity will become totally unnecessary:

The high road to thinking no longer passes through a deepening of human cognition, but rather through a becoming inhuman of cognition, a migration of cognition out into the emerging planetary technosentience reservoir, into ‘dehumanized landscapes ... emptied spaces’, where human culture will be dissolved.<sup>130</sup>

There are moments in history where technologies such as the plough or the hand mill become unproductive, where the essence of such technologies become synonymous with the fetters of antiquity. It is at these moments that a pure emancipatory progress takes over, where steam mills and trains tear into the past from the future, dragging the past towards it. In *Anti-Oedipus*, ‘humanity’ is an assemblage of desiring-machines, comprised of productive posthuman subjects essential to the productive picture. There will, however, be a point where humanity will share the same fate as the hand loom. Humanity must also fall, and thus the siren’s song will be one of melted flesh and charred bones, for as the future proceeds, “humanity recedes like a loathsome dream.”<sup>131</sup>

This is indicative of a rabid anti-humanism that eats through all that is man-made -- culture, politics, ethics, the whole of human civilization melts. Accelerationism is thus nothing if not inherently anti-political in its anti-humanism. How can there be a politics? For human thought,

---

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 293.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 293.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 298.

ingenuity, and resistance is meager and insignificant in the wake of the technological. Engels foreshadows this in his examination of feudal Austria, noting that the fervor of the Napoleonic could not hold a candle to steam. In the same sense, human political culture is ancient bourgeois culture, thus “politics is obsolete.”<sup>132</sup> The insignificance of politics lies in the fact that it is incapable of stopping the self-instantiation of techno-capitalism. “Life is being phased-out into something new, and if we think this can be stopped we are even more stupid than we seem.”<sup>133</sup> Ethical axioms are, again, seen as totally Oedipal – as concepts that will necessarily become eradicated. There is no such ethics in accelerationist thought, accelerationism is an all-out assault on whatever humanistic spaces presuppose ethics. All such moralism is totally draped in fantasy, and therefore must melt away with the rest of humanity, due to its synonymy with the “complacent whisper of a triumphant priest”.

Accelerationism understands humanity to be a pathetic conundrum that must be bypassed, “Why are sentient life forms crammed into boxes made out of lies? Why does the universe breed entire populations of prison guards? Why does it feed its broken explorers to packs of dogs? Why is the island of reality lost in an ocean of madness? It is all very confusing”<sup>134</sup> The only release from this conundrum is the eradication of humanity. Only through death may humanity be freed from the centuries of violence it has endured through the sadomasochism conducted through its own hands. For Land, the history of man is a history of colonialism, of prison systems, of monarchs - of Oedipal fettering. Through techno-capitalism, man will be relieved of his own miserable condition, and from his own impotence. It is time to count our sins, and once all is tallied and accounted for, one can only really conclude that we deserve what’s coming to us.

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 317.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 318.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 309-310.

### **13. *Fanged Noumena* and Species Being – a Genealogy of Productive Disintegration**

The genealogical trajectory mapped out in this thesis is one that showcases a disintegration of the human in favour of a birthing of the machinic. What begins as an antithetical relationship between man and machine and man and the productive process in *The Paris Manuscripts* only grows in tension, with outside forces of production gaining priority of the productive process in later Marx, to it becoming a part of humanity's very being in *Anti-Oedipus*, until finally, it is the only true self-reinforcing productive reality at all in *Fanged Noumena*. Through this process the human morphs from a promethean figure to an afterthought in the superstructure; then to a posthuman tool, until it is realized as an annoying dreg. The 'outside' of pure productivity encroaches the 'inside' of humanity until the former totally engulfs the latter. Further, ethics and morality progressively erode in each subsequent mode of thought, and the role of capitalism goes from an alienating, unproductive economic system, to a necessary stage in history, to that which best unlashes desiring production, to an all-encompassing futuristic tendency totally synonymous with production itself.

*Fanged Noumena* and its place amidst the genealogy of productive disintegration begs the following questions: does man really have a claim to species being at all? For what is the human's real role in the midst of a technological process of production? It seems that the true directed, emancipated autonomous agent is not man, but techno-capitalism. Man is not working towards the greater development of his species but is instead being used as a tool for the true maker, for a techno-capitalist first mover to complete a process of self-actualization. Man is not being freed by his labour, his labour is instead used to free something that will one day destroy all that man knows and holds dear. Techno-sentience, on the other hand is being birthed by its own doing, assuming its seat at the helm of the productive process, following a cybernetic structure of its own will. The

picture does not bode well for man, for he is left as a mere garden snake, eating its own tale, whilst the Ouroboros that is techno-capitalism is a great beastly demon vomiting itself into existence.

## CHAPTER 3 - What is to be Done?

*It is ceasing to be a matter of how we think about technics if only because technics is increasingly thinking about itself.*<sup>135</sup>

- Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena*

*May we have the courage to face the eventual doom of our civilization as we have the courage to face the certainty of our personal doom. The simple faith in progress is not a conviction belonging to strength, but one belonging to acquiescence and hence to weakness.*<sup>136</sup>

- Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use of Human Beings*

### 0. Introduction

This chapter will map the genealogy in real time – tracking trends of both capitalism and the study of artificial intelligence to then gauge how relevant this genealogy is to the material reality of capitalism and technological development. The study of capitalism will be reliant on the works of economists such as David Harvey and Michel Aglietta. The examination of new developments in artificial intelligence will focus on Ray Kurzweil’s work *The Singularity is Nearer*. In tracking the trends of both capitalist regulation theory and the cybernetic explosivity of AI development, this chapter will thusly argue for the plausibility of Landian techno-capitalism.

The latter half of this chapter will suggest a productive nihilism wherein the cultural ‘meltdown’ engendered by capitalism should be embraced and explored within the realm of aesthetics and subjectivity. Explorations in the realm of gender nonconformity, body augmentation, transhumanism, and cyberculture will be a means to argue that an accelerationist aesthetic is a viable way of life in light of a pernicious techno-capital singularity, not for the sake of political resistance, but as a means to explore pure experimentation – to test how far the aesthetics and subjectivity can be pushed synonymously with deterritorialization.

---

<sup>135</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 293.

<sup>136</sup> Norbert Wiener, *The Human Use of Human Beings: Cybernetics and Society* (London: Free Association Books, 1989), 47.

## 1. Uncharted Horizons – Is Capitalism Truly Limitless?

The conjectural critique that those who hold a Landian accelerationists position must endure is something along the following lines: that the auto-poetry and polemics make for a great work of theory-fiction, but that this is not indicative of the real world. There is no proof of capitalism being an almighty futuristic Lovecraftian beast traversing space and creating time. It is merely a relational economic system, more comparable to Feudalism than it is to Cthulhu. There is no economic basis for the idea that markets can have such dominance on the abstract. The idea that space and time are capitalism's plaything is a deification granted to a mere economic reality. History is linear, and not explosive, making Land's dystopian futures untenable.

Firstly, one may argue that revolutions are not unprecedented: Engels asserts steam as a revolutionary force in feudal Austria, but one cannot disregard the fact of the Napoleonic Revolution. Even if one presupposes a Marxian technological determinism when examining such movements, one must still admit relational changes have taken place in the past, granting humanity a different society. Such a change may soon be in store for capitalist structures as well.

