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OCCUPY TIME

Technoculture, Immediacy,
and Resistance after
Occupy Wall Street

Jason M. Adams





Occupy Time

Also by Jason Adams

Jason Adams and Arun Saldanha, Eds. *Deleuze and Race* (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2013).

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Technoculture,
Immediacy, and
Resistance after
Occupy Wall Street**

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For Amory Lee-Adams

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1

Introduction: Kairopolitics: The Politics of Realtime

Abstract: *The Introduction asserts that realtime is the temporality of today's digital capitalism and that as such, the status of the ancient Greek concept of kairos, which has served as a central basis for revolutionary thought from Walter Benjamin through Antonio Negri, is increasingly thrown into question. It explains the etymology of Cairo in Arabic and kairos in Greek, suggesting how between the two, one might arrive at a specifically post-Arab Spring and post-Occupy concept of "kairopolitics". The argument does not call for a simple reversal or return to a transcendental kronos over an immanent kairos (valorizing chronology over moments of opportunity), but rather of infusing kairos with a more radical approach to both memory and imagination, past and future, than that cultivated by today's digital capitalism.*

Keywords: Occupy, Virilio, Marx, Arendt, Deleuze, Benjamin, Negri, *kairos*, *kronos*

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How do you expect me to make a living?

Mohamed Bouazizi, prior to televised self-immolation and ensuing spread of the Arab Spring uprisings (2010)¹

What are we to say, at the end of the twentieth century, in the age of globalization... with the decline of the nation-state and the discrete revival in new forms of politics by the media... the multi-media of that “real time” of interchanges which performs the relativistic feat of compressing the “real space” of the globe through the temporal compression of information and images of the world? Henceforth, here no longer exists; everything is now.

Paul Virilio, *The Information Bomb* (1998)

Although it was largely forgotten in the wake of 9/11, after Occupy Wall Street it is worthwhile to recall that the 21st century began with the first planetary uprising in history, one that in many respects was similar to the occupation movement of the 2010s.² The antiglobalization movement, or as it was often called outside of the US, the *altermondialisation* movement, sought to propose alternatives to the neoliberal agenda promoted by global capitalist institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund/World Bank.

The summit meetings and attendant protests of the time took place in over a dozen cities worldwide, including Seattle, Davos, Melbourne, Prague, Montreal, Quebec City, Barcelona and Genoa, drawing summit-hoppers and solidarity actions from around the world. But the reason it is worth recalling today has little to do with lists of spatially defined event locations, as most retrospectives tend to feature.³

Rather, what conjoins the *altermondialisation* movement to the occupation movement is the element of time. Specifically, that is, the temporality of immediacy, also described as realtime. Not the abstract metaphysics of temporality, but the materially situated experience of time after the Internet and the World Wide Web provided the “presentist,” or better, “immediatist” basis for 21st-century political economy and technoculture.⁴

As the *altermondialisation* and occupation movements demonstrate, the circumvention of the space-time physiology and nation-state geography of the print capitalist era has not been conflict-free. Indeed, while digital capitalism has employed the live, networked communications

technologies of the period to optimize its own tacticality and flexibility, so too did these two unprecedented “movements of movements.”⁵

It is this conflict between the temporalities imposed by print and digital capitalism on one hand and those deployed by anticapitalist forces on the other that form the central concern of this book.⁶ It is, in short, a “kairopolitics,” a politics centered, with some qualifications, upon *kairos*, the emergent tempo- and technoculture of now-time.⁷

While the concepts of speed and acceleration could be employed to similar effect, the specificity of time today is neither of these, in any general sense. Rather it is marked by the reconstitution of experience in accordance with the speed *limit*. Or, at a bare minimum, the search for the speed limit, for the immediacy of realtime.

With realtime comes not only immediacy, but along with it, simultaneity and ubiquity: thus, much as the *altermondialisation* movement followed the path set by the Zapatista uprising, today’s kairopolitics follows that set by the Arab Spring, in particular, the January 2011 overthrow of dictator Hosni Mubarak in Cairo. There is, of course, a spatial component at play in both cases, but today, this spatiality that has been forever altered by the new experience of time as immediacy.

Thus, while the etymology of “Cairo,” in Arabic, comes from *khere-ohé*, or “place of combat,” it bears comparison to that of *kairos* in Greek, which, in one of its meanings, refers to “opportune moment.”⁸ Both refer to a space-time—or, as David Harvey famously put it, a time-space—in which past and future are confronted with a present pregnant with the reconstitution of temporality as such, as well as the spatial distinction of “here” and “there.”⁹

As has been widely noted, the Egyptian uprising did precisely this: it affectively charged not only the year 2011, but also, as a result of the countertemporality it introduced, “the world” as such. As in the rest of the Maghreb, “The Battle of Cairo”¹⁰ provided the occupation movement with the tactics and the inspiration that transformed the year into an opportune moment and turned “Wall Street” into a place of combat.

1.1 Materiality and time: before *altermondialisation* and occupation

It is no surprise then, given the resonance now-time is capable of producing, that for nearly a century theorists such as Walter Benjamin, Guy

Debord, Antonio Negri and Giorgio Agamben have presented *kairos* (or some near-variant) as the now-time of resistance, that which resists the domination of the present by the *kronos* of past and future.¹¹ Yet, this immediatism, insofar as it does not distinguish between versions of *kairos*, can just as easily serve the forces of control, particularly today.

Since immediacy collapses distance, all spaces become the many threads of a single, omnitemporal space: as a result, it is not only new modes of thought and resistance that are enabled by the emergent qualities of simultaneity and ubiquity, but so too are new modes of control. Immediacy, or now-time triumphant, makes it that much easier for state forces to place resistant forces under surveillance and for capitalist forces to extract surplus time: for both, in Foucault's terms, to "governmentalize."¹²

Kairopolitics then is not constituted by a simple embrace of *kairos*, but by the internal tensions between a transcendently imposed *kronos* that could be interrupted immanently, as well as a *kairos* that might constitute a transcendental *kronos*, a chronology without past or future. It is no longer enough to call for a revolution of now-time because now-time is the time of control.

It will be useful then to bring this presentism or immediatism into context: historically, both *kairos* and *kronos* have been used to refer to a preexisting, transcendental order of time as organized from above. Thus, etymologically, *kairos* refers to an "opportune moment," but opportune is defined here in the sense of "appropriate," "correct" or "right"—as deemed so by the existing structure of power and authority.

Even today, Christian institutions utilize the language of *kairos* as a reference not to an opportune moment available to anyone, at any position in society, to do whatever they might like, but specifically to the "right" moment for the "right" event to occur, according to the "right" order. Thus, *kairos* is generally invoked to refer to the transcendently appropriate moment in life to, for instance, move from singlehood to marriage, or in the case of *kronos*, to the appropriate chronology, from a wayward youth to a mature adulthood.¹³

Even prior to Christianity, however, this was already the case: Plato's *Laws*, for instance, define *kairos* in relation to a heterosexist virtue of self-restraint that, in accordance with the dominant view in his time and place, counseled minimal engagement in homosexual activity, restraining it to a culturally permitted addendum to a more central, primary heterosexuality. To engage in the wrong sexuality at the wrong time and in the wrong amount was to go against virtue itself.

Thus, according to Plato:

These two springs [heterosexual and homosexual activity] flow forth by nature, and he who draws from the right one, at the right time and in the right amount, is happy; the same holds for the city and for a private individual and for every animate thing. But he who does so without knowledge and at the wrong time [*ektos ton kairos*], lives a life that is just the opposite.¹⁴

Thus, while *kronos* has often been presented as the opposite of *kairos*, as a static, quantitative order of time interrupted by the revolutionary qualitativity of *kairos*, the latter temporality is no more than a moment organized from above by what it diverges from, *kronos*. Kairopolitics, as used here, does neither of these things: it diverges from the imperatives of already-spatialized, strategic power and interrupts time immanently and in a manner far closer to Plato's dreaded *ektos ton kairos*, the "wrong moment."

The kairopolitical task is not the affirmation of the transcendental time of *kairos* or *kronos* but the deployment of *kairon* and *kronon*, a shortened, rhetorical reference to what, from the perspective of power and authority, is understood as the wrong moment and the wrong chronology. Amidst the imperatives of transcendental immediatism then, or that imposed by what we call here "constant capitalism," the kairopolitical task is the production of an alternate, immanent immediatism, one closer to the sense of that which emerged amongst abolitionists in the 19th century than that proposed by lifestylists in the 21st century.¹⁵

This, essentially, is the argument of the French technocultural theorist Paul Virilio in *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject*. "Progress," he says, is no longer simply defined by the "speed" of the railway or the "acceleration" of the supersonic jet, but by the accomplishment or near-accomplishment of what both sought: the immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity of communication.

For Virilio, the temporal quality of this development appropriates the acclaimed potential of *kairos*, subjecting it to a "deterrence of the future as well as the past."¹⁶ What this means in the 2010s is that the politically laden functions of memory and imagination are subordinated to the immediacy of the now, a process that collapses formerly distinct vantage points into a single, immediatist point of view technologically, just as presentism once homogenized histories rhetorically:

After the "event-based" history of short anecdotal durations that kept historians happy up to the twentieth century, the time—or, more precisely,

the lack of time—has come for an “accidental” history, the history of the “right” moment, the *kairos* of the real time of immediacy and ubiquity. This now not only dominates the real space of geophysical expanse but also duration—both the long and the short durations of the accident in time, a hyperrealist time that now hangs, everywhere you turn, over the geophysical continuum of human activity, the whole array of our activities, now strictly interactive.¹⁷

The divergent threads that constitute the subject matter of this book are then centered upon such an “accidental history” of the present: the potential for now-time not only to be directed from below, as thinkers from Benjamin through Agamben argue, but also to be seized upon from above, as Virilio asserts is well underway. While we do not give up the emancipatory potential of a modified *kairos* per se, it is undeniable that the flattening of what was once a rich multiplicity of localized, spatialized times into globalized, temporalized space is everywhere visible in its effects.

This development, which theologians might describe as “omnitemporality” (i.e., the time of God), is one in which spatially defined continents are displaced by temporally reconfigured telecontinents, while trillions of dollars in financial transactions are circulated not only at accelerated speeds, but in realtime. When geopolitical diversity or geophysical expanse no longer constitutes an obstacle to global finance, which side of the digital divide one is located on matters little more than which spot on the planet one inhabits. All, in the end, are faced with the crisis of “constant capitalism,” the mode of production appropriate to the epoch of immediacy.

While many effects could be considered, one of the most significant for the occupation movement is that long-term, government-funded planning of the sort that gave rise to the Internet, a major source of immediatist technoculture, is no longer supported. Instead, governance itself is reduced to the temporality of now-time. Business conducts its own research and development in whatever direction seems efficient and expedient, while post-Keynesian social policy is replaced with an austerity agenda that ignores future implications.

Similarly, high-risk credit is extended while lenders are securitized from consequences, packaging loans, as Doug Henwood has put it, “into bonds and selling them to distant investors.”¹⁸ Investors, that is, who are unconcerned with the credit status of borrowers not only because risk is transferred away from the original lender, but also because in the form

of bonds, they are traded globally and immediately, thereby circumventing the regulation of nation-states.

While all of these developments point to the decline of the old intervals that once separated nations, groups and individuals, it is also for this reason that they enable new forms of resistance that were not possible under the condition of particularized space. Indeed, in the condition of universalized time-space, such resistance has often produced a dominance of force vis-à-vis the only security apparatus to which anticapitalist movements can, for the moment, still be exposed: those wielded by nation-states.¹⁹

Thus, just as *altermondialisation* protestors in Seattle, Genoa and elsewhere employed a temporally centered tacticality that repeatedly defeated police operations, the occupation movement, though originally centered in Lower Manhattan, mobilized an open-ended timeframe that outflanked spatially based security by multiplying the occupation into over 2,000 encampments, nationwide and worldwide.

“Occupy Time” is an observational phrase then, rather than a strategic advice. In the consideration of kairopolitics presented in this book, neither chronology nor spatiality are posited as the defining questions, neither practically nor theoretically. Rather, because realtime technoculture produces the effects of simultaneity and ubiquity, the focus is on how the impact of telepresence, for instance, enables participants to feel affectively connected in time to what might otherwise be experienced as distant in space.

The *altermondialisation* movement’s early resonance with the southern Mexico-based Zapatistas is indicative of this at least as much as the occupation movement’s recent resonance with the Maghreb-based Arab Spring. Both were inspired by geographically distant but phenomenologically near events, just as capital has fused the geographically distant into the materially near itself.

1.2 Becoming and time: after realspace and falsetime

Despite the many benefits the spatial frame has provided to cultural and political thought, in a time in which space is increasingly temporalized, even omnitemporalized, *Occupy Time* speaks instead to those researchers and activists seeking to engage political life as it is actually lived. The central approach is that of critical abstraction, engaging the occupation

movement through the interlocutions of Paul Virilio on the politics of technoculture, immediacy and resistance.

Unlike many works engaging a particular thinker however, what this book offers is neither a defense nor a critique of his work, but an open-ended, creative engagement with the dialogues in which he has engaged and been engaged by others, grounded in the event of the occupation movement. Specifically, *Occupy Time* draws upon conversations Virilio developed in relation to his predecessors, such as Immanuel Kant, Marx, Edmund Husserl and Walter Benjamin.

It also inflects those he participated in with his contemporaries, including Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. Additionally, *Occupy Time* engages those introduced by more recent thinkers such as Giorgio Agamben and Jacques Ranciere.

Beyond this, several interlocutions are staged with those whom he has neither engaged nor been engaged by directly, but whose thinking nevertheless exhibits relevant intersections and conflicts in our time, including Friedrich von Hayek, Ludwig von Mises and Martin Luther King, Jr. Overall, the most consistent interlocutions considered are those of Deleuze, Marx and Arendt, while Henri Bergson's articulation of perception, affection and action provides an underlying framework for the book's argument.

In each chapter of *Occupy Time*, the emergent logic of immediatism is encountered by beginning with a specific event from the occupation movement, so as to then draw out the theorizing from its more often than not unacknowledged constitutional multiplicity. Its embedding in a past that has not passed, a future that is undetermined and a contingent cultural habitus that is by and large, unrecognized.

In short, we approach the event in the manner suggested by Deleuze, that which he called "counter-effectuation."²⁰ Each event from the occupation movement that we consider is treated not in a commonsensical manner, but with respect to its relation to the increasingly immediatist technoculture to which it responds, as well as the potentialities that are thereby suggested.

This is why although *Occupy Time* is a work of cultural and political theory, it begins neither with isolated theory nor isolated events. In the spirit of Virilio, Deleuze, Marx and Arendt, the book moves beyond theorizing materiality (e.g., "applied political theory") so as to instead reverse the process to materialize thought, to produce thought worthy of "the event."

Virilio himself once described his approach as materialist in this sense: that of a “materialist of the body,”²¹ one who refuses mind/body distinctions and body/world distinctions alike. In league with his teacher Merleau-Ponty, for Virilio the perceptual field through which experience is organized is always interconnected with the world at large, in tempo- and technocultural terms alike. It is for this reason that the event remains central, permitting procession only from its interpreted features, which are only then placed into dialogue with cultural and political theory.

While *Occupy Time* refers to the contradictions of these developments vis-à-vis our conceptual term kairopolitics, what is referenced in doing so is not only Foucauldian “biopolitics,” but also Virilian “chronopolitics,” a temporal politics which he describes as originating with post-Carter deregulation in the US. For Virilio, this resulted in the depopulating of postindustrial metropolitan regions, bringing forth “the end of the unity of place of the old political theater of the City and its imminent replacement by a unity of time.”²² In its place, and in league with the rise of neoliberal political economy, what was consolidated was

a chronopolitics of intensivity and interactivity [in which] technics replace the long duration of the City, as systems architecture definitively replaces the contemporary system of architecture and urbanism.²³

Heeding the Arendtian imperative to always think anew amidst new situations, however, *Occupy Time* diverges from a hyperfocus on the potential authoritarianism of omnitemporality, in order to mine the dialogues with Virilio’s interlocutors to evoke a greater range of potentialities. The book also mines his own concepts in order to do so, doing to them what Virilio argues should be done to the objects of our increasingly immediate technoculture. That is, not defend or oppose them per se, but take them apart to grasp their structures of articulation, get inside them, so as to appropriate them to more critical ends.²⁴

In this respect, *Occupy Time* is not so much interested in representing Virilio’s thought as encountering and expanding the potentialities of the concepts he makes central for cultural and political thinking. In beginning from his interrogations, author and reader alike become interlocutors, developing new modes of perception that are as indebted to the Virilian *corpus* as they are to departures from it.