One obvious source of such criticism is from Marx himself. In addition to the initial, ethical critiques of capitalism's inhuman treatment of the worker in *The Paris Manuscripts*, Marx poses an interesting critique in the first volume of *Capital* – one specifically relevant to this genealogy. In the fifth section of the fifteenth chapter, entitled *The Struggle Between Worker and Machine*, Marx suggests that new technologies have historically met with an unruly opposition from workers, “only since the introduction of machinery has the worker fought against the instruments of labour itself, capital's material mode of existence.”<sup>137</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Marx, *Capital I*, 553-4.



This resistance emanates from disruption that new advances in machinery instigate in the working class's way of life - displacing them from their livelihood through automation via technological advancements. According to Marx, the worker will historically first begin to realize that this revolt against technology, due to its being perceived as the cause of their misery, is misplaced. The worker will then swiftly enter a clearer state of mind and realize that the true target of their ire should be the relations of production at the helm of such a problem, "It took both time and experience before the workers learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and therefore transfer their attacks from the material instruments of production to the form of society which utilizes those instruments."<sup>138</sup>

This critique points to two ideas in particular: that modes of production are not stagnant, and that revolutions (even technologically determinist ones) contribute to change in economic relations to some extent. These critiques are particularly relevant for the obvious reasons of technological development (in particular, recent developments in AI), and the way it has been utilized by capital to displace workers. Such critiques set a precedent of sorts: one cannot brazenly state that capitalism is not susceptible to relational change, via some form of human disruption (even if the source of such a disruption is motivated by a technologically 'outside' force).

For instance, a recent study by Goldman Sachs, which directly links predictive trends in the labour market to the development of generative AI, states "A new wave of AI systems may also have a major impact on employment markets around the world. Shifts in workflows triggered by these advancements could expose the equivalent of 300 million full-time jobs to automation."<sup>139</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 555.

<sup>139</sup> "Generative AI Could Raise Global GDP by 7%," Goldman Sachs, last modified April 5, 2023, <https://www.goldmansachs.com/intelligence/pages/generative-ai-could-raise-global-gdp-by-7-percent.html>.

Further, a more worrying 2017 study by the McKinsey Global Institute states “We estimate that between 400 million and 800 million individuals could be displaced by automation and need to find new jobs by 2030 around the world ... of the total displaced, 75 million to 375 million may need to switch occupational categories and learn new skills”.<sup>140</sup> Such a vast degree of destabilization at the mercy of a growing technological integration may result in revolution on Marxian grounds. There is a growing possibility that workers will revolt against the encroachment of AI, and eventually the economic system that utilizes it in such a disruptive manner.

Yet, a plethora of reports both academic and financial also give heed to capitalism’s ability to create jobs to the point at which a rupture in the social conditions of workers is quelled – in turn cooling any possibility for revolution laid out in the previous Marxian terms. Take the 2018 report published via The Center for Labour Economics in Hamburg, “Markets cannot attain the transformative alterations that are necessitated to create ground-breaking jobs at a tremendous scale, but generate adjustment mechanisms that may set up cutting-edge jobs and restore these job losses.”<sup>141</sup> The report ends on an almost utopian Keynesian note, stating “freshly advanced mobile robots are likely to integrate human tasks and, by substituting chiefly nonroutine manual and interactive tasks and harmonizing non-automated ones, they eradicate not jobs, but work.”<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup> James Manyika et al., "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained: What the Future of Work Will Mean for Jobs, Skills, and Wages," McKinsey & Company, last modified November 28, 2017, [https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages#/.](https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages#/), 11.

<sup>141</sup> Sorrells, Brian (2018). “Will Robotization Really Cause Technological Unemployment? The Rate and Extent of Potential Job Displacement Caused by Workforce Automation,” *Psychosociological Issues in Human Resource Management* 6(2): 68-73.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 68-73.

Even the *McKinsey Global Institute Report* itself posits a similar trust in the historical plasticity of the market, and its ability to regulate potential destabilization due to technological innovation and integration:

History shows that the adoption of technological innovation can act as a powerful stimulus on the economy and jobs. The overall effect of mechanization has been to create jobs on an unprecedented scale. Machines allow workers to produce more, thereby raising productivity and (eventually) wages, and lowering the price of goods and services. These twin effects unleash new demand for all goods and services. In addition, as firms gain scale, they require more managers, accountants and other office workers.<sup>143</sup>

Lukas Schlogl and Andy Sumner's book *Disrupted Development* does not foresee job displacement in the face of automation (including job displacement as a result of AI development) as a real threat either<sup>144</sup>. At most there will be a wage stagnation that plagues the economy, but as will be further discussed in the section on Fordism and the transition post-Fordism, this is nothing new. As AI continues its integration into the job market, capitalism will continue to augment the landscape, allowing for all aberrations to be engulfed, stringing humanity along, whilst allowing humanity to acclimate to periods of unemployment and stagnation. Human capabilities and labour power ebb and flow to the tune of what is required by these new technologies; death and exploitation will be a part of the picture, but then again, when have they ever not been?

One may, however, also respond by stating that there is an unprecedented economic rigidity in North America since the 2008 crisis, including wage stagnation, dips in unemployment, and an inflated cost of living; although capitalist augmentation may be presupposed to a certain extent,

---

<sup>143</sup> Manyika, *Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained*, 37.

<sup>144</sup> Lukas Schlogl and Andy Sumner, *Disrupted Development and the Future of Inequality in the Age of Automation* (Basingstoke: Springer Nature, 2020), 39.

these factors are still a worrying reality. Added to that worry is the fact that the population is growing at a rapid rate – that an economic system that benefits such stagnation will not be able to hold with such a large number of people. The population explosion and its transformation into a source of an unprecedented number of proletariat workers is at the centre of many arguments in Srnicek and Williams’ *Inventing the Future*, “This is the crisis of work that capitalism faces in the coming years and decades: a lack of formal or decent jobs for the growing number of proletarian population.”<sup>145</sup>

The Landian accelerationist answer is more complex than merely pointing at the historical record. The mercurial functionality of capitalism itself must be understood; economic crises are opportunities, and proletarian tension may be utilized for capitalism’s own benefit. The transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism exemplifies how the mechanism of capitalism takes crises and turns them into opportunities of self-propagation. In his work, *The Condition of Postmodernity* David Harvey gives an overview this transition. The advent of Fordism is signified by the factory-line model, implemented by Henry Ford, along with the eight-hour workday and countless benefits for his workers, whilst using factories to mass-produce vehicles for increased consumption. Through the lens of vulgar Marxism, this is a mode of production engendered by post-war technology, “Cars, ship-building, and transport equipment, steel, petrochemicals, rubber, consumer electrical goods, and construction became the propulsive engines of economic growth”<sup>146</sup>

The Fordist period is historically marked as a successful post-war economic boom in America. But in the seventies income inequality, questions of hegemonic instability from foreign

---

<sup>145</sup> Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams, *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2015), 92.

<sup>146</sup> David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992), 142.

economic pressures, and pressure from unions posed a threat to American prosperity. The Fordist model had reached a point of stagnation:

There were problems with the rigidity of long-term and large-scale fixed capital investments in mass-production systems ... There were problems of rigidities in labour markets, labour allocation and labour contracts ... And any attempt to overcome these rigidities ran into the seemingly immovable force of deeply entrenched working-class power.<sup>147</sup>

In Keynesian fashion, the governmental response was to stop a total monetary downturn by flooding the economy with money, causing unprecedented amounts of inflation, inevitably leading to the infamous economic crash of the 1970s.