Which is, as already seen above, what he himself does with the concept of *kairos*, or now-time: while it had been central to multiple theories of resistance, the image of *kronos* as the primary basis of control did not,

it would seem, appear to him sufficiently developed. Thus, we are presented with the image of a divergent, indeterminate time in which the present breaks through future as well as past, such that “the present” of now-time describes the contemporary form of control.

But if Virilio is correct that this is one central manner in which control operates today, Benjamin and others are also correct that *kairos*, if reinterpreted and reworded as *kairon*, can nevertheless provide a temporality within which to change the *kronos* (or the *kairos-as-kronos*), by interrupting the supposedly objective course of history. That *Occupy Time* deploys the concept of kairopolitics rather than chronopolitics then serves to indicate that while it is indebted to his work, the book also departs from Virilio’s in several respects.

First, this book diverges from that moment in which Virilio’s own rhetorical flourishes and contradictions indicate potentials left unstated, for reasons that, however uncharacteristic, have more to do with the maintenance of continuity than cultural or political relevance. No more than Virilio, or Deleuze, Marx or Arendt do in their own practice, *Occupy Time* does not only reverse the argument, positing *kairos* as the problem to which *kronos* is then the solution.

Rather, now-time is encountered in its full complexity, as something that is indeterminate, even if it is not neutral. The primary utility of kairopolitics conceptually then is the critical description it affords the new temporality that contending forces of capitalism and anticapitalism (amongst others) are subject to. This allows one to build upon Virilio’s insights, extending his work in unanticipated directions, even in directions that are forthrightly “non-Virilian.”

At the same time, while secondary texts typically see no way out of his articulations of these “ultrapid forms of...control,”²⁵ as Deleuze called them, the book attends to what is already present within his work, even if it has not been extensively commented upon: In particular, Virilio’s elusive theory of resistance. In this respect, *Occupy Time* follows of *Postscript on the Societies of Control*, asserting that “there is no need to hope or fear, but only to look for new weapons.”²⁶

In order to conduct such a search then, or at least, to prepare for it, the following three chapters are centered upon thought, control and resistance, as they illuminate the occupation movement and the tempo- and technocultural conditions that have given rise to it.

In the first central chapter, Chapter 2, the impact of immediacy on cultural and political thought is considered as manifest within online

journals, social media and other digital engagements with the occupation movement. Developing a concept of “live theory,” the central concern is to question what is thinkable and what is thought when realtime temporality restricts interrogation of the past and consideration of the future alike, such that thought is restricted to the “actual” of the “possible” rather than the “actual” of the “virtual” event.²⁷

Briefly, if memory and imagination alike are curtailed in such an environment as Virilio suggests, the concern is the manner in which theorists are resisting such effects by rendering the virtual within the actual perceptible. Given that the modern and late-modern political thought they are drawing upon emerged under the influence of print capitalism, new forms of thinking result, at least partially, from the specificity of the digital media environment.

Then, Chapter 2 considers the relationship between thinking, immediacy and the decision, affirming the inescapability of mediation, particularly in the form of intellectual mediation. Not answering preexisting questions, but questioning the questions themselves, the chapter argues, is the essence of a radically democratic polity, one that may actually be threatened rather than enhanced by the impulse toward “unmediated,” or rather, immediatist, collective decision-making.

While it might have made some sense to begin the book with the overall technocultural and political economic context for this, the question of thought goes first here, since if one is not to subordinate the virtual to the actual, such a question cannot be considered without reference to the rhetorical framing that enables such representations. In proceeding in this manner, we set the pace for the rest of the book and its overall project of virtualizing the event, of “attain[ing] and express[ing] the sense of what happens, thereby dissociating the pure event from the particular determinate form in which it has been actualized.”²⁸ Or, as Deleuze and Guattari put it in *What Is Philosophy?*, dissociating it from the actual in order to “liberate it . . . for other times.”²⁹

In Chapter 3, having demonstrated the necessity of remediation amidst a culture of immediacy, the next section engages the character of control by articulating the concept of “constant capitalism,” the emergent mode of production in the early 21st century. In short, the temporal qualities of immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity force Marx’s dichotomy of constant capital and variable capital into a zone of indistinction, such that distinctions between worktime and freetime hold together no more well than that which once separated technology from humanity rhetorically.

Concentrating on the cybernetic origins of the Internet, the rise of digitally mediated global trade and the attendant rhetoric of efficiency and expediency, the basis for this development is interrogated.

Next, the chapter focuses on the process through which constant capitalism, tempo- and technocultural immediacy and neoliberal economics have given rise to a new form of financial dictatorship. This is engaged via the installation of Emergency Financial Managers in Flint, Detroit and other postindustrial, black-majority “rustbelt” cities in the US: indeed, precisely the same cities Virilio considered when developing his concept of chronopolitics, which we replace with kairopolitics.

Considering the protest this drew from the occupation movement, the chapter then moves on to the paradoxical influence of libertarian thought on many sectors of the movement itself. Tracing the intellectual genealogy and strategic use of social media that made it possible, the Austrian School of Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises are considered at length, engaging their thematics of liberty, equality and democracy as well as the manner in which they are obscured in online political promotions.

The third chapter concludes by considering in greater detail the anti-EFM (emergency financial managers) group *Occupy for Democracy*, articulating the unspoken conflict within the occupation movement its nomenclature foregrounds with respect to the engagement of the anti-democratic effects of constant capitalism. Having begun the book with the question of theory and thought allows for a consideration of how an authoritarian politics could be re-narrated as freedom, or in any sense at all, as liberty-oriented. By counter-effectuating the event, the tempo- and technocultural frame that allowed it to occur is rendered perceptible while in the process revealing its capacity to be actualized differently in the future.

Finally, Chapter 4 moves on to the question of “realtime resistance” considering the manner in which immediacy has transformed protest in the early 21st century, just as it has transformed thought and control. In particular, we consider examples from the occupation movement that demonstrate how temporally oriented tactical forms of resistance have increasingly overtaken strategic approaches. The primary task, these examples suggest, is neither that of accepting immediacy part and parcel by conforming to the imperatives of accelerationism, nor that of resisting it through decelerationist refusal, but instead affirming an ethos of realtime resistance, the collective self-valorization of speeds at which, in

Deleuze's words, one, or more than one, becomes "the master of one's speeds."³⁰

Rather than accepting the *kairos-as-kronos* imposed by an imminent police attack, for instance, we consider here the significance of a tactics in which space is temporarily evacuated and then reoccupied once security forces are no longer present, leading to a counter temporality we describe as *kairon* and *kronon*. Immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity in such approaches enable the telepresence of resistant bodies to one another even when they are not assembled in "realspace."

Thus, they disassemble and reassemble at will, via text messaging, social media and other networked communication technologies, thereby rendering them masters of their own speeds, rather than only accelerationists or decelerationists. The final chapter concludes with a consideration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s philosophy of temporality, in his speeches and sermons as well as his Ph.D. dissertation from Boston University on the preeminent theologian of *kairos*, Paul Tillich. Placing them into dialogue with those of Virilio, Marx, Arendt and Deleuze, we articulate them in the terms of realtime resistance, or "the fierce urgency of now," a process through which to clear the way for both critical thought and active resistance.

Notes

- 1 Bouazizi's public act of self-immolation occurred on December 17, 2010, after he was denied the right to continue vending fruit, his only source of income for nearly a decade. Shortly thereafter, images and videos spread via Facebook across multiple cities including Tunis, Algeria and Cairo, followed by mass demonstrations and a series of revolutions now known as the Arab Spring, which inspired the occupation movement. See B. Simon, "How a Slap Sparked Tunisia's Revolution" *CBS News*, February 20, 2011. Available at http://www.cbsnews.com/2102-18560_162-20033404.html. The synopsis bears repeating:

The anger spread to other towns in the interior of the country, where unemployment among university graduates was approaching 50 percent. The dictator Ben Ali did the only thing he knew how to do: he turned to his police. "The turning point, the real one here was the real bullets. Tunisia is one of the most peaceful countries you can ever think of. Tunisia, people don't have guns. Even robbers don't have guns. And then here we have the ruler, the government asking its police to shoot its own people using snipers, shooting people with real bullets in their heads," Mhersi explained. Hundreds of protesters were killed, but you

wouldn't have heard anything about it on the state-run media. Twenty percent of Tunisians, however, are on Facebook, and Facebook had pictures. Asked how Facebook was used to spread word of the unrest, Mhirs said, "Facebook was the only video-sharing platform that was available to Tunisians. And seeing videos of people shot with real bullets in their heads on Facebook was shocking to many Tunisians." ... "That picture was shocking. You could see nothing of Bouazizi. He was surrounded by band-aids like a mummy. Obviously, he was in a coma. And then you have all these politicians coming inside the room," Mhirs told Simon. Bouazizi died Jan. 4. Word went out on Facebook to take to the streets. The message was received. On Jan. 14, tens of thousands brought the nation's capital, Tunis, to a halt. Now the world started paying attention ... "Degage"—get out—they shouted at Ben Ali. Zied Mhirs was there. "Oh it was fantastic to be there on that day. There was everybody, young, poor, rich, educated, women, men, every part of the Tunisian society was represented in that demonstration that asked Ben Ali to get out," he remembered. The protesters thought it was entirely possible that Ben Ali would order the army to fire on them. But they didn't budge. To their astonishment, it was Ben Ali who panicked. He fled the country and went to Saudi Arabia. "I think like the majority of the Tunisian people, we were in disbelief. We were, like, 'He's gone.' It was just crazy. He left in his plane and he's gone. Took us some time to realize it, I think. So, yeah, we were free then," Mhirs said. It was the first time an Arab dictator had been toppled by his own people. It didn't take long before the homes belonging to his extended family were torched and looted. Today, they're tourist attractions, but not for foreigners—for Tunisians themselves, a testament to what they've accomplished. There used to be pictures of Ben Ali everywhere. They're gone now, almost. There's graffiti all over Tunis thanking Facebook for the revolution. But more than anything else, it was the revolt of the young.

- 2 Herein, we refer to the "occupation movement" rather than Occupy Wall Street, in order to call into question both the spatial and temporal associations of the more commonly used term.
- 3 Perhaps the spatial focus is not so surprising for those retrospectives that use the language of "antiglobalization," as opposed to *altermondialisation*: the former implies a spatial politics of relocalization while the latter suggests a temporal politics of self-determination. See A. Starr, *Global Revolt: A Guide to the Movements against Globalization* (London: Zed Books, 2005); N. Klein, *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate* (London: Picador, 2002); T. Mertes, *A Movement of Movements: Is another World Really Possible?* (London: Verso, 2004).
- 4 "Presentism" is the term used in D. Rushkoff, *Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now* (New York: Current, 2013). "Immediatism" derives from H. Bey, *Immediatism* (San Francisco: AK Press, 2001). As for realtime, as one writer observed at the eve of the millennium, "very soon, real time will be the price of entry for business." J. Sweat, "Real-Time Reality: Businesses Are Finding That Pretty Fast Is Not Fast Enough" *InformationWeek Online*, December 6, 1999. Available at <http://www.informationweek.com/764/realtime.htm>

- 5 I derive this term from popular movement-based usage, but it also appears in the title to T. Mertes, Ed. *A Movement of Movements: Is another World Really Possible?* (London: Verso, 2004).
- 6 As explained below, here we diverge from definitions of capitalism (and thus, “anticapitalism”) as an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production in which profit accumulation is prioritized above other considerations. Rather, we understand capitalist economics in the terms Karl Marx used in the *Grundrisse*: “economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself” (173). Here then, capitalism is understood as an economic system based upon a continuously accelerating temporality of efficiency, in which the assumption of scarcity rationalizes whatever is necessary for the most expedient accumulation of disposable time. In this process is produced the hierarchy of the temporally rich over the temporally poor, defined as those subjected to disposed time, time which is ordered for them rather than by them. Profit, wealth and money are meaningful signifiers in this definition only in that they are objectified representations of physical processes that enable the accumulation and distribution of time in a hierarchical fashion. Similarly, commodities are not autonomous, free-floating objects, but materializations of congealed time, just as surplus value is really only the result of the extraction of “surplus time,” that time which exceeds the necessary time to cover operating costs, including the constant capital of the means of production and the variable capital of the laborer as wage-laborer. See, for instance, K. Marx, *Grundrisse: Critique of Political Economy* (London: Penguin, 1993); A. Negri, *Time for Revolution* (London: Continuum, 2005); E. Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); S. Glezos, *The Politics of Speed: Capitalism, the State and War in an Accelerating World* (London: Routledge, 2011); F. Berardi, *After the Future* (San Francisco: AK Press, 2011); F. Berardi, “Time, Acceleration and Violence” *e-flux* (2011). Available at <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/time-acceleration-and-violence/>. Anticapitalism in our use is not only concerned with bringing to an end the private ownership of the means of production or the refusal of the logic of profit, wealth or money in the second-order, representational sense, but first of all with the refusal of this first-order temporal hierarchy.
- 7 This is the term used by Giorgio Agamben, following Renalto Solmi’s translation of “*jetzeit*” from Walter Benjamin’s “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” Agamben argues that Solmi’s translation is apt, since it carries forward the meaning of “*ho nyn kairos*” (“the of-now-time”) in the same essay. G. Agamben, *The Time That Remains* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 143.
- 8 See “Cairo” and “Kairos” *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Available at <http://www.etymonline.com/>

- 9 The term is introduced as “time-space compression” in D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (London: Blackwell, 1991).
- 10 As it was described in periodicals ranging from *Al-Jazeera* to *The Economist*.
- 11 See thesis XVII in W. Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” W. Benjamin, Ed. *Illuminations* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1968); G. Debord, *In Girum Imus Nocte et Consumimur Igni* (Film), 1978 and “Notes on Poker.” Available at <http://www.notbored.org/notes-on-poker.html>; A. Negri, “Kairos: Prolegomena,” in A. Negri, Ed. *Time for Revolution*, 149; G. Agamben, *The Time That Remains* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 143.
- 12 See, for instance, G. Burchell, C. Gordor and P. Miller, Eds. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- 13 Consider, for example, P. Tillich, *History of Christian Thought: From Its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1968): here, *kairos* is defined in a section entitled “The Preparation for Christianity.” Paul, he argues, did not present the appearance of Jesus Christ on earth as something that could occur at just any moment, but only at the opportune, or rather, proper moment. Similarly, “we all experience moments in our lives when we feel that now is the right time to do something, now we are mature enough, now we can make the decision. This is the *kairos*” (1).
- 14 I shorten the full term “*ektos ton kairon*” henceforward for rhetorical purposes, to indicate the distinction between the “right time” and the “wrong time.” 636d-e, Plato, *Laws*, in J. Cooper, Ed. *Plato: The Complete Works* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997). See also the usage in M. Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: Volume 2 of The History of Sexuality* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 87.
- 15 For abolitionists, the term “immediatism” referred to the argument for the immediate rather than gradual elimination of slavery: “lifestyle” anarchists such as Hakim Bey use immediatism, instead, to refer to the celebration of the “least-mediated” forms of culture, as well as living in the present, rather than past or future.
- 16 P. Virilio, *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 70.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 72.
- 18 D. Henwood, “Taking the Measure of Rot” *MR Zine*, April 11, 2010. To paraphrase, Henwood argues that the roots of the current crisis go back to the 1970s, when interest rates were allowed to rise up to 20%. Reagan fired striking air traffic controllers and deregulation intensified privatization and the global financial flows. Combined with the liberalization of employment, this created a contradiction between stagnant wages and rising prices, particularly in an economy more oriented toward consumption than production. Since the capacity of wage-earners to engage in consumption helped to stave off the

legitimation crisis that would emerge if economic instability for the majority was combined with stagnant purchasing power, this was resolved through the expansion of credit, through credit cards and mortgages alike. In each case, these economic policies are best understood as examples of the triumph of immediatism, in which neither past traditions of maintaining a sizable middle class nor future orientations toward the continuity of consumer capitalism mattered as they once had. The result of economic immediatism, or constant capitalism, is that poor, working and middle-class people now avoid mid-range items and seek discount prices and venues: as a result, legitimation processes are no longer so easily maintained and we have the tea party on one side and the occupation movement on the other. Another thing Henwood says is that high-speed rail, solar panel production and other possible ways to jumpstart a “new industrial revolution” are avoided because the immediatism orthodoxy does not allow for the recognition that railroad and computer industries, for instance, started with massive government investment in research and development. Only the market can lead the way, in other words, under immediatism economics.