Again, economic crises are merely opportunities, but instead of being opportunities for man to reclaim his power amidst the market, they are opportunities for capitalism to restructure itself, uncovering new pathways of surplus extraction. Capitalism's answer to its own problem was the advent of post-Fordism, marked by a flexible accumulation model "characterized by the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological and organizational innovation"<sup>148</sup>, resulting in the flexible high profit economy of the 1980s.

The most surprising aspect of Harvey's overview of his transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism is when he states: "the time horizons of both private and public decision-making have shrunk, while satellite communication and declining transport costs have made it increasingly possible to spread those decisions immediately over to an even wider and variegated space."<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, 147

Herein, it is important to note that these are not the words of some philosopher poet, of a techno-futurist, or anti-humanist pessimist, but a respected historian and economist writing a serious and stringent economic analysis of postmodernity. As always, the Nietzscheans have the last laugh – for it is almost as if Harvey is implying that capitalism has traversed both space and time to further its own development through a self-augmentation. Each epoch of augmentation unearths new monstrosities, “Only proto-capitalism has ever been critiqued.”<sup>150</sup>

Regarding proletariat pressure, an argument with similar premises is made by Michel Aglietta in his work *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation*. Aglietta gives a historical-economic account of how the Great Depression was “a major crisis of accumulation because the transformation of the labour process itself set up obstacles to valorization.”<sup>151</sup> The steep disparity between the rich and the poor fueled a distrust within the system that led to an economic crash. Yet, it was surprisingly through the bargaining of the communists that capitalism was able to find an exit hatch to escape its own roadblocks.

The consequent New Deal drafted by Roosevelt is indicative of how “class struggles can then generate, in a political and ideological climate that does not threaten capitalism itself, those major transformation in the social organization of labour which alone can provide the basis for the conditions of a new and lasting accumulation”<sup>152</sup> This leads to the question: if something as massive as the Great Depression was not a climate which threatened capitalism (a calamity that threatened the solidity of every big bank in America), what possible climate must arise to threaten capitalism? Aglietta’s work is ambiguous regarding such conditions, “for us today, crisis has

---

<sup>150</sup> Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 340

<sup>151</sup> Michel Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The US Experience* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2016), 140.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 364.

become a chronic and seemingly permanent condition... Crises never come to culmination; instead, they are endlessly and indefinitely deferred”<sup>153</sup>

## **2. The Technological Singularity**

A necessary component to the Landian destination of this thesis’s genealogy is an assured, already-existent future of the technological singularity retroactively causing the present. This hypothetical point in time presupposes a cybernetic runaway circuit of technological development far beyond human control, as aforementioned with the invocation of Kurzweil in chapter two. The rapid development of artificial intelligence and technological sentience of some form or another are necessary factors for the singularity. Alongside the growth in popularity of the singularity, there has been a recent popularization of the concept of AGI (Artificial General Intelligence), or, “artificial intelligence that matches (or outmatches) humans on a range of tasks.”<sup>154</sup> The interest has grown as a result of OpenAI’s CEO Sam Altman releasing a statement in February of 2023 promising to create AGI towards for the benefit for humanity, whilst vowing to avert any sort of risks that may be associated with the undertaking of such a project.<sup>155</sup> All such conversations are popularizing AI development and adding to the excitement surrounding the singularity. However, the concept of the singularity, as well as the very possibility of rapid AI development are also undergoing heavy scrutinization across the board.

With the advent of GPT and the popularization of singularity theory by the likes of Kurzweil, it is easy to brush the excitement off as a mere trend grasping at the popular imagination

---

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>154</sup> Rhiannon Williams, "The Download: Defining AGI, and Making Sense of the Complicated Universe," MIT Technology Review, last modified November 16, 2023, <https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/11/16/1083526/the-download-defining-agi-and-making-sense-of-the-complicated-universe/>.

<sup>155</sup> Sam Altman, "Planning for AGI and beyond," openai.com, last modified February 24, 2023, <https://openai.com/index/planning-for-agi-and-beyond/>.

due to the science fiction scenarios they elicit. News of the singularity and AI development begets flash images of *The Terminator* and *Bladerunner* – but as a significant portion of computer scientists may tiredly state for the nth time: the software available is not close to what is necessary for anything like the singularity to come to fruition.

In a brilliantly rigorous essay by Alexander Seewald, entitled *A Criticism of the Technological Singularity*, he examines various points of contention regarding rapid AI development towards the creation of AGI. Two important points Seewald accounts for are: i) the problem with Moore’s law, and thus with the exponential growth needed to reach singularity-levels of technological development, and ii) the improbability of AGI along with the problems associated with energy consumption and singularity-like scenarios.<sup>156</sup>

Moore’s law is the theory that “owing to progressive miniaturization, the number of transistors that can be put on a microchip doubles roughly every two years.”<sup>157</sup> Moore’s law is important due to it being indicative of the exponential growth of technology, thusly understood as a strong indicator of machinic progress. Yet Seewald points out the blatantly obvious problem that there are limits to how many transistors can fit on a microchip, “although the absolute theoretical limits are still 8-13 years away, we already see a reduction in the exponential magnitude, where according to singularity proponents, we should be seeing a speeding-up.”<sup>158</sup>

Regarding the development of AGI, Seewald believes the closest current model of machinic learning to be that of deep learning, which utilizes layered neural networks, gathering

---

<sup>156</sup> Alexiei Dingli et al., *Disruptive Technologies in Media, Arts and Design: A Collection of Innovative Research Case-Studies that Explore the Use of Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain within the Media, Arts and Design Sector* (Basingstoke: Springer Nature, 2022)

<sup>157</sup> Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Nearer: When We Merge with Computers* (Bodley Head Childrens, 2024), 40.

<sup>158</sup> Dingli, *Disruptive Technologies*, 99.



information in a way that parrots ‘learning’. Yet again Seewald is not sure of its ability to lead humanity to AGI. Although it has been used for incredible feats, he claims it is “not an AGI at all.”<sup>159</sup> A more interesting critique regarding AGI is the thought experiment Seewald poses: assume AGI was hypothetically created, and this intelligence system is as good as humans at task-performance. On what grounds can we assert that this AGI will then lead humanity to superintelligence? In other words, say that at the absolute limit of human ingenuity, an AI apparatus is created, which is capable of mimicking human capability, will this newly formed intelligence not come up against the same wall that humanity has come up against when trying to create something that surpasses its own finitude?

Finally, Seewald states that there is a problem regarding the energy consumption necessary for technological development. To presuppose an exponential growth in AI, one must also presuppose exponential economic growth, which is accompanied by massive amounts of energy consumption. “Historically, there has been a strong correlation between economical growth and energy consumption, but even a small proportion of a 128-fold increase in energy consumption would probably change climate to such an extent that human survival is no longer feasible.”<sup>160</sup>

The problems posed by Seewald are a cause for concern; such roadblocks are echoed by various AI researchers, economists, and theorists alike. This leads some to believe that the AI which will be developed in the future will be unspectacular and merely used to advance current market trends. Aaron Benanav’s work *Automation and the Future of Work* echoes such sentiments. Benanav’s criticism stems from a similar point of view; he cites the vast number of resources needed for technological development to continue at rapid rates. Resultantly Benanav posits a

---

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 110.

rather banal future for the usage and development of AI– in that AI will most likely be utilized towards a hyper-commodification by bolstering and optimizing the instructive processes of algorithms to personalize the average consumer’s shopping experience.<sup>161</sup>

The likes of Seewald pose serious questions to the exponential nightmare of machinic anti-humanism inherent in Landian accelerationism. One must, however, also consider the following: Seewald’s essay is from 2022, whilst Benanav’s book is from 2020. Yet, as of 2024 the roadblocks posed by both thinkers have already begun to slowly melt, despite such a short passage of time. Take Kurzweil’s 2024 work *The Singularity is Nearer*: in it, he agrees with Seewald’s diagnosis regarding the inevitable termination of Moore’s law. However, according to Kurzweil, “Moore’s law is just one instance of the more fundamental force I call the law of accelerating returns, where information technology creates feedback loops of innovation.”<sup>162</sup> For Kurzweil, the chip technology Moore’s law commonly refers to has undergone vast amounts of development but has now long outlasted its welcome. Nanomaterials and its usage in computing is given as a possible example of the new shift away from microchips. In stark contrast to Seewald, Kurzweil believes that deep learning will take the mantle as the crown jewel carefully placed atop a cybernetic circuit.

It is important to note that Seewald’s article does not mention OpenAI or chat GPT, which utilizes deep learning. Much of Kurzweil’s prediction of exponential growth is influenced by the leaps and bounds of progress made by OpenAI in its development towards an AGI. This is reinforced by a recent Cornell study entitled *Sparks of Artificial General Intelligence*. In this 2023 study researchers track the results of experiments performed with GPT-4 (asking it to draw a unicorn, to write a poem, complete tasks requiring it to utilize spatiality, etc.). After conducting

---

<sup>161</sup> Aaron Benanav, *Automation and the Future of Work* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2022), 105.

<sup>162</sup> Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Nearer*, 40.

these experiments, this study concludes that GPT-4 has the potential to be a jumping-off point from which AGI may takeoff<sup>163</sup>. Contrastingly, Seewald believes AGI is “at least two, and more likely 4-8 centuries away.”<sup>164</sup> Within the span of merely two years, there is a drastic change in opinion due to the AI boom spearheaded by OpenAI.

Yet what of the thought experiment by Seewald regarding the limits of AGI? That even if AGI is realized (and that is still a big if), it does not guarantee an exponential jump towards superintelligence, “why would an AI at the same intelligence level as us have better insight into its internal structure? Why should its mind work parallel and not serially as ours, limiting the obtainable speedup as well as self-reflection? ... how to get from a human-level Artificial General Intelligence to a superintelligence when it cannot improve itself better than a human?”<sup>165</sup>

One could respond that this thought experiment – as well as the very definition and overall approach to AGI in general - is mired in anthropocentrism, which may not reflect the complexity with which researchers and theorists are approaching the topic of machine learning. There is an inherent plurality at play with AI development that such a thought experiment does not consider. The pathway of development for AGI does not necessarily have to be one which develops in some ordained image of man. For instance, Beth Preston argues that through a “divergence from anthropocentrism, AI restores a measure of wholeness to our notion of what intelligence is.”<sup>166</sup>

The aforementioned thought experiment stagnates the possibilities of AI due to the presuppositions of it being modelled in the image of man. Although the benchmark of AGI is one

---

<sup>163</sup> Bubeck, Sébastien, Varun Chandrasekaran, Ronen Eldan, Johannes Gehrke, Eric Horvitz, Ece Kamar, Peter Lee, et al. 2023. “Sparks of Artificial General Intelligence: Early Experiments with GPT-4.” *arXiv.Org*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2303.12712>.

<sup>164</sup> Dingli, *Disruptive Technologies*, 110.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>166</sup> Preston, B. AI, anthropocentrism, and the evolution of ‘intelligence’. *Minds and Machines* 1, 259–277 (1991). <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00351181>

which compares the efficiency of task completion to human standards, AGI development need not be approached with a rigid trajectory. The human experience may be a useful benchmark and/or standard to begin mirroring AGI's development upon, but there is also room for the development for AGI to diverge from such stagnant boundaries. As it proceeds, the actual definition of AGI may change as it progresses, along with the ways in which it approaches problem solving.

Regarding prior concerns of how much energy it would take to run AGI based on how much energy human functionality expends, Kurzweil does not believe this will be a problem in the future, “a \$1 billion dollar supercomputer could achieve this by 2030 and be able to simulate every protein in every neuron by 2034.”<sup>167</sup> Further, Kurzweil believes that fossil fuels will slowly but surely be replaced with new technologies such as solar power and that “AI-assisted breakthroughs in nanotechnology will increase cell efficiency by enabling photovoltaic cells to capture energy from more of the electromagnetic spectrum.”<sup>168</sup>

Finally, contrary to what Benanav's assertions, with the advent of GPT, and advancements in deep learning, the applications of AI are developing in a vast and pluralistic manner. This ranges from the use of AI in self-driving cars to image generation. Further LLMs have a wide range of use in corporate settings, (replacing the need for copywriters, having them send e-mails, and language translation – for instance). The likes of Dyer-Witthford et al. argue that AI is increasingly becoming a condition of production; one akin to roads – making AI integration a necessity for the continuation of the productive process.<sup>169</sup> The point here is that even a study as recent as Seewald's published in 2021 has already had its contentions met with handy resistance within three years of

---

<sup>167</sup> Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Nearer*, 62.

<sup>168</sup> Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Nearer*, 172.

<sup>169</sup> Nick Dyer-Witthford, Atle M. Kjoson, and James Steinhoff, *Inhuman Power: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Capitalism* (London: Pluto Press (UK), 2019), 6.

AI development. Exponential growth in AI development is thus not out of the question, and neither is the possibility of AGI developing within the current century.

Kurzweil's book also aligns with Landian accelerationism, insofar as it argues that as AI develops, humanity will totally pass over to the realm of the digital. Kurzweil's understanding of this is not as dystopian as Land's, but nevertheless, he states that "Eventually nanotechnology will enable these trends to culminate in directly expanding our brains with layers of virtual neurons in the cloud. In this way, we will merge with AI and augment ourselves with millions of times the computational power that our biology gave us. This will expand our intelligence and consciousness so profoundly, that it's difficult to comprehend."<sup>170</sup>

A stage of transhumanism is present in Land's thought, yet it is interpreted along anti-humanist lines; that the technological will infect humanity's very being, and totally eradicate us in the process. This comes from the approach to technology as being one of a pure Landian productivity of the outside controlling the productive process, and replacing humanity as the process continues, versus a utopian posthumanism mired in humanist and Enlightenment ethics, wherein human capabilities are extended. For accelerationism, the logic of the productive process will undergo a self-propagation loop that lends itself to totally disregarding all that is unproductive. And if AI really does reach its last epoch in Kurzweil's estimation wherein "our intelligence spreads throughout the universe, turning ordinary matter into computronium, which is matter organized at the ultimate density of computation"<sup>171</sup>, one may be rightfully skeptical if such a reality is conducive to humanity's goals of progress and conservation. In other words, it is unclear if such a future is meant for us.

---

<sup>170</sup> Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity is Nearer*, 4

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

### 3. What is to be Done? An Accelerationist Aesthetic

The trajectory of this genealogy is one which follows the human subject as it is shredded by the chrome assemblage of a machinic future. By examining the trends of a capitalism that uses economic crises as a means to continuously regulate and propagate itself into new forms, as well as those of a continual, exponential AI development, which utilizes criticisms as benchmarks to be broken through for further development, it is not totally unfounded to surmise that such human disintegration is a possibility. Yet what is one to do in the face of the unblinking eye of disintegration? Anti-capitalist movements are engulfed by capitalism, and AI is increasingly becoming a condition of production. The answer is one of a boundary-pushing experimentation.