And what about our ruling class? ...nothing coherent has replaced the old northeastern WASP elite as a ruling stratum. Though it was often greedy and brutal, it also had a disdain for commerce and an ethic of stewardship that helped it plan the post-World War II order with some degree of actual vision and skill. Its members went to the same schools, belonged to the same clubs, and married from the same small and homogenous pool. But now, to use the jargon of Wall Street, the transaction has replaced the relationship. It's all about who can make the most money most quickly, and the long term can take care of itself. (Henwood 2010)

- 19 We explore several examples in the final, concluding chapter of this book.
- 20 Deleuze (and Guattari) argue that “philosophy’s sole aim is to become worthy of the event.” G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (London: Verso, 1994), 159. For them, events always appear to us as less than they actually are. What appears to us as “the” event is just a representation of it that in the act of representing it contributes to its production in a particular direction or manner. Thus, what we attempt is a counter-effectuation of events, seeking out what is left unstated or unattributed, in order to bring forth their remaining potential, which is a potential for future events to actualize differently, beyond their already-existent actualization in a particular state of affairs.
- 21 Virilio uses this phrase to indicate his Merleau-Pontian refusal of distinction between not only mind and body, but also body and world (“our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism”). See M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 2005), 235. For Virilio, in turn, the perceptual field is always already interconnected with

- the world, in all of its political, economic, technological, cultural and other dimensions.
- 22 P. Virilio, *The Overexposed City* (Semiotext(e): Brooklyn, 1991), 124.
- 23 Ibid., 125.
- 24 “If architects today want to prove themselves equal to the new technologies, like Paolo Uccello or Piero della Francesca, they would make the software themselves, they would get back inside the machine. Whereas now they are sold the equipment, and they work with it. That’s what I can’t accept. This doesn’t mean I am some Luddite eager to destroy machines, not at all. I have always said: penetrate the machine, explode it from the inside, dismantle the system to appropriate it.” S. Lotringer and P. Virilio, *The Accident of Art* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2005), 74.
- 25 “Postscript on Control Societies,” in G. Deleuze, Ed. *Negotiations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 178.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Deleuze distinguishes between the actual/possible nexus on the one hand—that between the possibilities inherent to an entity at a specific moment, or that which remains the same across multiple moments—and the actual/virtual nexus on the other—that between the potentialities of an entity that is not static but that exists in a state of continuous, material becoming that transforms that entity continuously. See, for instance, G. Deleuze and C. Parnet, *Dialogues II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 148.
- 28 P. Patton, *Deleuze and the Political* (London: Routledge, 2000), 28.
- 29 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 159. “The event is actualized or effectuated whenever it is inserted, willy-nilly, into a state of affairs; but it is *counter-effectuated* whenever it is abstracted from states of affairs so as to isolate its concept.”
- 30 Both Virilio and Deleuze make this argument: presumably, given their continuous citation of his work, the origin is the 1955 work of H. Michaux, *Miserable Miracle: Mescaline* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002). In his description of mescaline experience, Michaux recounts the “phenomenal speed” with which new ideas develop, but notes that “instead of being constructive, [the intelligence] is above all interested in covering ground... never resting, non-contemplative” (64). As he continues, under the effects of mescaline, “the system of brakes controlling this speed has stopped functioning” (80). Thus, “all drugs are modifiers—usually accelerators—of the mind’s speed (of images, thoughts, impulses). Mental health, on the contrary, would consist in remaining the master of its speed, of their speed” (154). Michaux then goes on to talk about the importance of sleep, of taking a break from being at the “instrument panel”: “of all animals man is the one that controls the greatest number of roadblocks and open roads, of ‘Yes’s’ and ‘No’s’, of what is permitted and what is forbidden. A mammal with brakes.

The animal that can manage the most complicated instrument panel” (154). Critiquing reliance on reflex, Michaux argues that one must, for instance, sleep, in order to reflect, in order to process the events of the day: “not to let themselves be carried away, to remain master of their speed seems to be the underlying, the constant and secret preoccupation of all men . . . below the man who thinks, and much deeper down, there is the man who controls, who controls himself” (155).

2

Thought-Time: Immediacy and Live Theory

► **Abstract:** *Chapter 2 concerns the impact of immediacy on publicly engaged cultural and political thought, as manifest within online journals, social media and other digital engagements with the occupation movement. While developing a concept of “live theory,” its central concern is questioning what is thinkable when realtime temporality restrains interrogation of the past and consideration of the future alike, such that thought is restricted only to the actual of the possible rather than the actual of the virtual event. Briefly, if memory and imagination alike are curtailed in such an environment as Virilio suggests, the concern of the chapter is the manner in which theorists are resisting such effects by rendering the virtual within the actual perceptible, even amidst difficult circumstances.*

Keywords: Occupy, Virilio, Debord, Arendt, Deleuze, social media, Situationism, memes

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React Now

The Independent (2012)¹

I believe in reflection, not reflex. The new technologies are conditioning technologies and they are frightening in that they are related to the Audimat [French Nielsen ratings] and to polling... Each time a wall is reached, there is a retreat. And history has just struck the wall of worldwide time. With live transmission, local time no longer creates history. Worldwide time does. In other words, real time conquers real space, space-time. We must reflect on this paradoxical situation which places us in a kind of outside-time.

P. Virilio, *Cyberresistance Fighter* (2004)

Amidst the intensification of the occupation movement in late 2011, extended cultural and political theory engagements appeared on the sites of a number of online theory journals, including *Theory & Event*, *Possible Futures*, *Critical Inquiry: In the Moment* and *The Contemporary Condition*. Similar interventions also occurred within social media sites, including theorists' interlinked Facebook and Twitter accounts, via shared/re-shared articles and continuous, interactive commentary between well-established and emerging academic/activist theorists.

Beyond this, one of the Internet's typically "lowbrow" facets also manifested an impressive outpouring of critical thought, though not exclusively in written form: that of politically inflected memes, or, what might be called in a conceptual nod to the Situationists, *détournememes*. Each of these emergent digital venues provided opportunities for the circumvention of the partition of thought and action within activist movements, not only by celebrated theorists such as Slavoj Žižek, Judith Butler and Cornel West, but also by unknown or relatively unknown activists, students, autodidacts, friends, family, colleagues and associates, amongst others.

"Live theory," as this emergent form of decentralized, instantly published theorizing will be referred to, was an important development in the occupation movement first because the immediacy of contemporary culture often restrains political possibility by encouraging a reactive rather than creative response to events. In short, what Virilio describes as the primacy of "reflex" over "reflection" takes hold, restraining the

ability of movements to produce new perceptions appropriate to new conditions, as events are encountered only in actual rather than also in virtual form.

While one could focus exclusively on *détournememes* and activist publications such as *The Occupied Wall Street Journal* and *Tidal: Occupy Theory, Occupy Strategy*, the most interesting aspect of live theory for the occupation movement was the manner in which it broke down conventional high/low distinctions. In doing so, “low theory,” as David Graeber described its emerging form after the Seattle WTO protests, became inseparable from “high theory.”² Rather than low theory emerging exclusively from within grounded social movements while high theory remains within institutionalized academic environments, this phenomenon is one in which a hybridized high/low theory encounters a hybridized low/high theory and then, particularly in the midst of the event, these distinctions also dissipate.

2.1 Perception and time: before mediacy and immediacy

How, then, might we understand the emergence of live theory? While the immediacy of contemporary digital culture often privileges reflex over reflection, before we accept this conclusion, we must note that under the influence of emerging events, reflection is not only speeded up but also, due to the time pressures of simultaneity and ubiquity, it is increasingly shared as well. As such, theory becomes a transindividual, rhizomatic project. This chapter begins then with the impact of immediacy on thought and thought on immediacy, because as Deleuze asserts, however things might change, the actual is always already within the virtual, just as the virtual is within the actual.

New interfaces do not simply create structures of experience to which users respond, they are also negotiated by users in ways that diverge from designers’ and technicians’ intentions. All forms of control and all forms of resistance are ultimately based upon a prior ontological frame, one subject to both temporal and spatial conditions of possibility. In such a situation, the continuously changing character of time and space requires a continuously changing mode of thought, one that live theory is perhaps, today introducing.

As Arendt put it in *The Life of the Mind*, “practically, thinking means that each time you are confronted with a new difficulty in life you have

to make up your mind anew.”³ This continuous thought renewal requires first a recognition of the consolidation processes of previous modes, a sensitivity to what is, precisely, being remade. Only in taking account of these prior actualizations might new virtualizations, or counter-effectuations, of the event emerge.

Danger lurks on every side, however. For instance, one of the most common assumptions about contemporary tempo- and technoculture is that immediacy could, in the right situation, enable an egalitarian, unencumbered alternative to representative democracy. In short, the argument is that while the “periodic” temporality that resulted from print capitalism lead to a liberal mode of electoral representation, the immediacy of digital capitalism might become capable of replacing it with a more pure, “direct,” non-representational mode of individual and collective self-presentation.

It is no surprise then that as the impact of social media and other developments in immediacy have intensified, so too has a reluctance to engage in practices commonly understood as hierarchical or mediated: those suggestive of representation or indirectness. “Intellectual” practices such as cultural and political theory, for instance, have declined at a pace that may be quite inseparable from that at which the earlier temporality of periodical publications have also fallen in value, as they are replaced by the immediacy of blog culture and social media.

While Virilio has been associated with a variety of radical democratic perspectives in this respect (including, for instance, “direct” democracy), he questions any argument for unmediated decision-making that asserts digital technologies as sufficient in and of themselves to ensure emancipatory ends. Much as post-Kantian cultural and political theory asserts the unavoidability of a temporal and spatial frame for perception, so too does Virilio with respect to the technological.

Richard Grusin and Jay David Bolter, of course, famously addressed this question through the Kathryn Bigelow film *Strange Days* (1995), suggesting that “the wire,” the fictional technology that allows one to directly experience the perceptions and sensations of another person, is an apt metaphor for the ongoing desire for greater and greater immediacy. As they put it, the “double logic of remediation” is that “our culture wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them.”⁴

If there is then no escaping mediation any more than there is actually existing, material situatedness, one must question technology at the level

of conceptualization, so that these radical democratic aspirations are not overtaken by antidemocratic presuppositions in the stage of research and design.

As Virilio asks in *The Information Bomb*:

a slow and measured democracy, locally situated, in the style of the direct democracy of the assemblies of the Swiss cantons, or a “live” media democracy, on the lines of the measurement of audience ratings in commercial television or the opinion poll? ...after the authority of human beings over their history, are we going to yield, with the acceleration of the real, to the authority of machines and those who program them? Shall we see the mechanical transference of the power of the political parties to the power of electronic or other devices?⁵

This is the central question posed for live theory in general and in particular for materially engaged theory such as that which emerged along with the occupation movement. In the face of constantly changing situations that constantly pose new questions, how does one answer or engage them, without taking the necessary time to do so? As Deleuze asserts to Claire Parnet at the outset of the eight-hour interview documentary *L'Abécédaire*, “to answer a question without having thought a bit about it beforehand is for me something inconceivable.”⁶

Yet, that is what the live technoculture of immediacy has produced. A culture of people answering conventional questions without questioning the conventionality of the questions they answer, let alone even taking the time to answer the conventional ones thoughtfully. As a result, on whatever side people might come down on a particular question, what is called “public opinion” is consolidated once again into a predictable conventionality while critical judgment is excised. While Virilio and Deleuze pose important questions in this respect, there is a manner in which live theory can avoid this: perhaps, in fact, it has already begun to figure out how to do so.

Consider, for instance, the difference in online engagements within the occupation movement between late 2011 and early 2012, in which the central tension within social media discussions was that between conventional and critical interpretation of the event. One thing at least was a certainty in the latter period. That it was still too early to judge, so early into the new year, whether the last months of 2011 constituted a real turning point in contemporary politics, or whether it did not.

Prior to the six-month anniversary events in May 2012 at least, the impressive momentum gathered in the final months of 2011 seemed to

have slowed considerably. Aside from the January conflicts in Oakland, the most momentous events related to the crisis occurred in countries with little occupation movement-identification, such as Greece. Similarly, post-New Year's theoretical analyses of the occupation movement were sparse, with the highest-profile intervention represented by the trumpeting of Chris Hedges on the question of violence/nonviolence.⁷

Indeed, the rhetoric in this respect was exemplary of what had become the conventional thinking, with respect to protest strategy and tactics since the late 1990s. In whatever form the argument was constructed, the consistent feature, from the *altermondialisation* movement forward, was that conflict was to be cheered "over there" and denounced "over here." Yet, despite the inconsequence of such rhetoric given the movement's condition at the time, the ongoing popularity of the argument is illuminating in its own manner.

Whereas in late 2011, online theory journals published immediately relevant yet theoretically mediated essays on the occupation movement, in early 2012, the influence of the journalsphere's interventions was overrun by those put forth by social media-oriented sites such as *Truthdig* and *Truthout*. Such venues, of course, increase hits by publishing the rants of quasi-controversial "universal intellectuals," with the caveat that the controversy remain shareable demographically while the intellectual remain legible discursively.

Given this, Maurice Blanchot's question of the "turning point," put forth in *The Infinite Conversation*, is particularly topical: "do you admit to this certainty: that we are at a turning point? If it is a certainty, then it is not a turning point."⁸ Similarly then, we might ask: did the journalsphere's interventions at the height of the occupation movement indicate a shift in the theory milieu's relationship to digital media, or did the reintroduction of conventional analyses into the engaged discourse at the very moment it seemed to have entered a slowdown indicate just how little had changed?

If we restrict our analysis only to the journalsphere, it might seem as though the latter could indeed be the case. But perhaps it is precisely the temptation to assume this without considering other facets of theoretical intervention such as *détournememes*, as we will see shortly, that indicates that something did indeed change during this period.

Though most celebrated commentators of the *Truthdig/Truthout* variety would sooner proclaim the death of postmodernism than admit their own semiotically slippery practices, maintaining the unity of

signifier and signified is often of seemingly less concern for them than conjoining the culture of immediacy to theory-free analysis. For all their seeming iconoclasm, rather than intensifying events by articulating what remains unstated about them—the ambiguities, questions and potentials of complex situations—what the most shareable, legible rants usually intensify is the intellectual vacuum. Virilio’s culture of “reflex” rather than “reflection,” in other words, and Deleuze’s culture of questions posed without the time to interrogate them. Rather than problematizing problems or destabilizing distinctions, they moralize and stabilize, or at a minimum, restabilize.

And, of course, much of the theory milieu contributes to this, too. While it is precisely in moments of intensification that critical, creative thought is most needed, its current mode of publication often forms an unwitting, paradoxical assemblage with the “clicktivist” sites, those more conventionally oriented venues such as *Truthdig/Truthout*.

Wedded to the periodical rhythms of print capitalism in decay, its major organs rest upon an authority that is increasingly irrelevant, insofar as it fails to engage the immediacy, and with it the simultaneity and ubiquity, of the digital culture in which we live. The task then, if a turning point is to emerge, would be to build upon the journalsphere’s engagements with the occupation movement in late 2011, mobilizing digital media’s capacity for timeliness, or *kairos*, precisely in the name of untimeliness, or *kairon*. Using its capacity for immediacy kairopolitically, in other words, to remediate unfolding events in a critical manner.