Such a project is undertaken by Steven Shaviro and his essays on accelerationism, entitled *No Speed Limit*. In the first of the three essays of this compendium, Shaviro gives an account of accelerationism invoking the likes of Marx, Deleuze/Guattari as well as economists such as Keynes and Hayek:

Accelerationism rather demands a movement against and outside capitalism – but on the basis of tendencies and technologies that are intrinsic to capitalism. Audre Lorde famously argued that “that master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” But what if the master’s tools are the only ones available? Accelerationism grapples with this dilemma.<sup>172</sup>

There is an ambivalence at the heart of accelerationism. Unsatisfied by this, Shaviro ultimately states that aesthetic experimentation is a means to explore accelerationism.

In the second essay, entitled *Accelerationist Aesthetics*, Shaviro explains why accelerationist aesthetic exploration cannot be inherently political<sup>173</sup>, namely because of the

---

<sup>172</sup> Steven Shaviro, *No Speed Limit: Three Essays on Accelerationism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 9.

<sup>173</sup> Political insofar as it is a means to bring about or enact some sort of post-capitalist change

subsumption of aesthetics by market mechanisms. Shaviro first invokes Kant's *Third Critique*, according to which aesthetics judgements are both (1) disinterested and (2) non-cognitive. Aesthetics are disinterested insofar as one enjoys aesthetics as ends in and of themselves; there is no ulterior profit or surplus to be incurred in aesthetic enjoyment. Further, it may not even matter if the source of aesthetic pleasure exists or not (i.e., one may enjoy the aesthetics of a dream). Aesthetics are non-cognitive because for Kant, concepts of beauty do not fit into his cognitive architectonic, for, "they are singular and ungrounded"<sup>174</sup>. These judgements cannot be utilized for a means outside of their own enjoyment.

Shaviro then introduces Hardt and Negri's concept of real subsumption: that under capitalism, all is consumed and marketable – labour, affects, emotions and judgments, "it isn't just labour that is subsumed by capital, but all aspects of personal and social life. This means that everything in life must now be seen as a kind of labour: we are still working even when we consume and even when we are asleep."<sup>175</sup> Thus, regarding aesthetic judgements, both (1) and (2) are flouted. Aesthetics are no longer disinterested, for they are a marker for personal identity, and commodifiable, and aesthetics are no longer non-cognitive, for aesthetic preferences are objectivized and transformed into data points under the schema of marketing and consumerism.

Real subsumption nullifies the use of transgressive aesthetics for political purposes - transgression is a means by which new market avenues form. Capitalism renews itself and utilizes excess to explore uncharted aesthetic territories, only to 'retreat' to normalcy and commodify said avenues. The question remains: where does this leave accelerationism and accelerationist aesthetics? For Shaviro, capitalism is a hyperobject commodifying all aspects of life, and

---

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 17.

transgressive aesthetics are a part of this system as a means by which the market realizes new avenues of profit. Yet Shaviro still believes transgressive aesthetics are useful; its utility lies in personal cultivation and gratification – perhaps for purely hedonistic reasons. One may still lean into aesthetic plenitude in the face of economic finitude. This sort of ‘leaning in’ to the aesthetics of accelerationism is not a means to enact political change, but to enjoy aesthetic excess as an act of subversive pleasure, expounding the boundaries of experimentation for its own sake.

Capitalism creates dire conditions, making life precarious for its subjects, while distributing nothing but wealth and indulgence for a select few. There is no economic or socio-political means by which one may push through these dire conditions. Accelerationist aesthetics is the only means by which one can endure and make the most of life in the meantime. Such a usage of nihilism is productive; for instance, Nietzsche’s answer to nihilism is along the lines of such a fulfilling and intelligent indulgence in art, “Art and nothing but art! It is the great means of making life possible, the great seduction to life, the great stimulant of life. Art as the only superior counterforce to all will to denial of life, as that which is anti-Christian, anti-Buddhist, antinihilist *par excellence*”<sup>176</sup> To envelope oneself in an artistic mode of self-expression in Nietzsche is an anti-nihilism insofar as it is a means to go cope with the destructive aspects of the Will to Power.

Aesthetic accelerationism is a similarly viable approach. Shaviro invokes Oscar Wilde as an archetype of this form of thought – stating “Wilde’s dandyism and self-fashioning were part of a longer history. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, gay men in the West – and other minorities as well to some extent – turned to. An extravagant form of aesthetic self-cultivation, in response to the discrimination and persecution that they faced.”<sup>177</sup> The same way

---

<sup>176</sup> Nietzsche, *Will to Power*, 452

<sup>177</sup> Shaviro, *No Speed Limit*, 23-24



that Nietzsche's answer to pure nihilism is for humanity to live an interesting life to the best of their ability, Shaviro's answer to an ever-accelerating capitalism is to live a life of aesthetic experimentation, whenever the opportunity to do so may arise.

What is peculiar of Shaviro's account is that it can be applied to both aesthetics and subjectivity. One's subjectivity is just as susceptible to commodification intensification and to the flows of the market as are one's aesthetic tastes. Thus, to experiment with one's subjectivity, (personal subjective markers, cultural subgroup memberships and the like) is similar to the continual addition or swapping of one's hardware in order to expand and traverse the boundaries of what exactly may constitute a posthuman 'subject'.

Aesthetic and subjective expression in the accelerationist sense encompasses any form of bodily augmentation or implementation/experimentation of subjectivity that pushes cultural boundaries and norms, not as a means of resistance against the deterritorializing flows of capitalism, or towards any ethical project for the good of humanity, but purely for the sake of experimentation and transgression in and of itself. Such experimentation is congruent and one with the flows of deterritorialization, revelling in capitalism's ability to unleash libidinal desire. Culture cannot be posed as antithetical to economic tendencies, but instead runs with it in concurrent flows:

The postmodern meltdown of culture into the economy is triggered by the fractal interlock of commoditization and computers: a transscalar entropy-dissipation from international trade to market-oriented software that thaws out competitive dynamics from the cryonics-bank of modernist corporatism. Commerce re-implements space inside itself, assembling a universe exhaustively immanent to cybercapital functionality.<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>178</sup> Land, *Fanged Noumena*, 447

Culture and capital flow into a ‘meltdown’, one of Deleuzian schizophrenia without any limit points -- a total melting of the subject into a sleek rainbow mercury of technics. As a result, meltdown engenders subjective and aesthetic experimentation.

Meltdown has a place for you as a schizophrenic HIV+ transsexual Chinese-latino stim-addicted LA hooker with implanted mirrorshades and a bad attitude. Blitzed on a polydrug mix of k-nova, synthetic serotonin, and female orgasm analogs, you have just iced three Turing cops with a highly cinematic 9mm automatic.<sup>179</sup>

For Land, certain artists are cyborgs smuggled into the present from the future. The poetry of Rimbaud, the short stories of Lovecraft, films such as John Carpenter’s *In the Mouth of Madness* -- all of these cultural figures and their cultural objects are ‘ahead of its time’ not insofar as they are something the populous has never experienced before, but insofar as they are indicative of a cultural meltdown in real time. They refuse to consolidate with stagnation and insist on breaking the boundaries of humanist ideals.

#### **4. Productive Nihilism – Experimentation in Aesthetics as a Way of Life**

To be one with techno-capitalist cultural meltdown, one merely needs to embrace the productive nihilism capitalism allots both regarding aesthetics and subjectivity. The meltdown of aesthetics may be carried out through whatever means are possible and at hand for the individual. Some initial, uncontroversial examples include experimenting with your own sexuality, experimenting with body augmentations such as tattoos, or even experimenting with fashion. For instance, indulging in physical acts of decadence and stretching one’s own personal definition of the body can be explored in terms of one’s performativity. In her work *Gender Trouble*, Judith

---

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 456.

Butler advocates for a project wherein the human body is no longer an object with definitive lines and borders. Instead, one may lean into an experimentation of performances to extend the finitude of the human body.

Drag is an example of this: “As much as drag creates a unified picture of “woman”..., it also reveals the distinctness of those aspects of gendered experience which are falsely naturalized as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence... In the place of the law of heterosexual coherence, we see sex and gender denaturalized by means of a performance which avows their directness and dramatizes the cultural mechanism of their fabricated unity.”<sup>180</sup>

Herein, drag is not merely a showcase, but an act of aesthetic plenitude, and experimentation. It is a self-aware showcase, yet within the show is a playful critique of sexual norms, wherein the performers draw boundaries of sexuality and normativity, only to subsequently erase them in a display of indulgence. These are transgressive aesthetic acts – however, it is important to point out that this transgression cannot (in any meaningful way) be enacted for the sake of any sort of anti-capitalist form of resistance.<sup>181</sup> However, transgression is a viable means to create an aesthetic plenitude –for the sake of pure hedonistic, boundary-pushing indulgence.

Gilles Lipovetsky’s work *The Empire of Fashion* discusses how something as basic as one’s choice in apparel has the power to be a means of self-cultivation in a new age of consumerism, “hedonistic culture stimulates us all to take greater charge of our lives, to assume more self-mastery, to achieve self-determination in relationship with others”<sup>182</sup>. The cyclical

---

<sup>180</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 175.

<sup>181</sup> Whether Butler intends these shows to be a means for economic change contra capitalism is not clear to me, but for the sake of Shaviro’s project, such a performance would be a strictly a means for self-cultivation and aesthetic indulgence.

<sup>182</sup> Gilles Lipovetsky, *Empire of Fashion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 148.

nature of fashion, along with its ability to find new aesthetic trends (propelled by the market) allows such an aesthetic to traverse class lines, enabling people to authentically explore individuality and experiment with capitalism. Although Lipovetsky is not nihilistic about the economic future of the world, the ethos of his work still understands the importance of aesthetics during precarity. In the context of accelerationist aesthetics, Lipovetsky's project is useful, as means by which people may authenticity indulge in and experiment with aesthetics in the face of capitalist precarity.

One may also delve into actual body transformation, whether for the sake of gender non-conformity or for other transgressive aesthetic reasons. An example of this would be body art: tattoos, piercings, brandings etc. In his work *Customizing the Body*, Clinton Sanders writes "The power of tattoo, like that of street graffiti, is primarily derived from its ability to outrage members of conventional society. For tattoo devotees, much of the appeal of tattooing comes from its symbolic demonstration of co-membership in a unique and somewhat alienated cultural group."<sup>183</sup> Again, a key aspect is an aesthetic indulgence for the sake of indulgence in and of itself. Even explorations by minority groups are purely aesthetic - void of any hope of progressive change. In doing so, one explores the concept of aesthetics through experimentation; even the difference between the marginal and other within a capitalist system will not provide answers as to how such an oppositional dichotomy may be resolved.

In the context of accelerationist aesthetics, transhumanism becomes an interesting field of scholarship. Transhumanism is loosely defined as "an outgrowth of secular humanism and the Enlightenment. It holds that current human nature is improvable through the use of applied science

---

<sup>183</sup> Clinton Sanders and D.A. Vail, *Customizing the Body: The Art and Culture of Tattooing* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 162-163.

and other rational methods, which may make it possible to increase human health span, extend our intellectual and physical capacities, and give us increased control over our own mental state and moods.”<sup>184</sup> Its origin lies in the work of Julian Huxley as a term of human progress, which breaks the fetters of human capability to reach a new epoch of self-fulfillment. This term has been further popularized by Max More, who emphasizes the transcendent nature of technological advancement for the good of humanity. More recent proponents of transhumanism include the likes of Nick Bostrom and David Pearce – who founded the World Transhumanist Association.<sup>185</sup>

For the most part, transhumanist literature is rife with posthumanist utopianism. Ethics and morality are often consolidated with when discussing bodily augmentation and enhancement so as not to risk offending the sensibilities of the humanist milieu adhering to the enlightenment tradition from which ideas of human improvement are birthed. For instance, Nick Bostrom and Anders Sandberg’s essay *The Wisdom of Nature* grapples with the idea that evolutionary tendencies are a baseline from which we should judge augmentations (natural or unnatural). If evolutionary history has not already accounted for some augmentation in humanity, Bostrom and Sandberg give ethical, Darwinist and societal reasons as to why although such an artificial change has not yet been invoked by evolutionary history, it may still be a benefit for humans to undergo said augmentations; these include: some form of trade-off that a new augmentation can provide, some form of value discordance - in that there is some augmentation that is beneficial to either the individual or society, but in discordance to the evolutionary nature of fitness (i.e., birth control) - and certain limitations of evolution (i.e., those augmentations that nature cannot provide us with).

---

<sup>184</sup> Gregory R. Hansell, *H+/-: Transhumanism and Its Critics* (Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation, 2011), 8

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

As for those augmentations that do not meet a rational-ethical viewpoint, these should “merit suspicion, and attempting them may be unwise, short sighted, and hubristic.”<sup>186</sup>

Another example is the work of Andrew Pilsch, who takes the humanist and social benefits of transhumanism in order to explore ideas of ‘Utopia’, defined as “the collection of processes for imagining spaces beyond capitalism that feed into the practices of political resistance in the present”<sup>187</sup> Pilsch not only centers a morality around post-capitalism, but disparages Landian accelerationism for its insistence on running with the flows of capitalism towards human cessation, “For Land, the human is a drag on the process of capitalism, a creation that now exceeds its creators’ abilities of comprehension.”<sup>188</sup>

Again, the conversations around transhumanism deal with how the subject may augment himself for the sake of some gain within the picture of human development, fitness, and ethics. If there is any contradiction between experimentation and a humanist ethics or any Darwinian axioms of improvement, those augmentations must be argued for –within the same framework presupposed in either a Darwinist fitness-based program or a post-Enlightenment ethics.

Such ethical and social considerations, insofar as they are anti-capitalist, are disregarded in accelerationist aesthetic experimentation. Take the David Cronenberg film, *Crimes of The Future* as an example. In this film, humanity has evolved to the point at which people no longer feel pain, nor do they have to deal with a majority of bacterial diseases. In such a world, the viewer finds the protagonists, Saul Tenser and Caprice, a pair of artists who take advantage of Tenser’s

---

<sup>186</sup> Julian Savulescu and Nick Bostrom, *Human Enhancement* (Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2009), 408.

<sup>187</sup> Andrew Pilsch, *Transhumanism: Evolutionary Futurism and the Human Technologies of Utopia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 17.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

ability to re-grow organs by hosting art shows wherein Caprice uses surgery as a means to explore the aesthetic possibilities of body augmentation and experimentation.

In the film, surgery becomes a libidinal spectacle, totally scrambling all imperatives that may be present in the ethical frameworks of Enlightenment or of Darwinian fitness. The point of augmentation and experimentalism is to revel in grotesque excess. The question posed this film is: ‘how far can such an anti-intuitive artistic experience go?’ It is the artistic spectacle of what humanity can do in its ability to rip apart the body, change its structure and showcase these changes to a crowd of people that interests the protagonists of the film.