Doing so, of course, would not be simple: it is not only a matter of publishers overenthusiastically or anachronistically privileging one medium over another. It is not that live theory is championed but not approached seriously, nor that live theory is rejected out of hand, while print-mediated theorizing is defended at all cost. Aside from the ever-encroaching empire of intellectual property law, there is no shortage of evidence attesting to the continued institutional and popular understanding of theory as a primarily print-based rather than online enterprise.

If anything, theory is increasingly treated both within institutions as well as within the popular understanding as an anachronism; a relic from a time when people still believed that thought and reflection mattered at least as much as practical, empirical research and activity. Why this might be is not hard to discern: as Virilio and Deleuze both assert, theorizing in a thoughtful, critical manner takes time. And in a world with

ostensibly less time than ever before, theory as it has previously been known may not be wholly remediable in an online media environment that is temporally speaking, more immediate than periodical.

As has been noted by Steven Shaviro, the extended essay format may have to be amended to allow for shorter, more concise interventions that can then, if the author prefers, be pieced together and reworded for use in longer, more synoptic works.⁹ But this kind of open relationship between mediums is still not widely accepted at present: publishers that initially emerged in the age of print still bristle at the suggestion of publishing anything that has appeared in public previously, whether on blogs or elsewhere.¹⁰

Hence *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* proclamation that while an array of theory journals emerged in the late 20th century, the early 21st century has seen a decline in the number of new publishing venues comparable to say, *Social Text* or *boundary 2*.¹¹ It is not difficult, of course, to see how such a claim might seem true, despite the many new digital journals that have emerged in the last decade or so. Habits of perception consolidated within earlier media environments do not simply disappear the moment a new one begins to coalesce, since as Catherine Malabou has put it, “for beings subject to change, habit is the law of being.”¹²

But *The Chronicle's* skepticism attributes another source: the ongoing withdrawal of funding from the social sciences and humanities. While there is a brief acknowledgment of the existence of the journalsphere that appends the argument, their claim is that such efforts have failed in the face of neoliberalism and that as a result, we've reached a turning point that will soon bring the life of the theory journal to an end. However, this claim ignores a great deal: at a minimum, it circumvents the rather obvious Blanchotian insight that “being part of the moment in which an epochal change (if there is one) comes about also takes hold of the certain knowledge that would wish to determine this change, making certainty as inappropriate as uncertainty.”¹³

There is no doubt, of course, that neoliberalism has largely restructured relations of production to further enhance economic exploitation. This plays a significant role in the current antitheoretical malaise: but this process cannot be divorced from the complexity of the larger processes through which it is carried out.

Contemporary automation, for instance, expands the predominance of the technological infrastructure over bodies, producing a mechanic mode of production that as Deleuze and Guattari assert in a rejoinder to

Marx's *Capital* envelops society as a whole.¹⁴ But the new predominance of constant capital through which surplus value is extracted from variable capital does more than enslave. It also enables new forms of resistance on the part of the bodies that are rendered inseparable from the technologies of production.

Even if their role is reduced to that of producers, on the consumption side the bodies upon which constant capital relies still renegotiate conditions through currents such as the occupation movement. In other words, the offline manifestations of that movement are no more separable from their online presence than are the audiences who engage in the journalsphere whenever and wherever they have access to the Internet.

While publications were once engaged only physically, digital immediacy enables a new ubiquity and simultaneity in addition to live temporality, one that could be mobilized quite differently than is presently the case. The potentiality this suggests is in fact quite clear after the occupation movement: the journal podcasts, open-access special issues, joint publishing projects and event-centered article series of late 2011 were not in and of themselves unique.

What made them momentous was the manner in which they all entered into a rhizomatic resonance machine, interwoven as they were, with sharing and commentary throughout the social media platforms, even while the event continued to unfold. Even if today's immediatist capitalism privileges search engine-optimized clicktivist sites on a market basis, it may also be enhancing the profile of live theory on a more general technocultural basis.

As delayed, individualized theorizing in print is displaced by realtime, collective theorizing online, in other words, digital theory venues begin to appear less as "theory blogs" and more as contemporary, live analogs to journals such as those championed by *The Chronicle*. Featuring similar though often more dynamic governance structures as well as overlapping figures on their editorial boards, the assumption that theory can only be an exclusively print-based project becomes increasingly difficult to assert.

While extended essays are, of course, still submitted to multiple venues based on fit and prestige, the specter of readers easily discovering briefer interventions without paywalls or mediums interrupting the "immediacy" of the process often privileges the qualities afforded by digital media. In such a situation, the blog becomes the new essay and the extended essay becomes the new book, at least as an e-book.

Nevertheless, this shift in publishing culture speaks not only to the self-interest of authors, but also to one of the central projects of theorizing: critically remediating what is perceived as unmediated, the online world that has become inseparable from the offline world.

As we will see in Chapter 3, while contemporary capitalism destabilizes the distinction between constant capital and variable capital, it also produces a new media environment within which theorizing, amongst other things, occurs. But as a result of the more general effects of the technoculture, this new media environment is also, at one and the same time, a new temporal environment: one that ultimately changes the character of everything that exists, including events theorized by theorists.

For instance, globalized, computerized trading now impacts everyday experience with such immediacy that it exceeds our capacity to comprehend it. As a recent article in *Wired* related, the “flash crash” of 2010, the largest single decline in Dow Jones history, was actually one of thousands that occur daily, though they are generally too brief to observe.¹⁵ Operating at a speed measureable in nanoseconds, human perception is not well suited to comprehend its most basic conditions of possibility, as currently organized.

This immediacy then is what demands thought the most today, since, as Virilio, Grusin and Bolter suggest, it mediates experience more than anything else, even while seeming not to. As Virilio asserts in *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject*, we cannot even understand the continuing economic crisis without attending to this dimension. The crash of 2007, he claims, is far less analogous to that of 1929 than it is to the Black Monday of 1987, the Asian Flu of 1997, or the end of the dot com “New Economy” in 2000.¹⁶

As he puts it with respect to the crash of 2007, “that crash followed closely the setting-up of program trading, that is, the instantaneous interconnection of stock exchanges that the Anglo-Saxons, what’s more, were to call the Big Bang.”¹⁷ What we live in today, for Virilio, is the “space-time of a single market,” the immediacy of which “carefully overlooks the excessiveness of an objective risk,” focused instead on a temporal imperative of “frantic automation.”¹⁸

Much the same could be said of the general perception of the occupation movement, since here too, the temporal character involved seems to have eluded both popular and theoretical perception. While initially Zuccotti Park was heralded as the sole, central spatial location, within a matter of weeks, the multiplying effect of immediate communication

combined with an open-ended timeframe that expanded the movement to more than 2,000 occupations worldwide.

Yet, as with the privileging of print-based theory journals by *The Chronicle* and conventional understanding of “Wall Street,” it was not time but space that was most widely reflected upon, as though it were without any question at all, the central influencing factor. Perhaps then, digital culture moves too “fast” in some ways and too “slow” in other ways, for most observers to grasp the complexity of the moment in which we live.

There is no doubt, of course, that momentum seemed to slow considerably in 2012. But we should not forget the lesson, for instance, of *The Washington Post’s* mid-November contention that “OWS is over.” Within one day, that claim proved at least as foolish as premature claims about the death of theory journals no doubt will, once the emergent media landscape becomes more consolidated.

On “N17,” the afternoon following the proclamation that the movement’s moment had passed, tens of thousands poured into the streets of NYC, thereby commemorating the two-month anniversary of the occupation. Just a few weeks afterward on “D12,” the blockade of West Coast ports from Seattle to Long Beach proceeded to “Shutdown Wall Street on the Waterfront.” And, after a cold-weather hiatus, the NYPD response to M17 (the six-month anniversary of OWS in May 2012) regvanized the movement once again, however, briefly.