With transhumanism gaining traction as a mode of thought, one must further question how far aesthetic experimentations can take the posthuman in scenarios of meltdown. Experimental body augmentation, cyberpunk cybernetic arms, implants and augmentations may all be undergone for the sole reason of exploring how much the body can be ripped to shreds -- to explore how many metallic inputs are possible before one’s very being totally shuts down. Such experimentation is congruent with meltdown, diving into an accelerationist aesthetics of pure insanity.

## **5. The Speed of Subjectivity**

Experiments in Accelerationist subjectivity is best exemplified via the traversing of online cultures and subcultures. Herein, the user becomes a digital nomad, totally severed from any top-down structures, free to plug in and out of any form of subjective space he deems fit to inhabit:

According to reproducer culture we are possessors of our own protective-sensory tissue and boundary defence systems. Nothing is more alien to it than the full sense of the skin trade, or that of AIDS. The replicants have never shared this prejudice. It is exactly marked out for them that the subject is not the owner of its skin, but a migrant upon its surface, borrowing variable and evanescent identities from intensities traversed in sensitive space.

The replicants drape themselves in wolf-pelts, and cross inter berserk zones of alien affect, or melt into data-suits that pulse with digitized matrix traffic streams. They do not need to be told that cyberspace is under our skin.<sup>189</sup>

In her 2009 work *Cyber Pop: Digital Lifestyles and Commodity Culture*, Sidney E. Matrix explores subjectivity under similar conditions -- experimentally within the realm of cyberculture. Subjects partaking in cyberculture are deemed as flexible insofar as they “can adapt to the constant acceleration or shifting of everything, permanent instability, and boundary explosion.”<sup>190</sup> Matrix invokes the work of Guattari and his idea of a computerized subject when discussing the notion of modern cyberculture, and its constant funnelling of information into the user’s virtual being. “The data body is a set of identifying informational bits, configured as subjects engage in an informational culture that is increasingly networked by multiplying databases.”<sup>191</sup> The digital user is a totally commodified individual, made up not only of consumer choices, but of identity-signifiers, totally immersed in online spaces. These flexible subjects are a loose amalgam of data-points.

The digital-cultural milieu of today – with the popularity of esoteric message boards and Instagram meme accounts, for instance - embodies what Matrix writes about in an accelerated manner. One can assume multiple forms of subjective embodiments – sometimes even all at once, other times switching in and out of subjectivities dependent on what digital space(s) one is traversing, what online accounts one is logged into, or what message board communities one is writing on. All is viable, all is produced, all is engendered by market mechanisms.

---

<sup>189</sup> Nick Land *Fanged Noumena*, 343

<sup>190</sup> Sidney E. Matrix, *Cyberpop: Digital Lifestyles and Commodity Culture* (London: Routledge, 2013), 28

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid*, 30



Much of the subjective experimentation in online spaces is conducted within the realm of political culture. The subjective experimentation online and boundary-pushing shows itself forth in how esoteric and mystical one's political affiliations may become. Online culture and its political embodiments are not as simple as the political becoming aestheticized, for to Walter Benjamin's chagrin, the reality is that in the wake of an accelerationist techno-capitalism, political culture becomes so incredibly plastic, and void of substance, that it morphs into a sheath of subjectivity, comparable to the subjective embodiments one may assume when partaking in any other consumerist cultural trend.

An example of this is given by Joshua Citarella, a new and exciting artist who writes about cyberculture in all its absurd schizophrenia, documents the political subcultures that 'Gen Z' play around with on Instagram (dubbed, politigram). Citarella follows these subgroups and subcultures; many of the members are young and follow niche political philosophers and philosophies as a means to explore their own sense of the self. Again, the primary questions guiding such forms of experimentation are: 'How far can this go?' 'How weird can it really get?' and 'Is there a bottom to esoteric experimentation?'. Much of the experimentation shows itself forth in the language used in these politigram accounts:

Politigrammers revel in adding as many prefixes and suffixes to their ideology as possible. Sometimes I think there are as many ideologies as there are members of Politigram. Some of the more unusual titles I've come across; National Trotskyism, Dharmic Eco-Reactionaryism, Libertarian Neo-Monarchism, Traditional Primitivist Caliphatism,

Christian Bolshevism, the list goes on ... these spaces are deeply individuated, and users often list their relevant info at the header of their page.<sup>192</sup>

What is of particular interest is the extreme (and often times, totally confused and contradictory) political and religious identities that are being assumed. The point is not to provide a substantial critique of the fact that something as libertine and pluralistic as libertarianism, and as stagnant as the traditionalism of monarchism are antithetical to one another, for that may in and of itself be the point. To be a member of any one of these communities is to assume a role within the digital and see how far one can stretch one's notion of self. Thus, embodiment within the digital age is best undertaken through a political performativity. This may be why there is a machinic assemblage-like experimentation when configuring such subcultures. Take any political movement in history and attach it as machine part A to machine part B (some other political movement). And just like that, you have created a subjective space around which communities may build and grow. Or perhaps you can take multiple aspects of different political movements and create a totally new monstrosity – these spaces are what one makes of them.

The political programs in question are thusly machinic amalgams; they are taken up and assumed as a node point within the user's virtual subjectivity. One is free to then use any media landscape to mark out what this new political movement's boundaries are. What are the beliefs one must hold to be a part of this culture? What type of person predominantly joins said subculture? The culture is then proliferated – discourses form around these subjective projects (if they are popular enough), and the members are free to expand or contract the community in question. It is something to post about, build around, to totally dive into. But it is important to keep in mind, that

---

<sup>192</sup> Joshua Citarella, *Politigram & the Post-Left* (Self-Published, 2018), 5.

the point of these subcultures is not for users to be politically involved in any meaningfully orthodox manner. Instagram is – obviously – not a space for change or revolution, and the political experimentations it breeds are far from any sort of vanguard. The point, however, is for users to delve into transgression and plurality; presumably, the fun ends when such a subjective exploration ceases to be transgressive, at which point, offshoots may arise, “These spaces bleed into nearly infinite subcultures.”<sup>193</sup> As capitalism insists on augmentation, and deterritorialization proceeds, so will the bleeding.

## **6. Conclusion – A Genealogy of the Future**

Once the genealogy of a productive disintegration from Marx, to Deleuze/Guattari to Land is established, one may track the inhuman outside taking control of the productive process and encroaching human sovereignty simultaneously. As the subject is torn apart, and melted into the cultural milieu, the machinic overtakes the organic for the birth of its own future. In a genealogy of productive disintegration, AI explosiveness overtakes humanity through humanity’s own capabilities, using man as a vessel.

The work of figures such as David Harvey and Michel Aglietta track such a genealogy in real time, showcasing capitalism’s ability to augment and propagate itself in the face of economic contradictions and crises. Further, Kurzweil’s work indicates that every new roadblock on the pathway of AI development is being flouted with every new innovation within the field, with a real possibility of the actual crossing over into the virtual, completely engulfing us in the process. This points to Landian techno-capitalist singularity as a possibility that must be taken into consideration.

---

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 8.

In the process, man is torn, as is humanist culture. Within the mercury of such a productive disintegration, an aesthetic and subjective program of experimentation arises. The question of the singularity in an accelerationist sense, begs the question of how one may live through one's own demise. The answer granted to the human subject is to indulge in the experimentation of aesthetics and subjectivity as both are engendered by capitalism, via body augmentation, the questioning of gender norms and partaking in niche online cultures.

The genealogy uncovers a map -- one which has caught the futuristic trends of a present and extrapolated its origins to find a dreamy haze of technics void of man. As capitalism expands, so does the effects of its deterritorializations; an accelerationist aesthetic is a productive nihilism, insofar as it engenders creativity, but it is not at all a project that is conducive to socio-economic change. Accelerationism's aesthetic answer is thusly to enjoy the process of human disintegration, to revel in its ability to meltdown cultures and structures, and to push the limits of experimentation for the sake of transgression in and of itself.

## Bibliography

- Aglietta, Michel. *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The US Experience*. Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2016.
- Altman, Sam. "Planning for AGI and beyond." openai.com. Last modified February 24, 2023. <https://openai.com/index/planning-for-agi-and-beyond/>.
- Bawerk, Eugen B. *The Positive Theory of Capital*. New York: G. E. Stechert & Co., 1930.
- Beauchamp, Zack. "The Extremist Philosophy That's More Violent Than the Alt-right and Growing in Popularity." Vox. Last modified November 18, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/11/11/20882005/accelerationism-white-supremacy-christchurch>.
- Benanav, Aaron. *Automation and the Future of Work*. Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2022.
- Bergson, Henri. *Creative Evolution*. New York: Random House Inc., 1944.
- Bernet, Rudolf. *Force, Drive, Desire: A Philosophy of Psychoanalysis*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2020.
- Bourg, Julian. *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought*, 2nd ed. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press - MQUP, 2017.
- Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.
- Buchanan, Ian. *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: A Reader's Guide*. London: Continuum, 2008.
- Burroughs, William S. *Naked Lunch: The Restored Text*. New York: Grove/Atlantic, 2007.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Citarella, Joshua. *Politigram & the Post-Left*. Self-Published, 2018.
- Cohen, Gerald A. *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

- Dingli, Alexiei, Alexander Pfeiffer, Alesha Serada, Mark Bugeja, and Stephen Bezzina. *Disruptive Technologies in Media, Arts and Design: A Collection of Innovative Research Case-Studies that Explore the Use of Artificial Intelligence and Blockchain within the Media, Arts and Design Sector*. Basingstoke: Springer Nature, 2022.
- Dyer-Witheford, Nick, Atle M. Kjösen, and James Steinhoff. *Inhuman Power: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Capitalism*. London: Pluto Press (UK), 2019.
- Fisher, Mark. *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*. John Hunt Publishing, 2022.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1961.
- "Generative AI Could Raise Global GDP by 7%." Goldman Sachs. Last modified April 5, 2023. <https://www.goldmansachs.com/intelligence/pages/generative-ai-could-raise-global-gdp-by-7-percent.html>.
- Hansell, Gregory R. *H+/-: Transhumanism and Its Critics*. Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation, 2011.
- Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 1992.
- Kurzweil, Ray. *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*. London: Penguin, 2005.
- Kurzweil, Ray. *The Singularity Is Nearer: When We Merge with Computers*. Bodley Head Childrens, 2024.
- Land, Nick. *A Nick Land Reader*. 2017.
- Land, Nick. *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011.
- Lipovetsky, Gilles. *Empire de L'éphémère*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Lovecraft, Howard P. *The Fiction Complete and Unabridged*. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 2008.
- Mackay, Robin, and Armen Avanessian. *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2019.
- Manyika, James, Susan Lund, Michael Chui, Jacques Bughin, Jonathan Woetzel, Paul Batra, Ryan Ko, and Saurabh Sanghvi. "Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained: What the Future of Work Will Mean for Jobs, Skills, and Wages." McKinsey & Company. Last modified November

28, 2017. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages#/>.

- Marcuse, Herbert. *Studies in Critical Philosophy*. Boston: Beacon Press (MA), 1973.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: Volume I*. London: Penguin UK, 2004.
- Marx, Karl. *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. London: Penguin UK, 2005.
- Marx, Karl. *The Poverty of Philosophy*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2008.
- Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978.
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. *Marx & Engels Collected Works Volume 6*. England: Lawrence & Wishart, 2010.
- Matrix, Sidney E. *Cyberpop: Digital Lifestyles and Commodity Culture*. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Moore, Bryan L. *Ecological Literature and the Critique of Anthropocentrism*. Basingstoke: Springer, 2017.
- Morton, Timothy. *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World*. 2013.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Will to Power*. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.
- Noys, Benjamin. *Persistence of the Negative*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Pilsch, Andrew. *Transhumanism: Evolutionary Futurism and the Human Technologies of Utopia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Plekhanov, Georgi V. *In Defence of Materialism: The Development of the Monist View of History*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1947.
- Rothbard, Murray N. *Man, Economy, and State, Scholar's Edition*. Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2009.
- Sanders, Clinton, and D. A. Vail. *Customizing the Body: The Art and Culture of Tattooing*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009.
- Savulescu, Julian, and Nick Bostrom. *Human Enhancement*. Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2009.

- Schlogl, Lukas, and Andy Sumner. *Disrupted Development and the Future of Inequality in the Age of Automation*. Basingstoke: Springer Nature, 2020.
- Schulak, Eugen M., and Herbert Unterkofler. *Austrian School of Economics: A History of Its Ideas, Ambassadors, and Institutions*. Auburn, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2011.
- Shaviro, Steven. *No Speed Limit: Three Essays on Accelerationism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.
- Shaw, William H. *Marx's Theory of History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978.
- Smith, Adam. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Spengler, Oswald. *Man and Technics: A Contribution to a Philosophy of Life*. Budapest: Arktos, 2015.
- Srnicek, Nick, and Alex Williams. *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*. Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2015.
- Taji, Zaheen S. *Aayaat-e Jamaal*. Rekhta Books, 2018.
- Wiener, Norbert. *The Human Use for Human Beings*. London: Free Association Books, 1989.
- Wiener, Norbert. *The Human Use of Human Beings: Cybernetics and Society*. London: Free Association Books, 1989.
- Williams, Rhiannon. "The Download: Defining AGI, and Making Sense of the Complicated Universe." MIT Technology Review. Last modified November 16, 2023. <https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/11/16/1083526/the-download-defining-agi-and-making-sense-of-the-complicated-universe/>.
- Witheyford, Nick D. "1844/2004/2044: The Return of Species-Being." *Historical Materialism* 12, no. 4 (January 2004), 6. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206043505130>.
- Wolfe, Cary. *What Is Posthumanism?*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.
- Young, Eugene B., Gary Genosko, and Janell Watson. *The Deleuze and Guattari Dictionary*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013.
- Young, Robert M. *Companion to the History of Modern Science*. Edited by G. N. Cantor, J.R.R. Christie, M.J.S. Hodge, and R.C. Olby. London: Routledge, 2020.



# Curriculum Vitae

**Name:** Vinay Sharma

**Post-secondary Education and Degrees:** University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada  
2018-2022 B.A. in Philosophy (Honours)

The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario, Canada  
2022-2024 M.A. at the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism

**Honours and Awards:** Five-time Dean's Honour Student (University of Manitoba)

Two-Time Outstanding Student Award in Philosophy Recipient  
(University of Manitoba)

**Related Work Experience** Teaching Assistant: University of Manitoba  
2019-2022

Research Assistant: University of Manitoba  
2022

Teaching Assistant: University of Western Ontario  
2022-2024

Research Assistant: University of Western Ontario  
2023