While the aura of public space and print media alike are still celebrated phenomenologically, in the terms of “lived experience,” both have always been as temporally conditioned as the occupation of Zuccotti Park proved to be. And although theoretical engagements with the Internet have long lamented the passing of the periodic rhythms of print, since they too, were supposed to support a (non-interactive) collective reception that would thereby enable a more participatory democracy, the decline of delayed theorizing should not immediately suggest the opposite.¹⁹

To the contrary, while the distributed networks from which thought assembles and into which it disperses are now as irreducible to “universal” intellectuals as movements are to “universal” leaders, what follows may well enable a more radical, complex and whole democracy, one predicated upon what Marx described as “the conditions of the process of social life itself . . . under the control of the general intellect.”²⁰

The live temporality of the current moment may tend toward reflex over reflection, conventional answers to conventional questions, but that

is not its only possible outcome. Indeed, the becoming-resonant of the theorizing process itself may actually enhance the simultaneous, ubiquitous collective reception championed by the adherents of print media.

2.2 Reflection and time: after criticality and creativity

Naysayers may be correct in one respect. Perhaps the emergent temporality today is indeed one in which the staying power of events such as the occupation movement is interrupted by much shorter timeframes or “lifespans” than what previously prevailed: this could, to some extent, threaten the prospects for systemic change. And perhaps it should be conceded to Virilio, Grusin and Bolter that while the culture of immediacy can be remediated theoretically, at present the desire for such interventions is only palpable in the midst of specific kinds of events.

Otherwise, as Virilio asserts, the only true immediacy in our time is that of the temporal, not the perceptual: while it might be immediate for him in the sense of a temporality devoid of interval it is not so in the sense of a temporality devoid of frame. For Virilio, immediacy is itself the frame. As such, contemporary tempo- and technoculture produces an assemblage in which the temporally immediate enters into a zone of indistinction with the perceptually immediate.

This is the reason immediacy is so culturally and politically powerful in its effects: only the actual appears, while the virtual that rendered it possible becomes increasingly indiscernible. It is perhaps the most imperceptible of frames, since in collapsing the basic properties of time and space, it obfuscates the conditions for perception. In order for today’s tempo- and technoculture to become emancipatory, would-be actors would have to question the initial conceptualization phase of devices and interfaces, interrogating their possible effects as well as the discourses that might legitimate them.

While Virilio’s writings at times may sound like a reductive juxtaposition of speed vs. slowness, the critical disposition he favors is, like that of Deleuze, primarily concerned with the qualitative rather than quantitative and the virtual rather than the actual. In other words, what Virilio advocates is working toward either the total reconceptualization of existing devices and interfaces or developing different technologies altogether, if that is what an interrogation of their built-in presuppositions and effects yields.

Given that it may be precisely the immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity of digital technologies that today found a politics of reflex rather than reflection, engaging this question is necessary for anyone who would advocate a politics at all, including a radical democratic politics. And it is here, therefore, that the question of thought emerges as a central thematic.

The challenge for thinking in a time of immediate, simultaneous and ubiquitous temporality is for thought to become untimely, to introduce a kairopolitical, virtual rhythm that is out of step, in one way or another, with the actual rhythm that prevails. The question this poses for the live theory after the occupation movement then is twofold.

First, what kinds of moves were required of thought to introduce perspective into what was presented as objective (or, in Deleuze's terms, to "virtualize the actual"), and second, how had immediacy already impacted today's cultural and political thinking, prior to much critical, creative thinking about thinking itself?

The live theory that emerged along with the occupation movement was arguably just this. It was not merely thought about the democratic or authoritarian potential of the technologies that enable a political economy such as our own, it was also thought about thought, as conditioned by its context.

While Virilio's argument is formidable, it too requires reflection: there is plenty of evidence, for instance, of the triumph of reflex over reflection within digital media, as he suggests. But there are also counterexamples such as the rhizomatic, resonant dimension of live theory considered above: the emergence of a "general intellect."

Indeed, upon considering its interventions, some might say that far from entering into permanent decline, cultural and political thought has undergone a sort of renaissance, albeit a largely unrecognized one. The emergence and spread of online venues, whether group or individual journals or blogs, Twitters or Tumblrs, has rendered previously discrete, privatized processes through which theory once coalesced and dispersed ubiquitous and simultaneous.

Further, the intensification of telepresence within social media has remade the process of book writing, for instance, such that it now bears little resemblance to the classic, Proustian image of the lone, individual genius locked away in a hovel without contact. To the contrary, the telepresent tendency toward "thinking out loud" enables a new, dialogically oriented reinvention of what had previously been centered upon the

printing press: the major difference now is that composition occurs in a telepresent, non-periodic state of continuous interactivity with others.

It is not then that instantaneous tempo- and technoculture is neutral and open to the masses any more than it is that it is determined and closed off from them. Rather, such easy claims on both sides are equally products of modern technological nihilism, since they seek to delimit or reduce thinking about immediacy's effects upon thinking to a one-dimensional, utopian or dystopian frame.

It is worth considering that etymologically the term "reflex" that Virilio so disdains first emerged in 14th-century Latin, referring then to the reflection of light. At that time, the term signified "to refract" or "to deflect." Several centuries later, reflex also began to refer to the automatisms such as involuntary nerve stimulation that signified by references to an unthinking "kneejerk liberalism" or "kneejerk conservatism."

As might be expected, however, the term "reflection" Virilio champions bears the same etymology derived from *reflexionem*, while also retaining the 17th-century Latin root *reflectere*: "turning back one's thought on some subject."²¹ Thus, reflection is not a simple concept: it draws upon an assemblage of meanings, including refraction, automatism and thinking at once.

Reflex is not only the contrary of reflection; it is in some respects, immanent to it. While immediacy can encourage, for instance, rapid-fire publication in a state of "sheer thoughtlessness" (Arendt), it can also be subjected to a more critically oriented rhythm of selective posting, considered engagement, collaborative production and collective interaction.²²

Virilio's image of Jacob wrestling with the angels prior to affirming positive belief is useful here insofar as far from indicating a one-dimensional understanding of the relationship between thought and action, questioning the existing presuppositions enables an alternate form of now-time from that which is presently ascendant.²³ That this process is no longer reducible to the isolated academic, laboring away in an office separated from fellow academics, activists, family or peers means that turning back one's thought on a subject is something that is often done in dialogue with hundreds of people whom one knows or has known over the course of a lifetime, on Facebook, for instance.

In Deleuze's consideration of radical thinking, the aim is neither purely negative nor purely positive in any simple sense, but instead "plac[ing] the negative at the service of the power of affirming," which he

describes as working toward the “Dionysian Yes.”²⁴ The nihilism of the former sense is that, while it might wrestle with the angels, it never goes beyond this to creative affirmation, thereby leaving the way open to the appropriation of the reversal, by inegalitarian forces. As such, it is what Deleuze describes as:

The yes of the ass... [that which] says yes to everything which is no... that puts up with nihilism [and] continues to serve the power of denying.²⁵

In other words, while it is positive, it is positive only in the sense that logical positivism, for instance, is positive. It has not encountered the negative and therefore offers only a depotentialized imitation of affirmation, the affirmation only of the possible, not the virtual.

For Deleuze and Guattari, this is one of the central questions of radical theory today, particularly of the sort that live theory has exemplified, at its highest moments. As they put it in *What Is Philosophy?*

We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present.²⁶

Rather than communicating conventional, preexisting thoughts, the challenge for theory today is to interrupt communication, to create “interference” or “circuit-breakers” that disrupt conventional thinking, creating possibilities for new modes of perception, affection and action. At the same time, Deleuze, like Virilio, has asserted that, as he sees it, thought is embodied not only in academic philosophy or theory journals, but also in popular visual art forms such as cinema, photography and painting, amongst others.

The remainder of this chapter then will consider one of the many emergent domains of live theory, in Deleuze’s sense: the popular thought-form of *détournememes*. In beginning to understand the role of *détournememes* in the occupation movement, it might be worthwhile to contrast their development to the journalsphere and social media-based theorizing already considered.

While the venues considered above were rhizomatic in terms of production, they were still centered around “individual” theorists identified by the tagline attached to books and essays or blog posts, shares and comments, on Facebook and Twitter. With *détournememes*, in contrast, theory moves not only somewhat beyond individuated authors, as in the cases considered above, but entirely beyond them into a world of anonymous, property-less, transindividual creation.

Indeed, according to media theorist Patrick Davison, it is this dimension more than any other that inspires their viral, participatory character. Rather than being indebted primarily to the corporate-controlled “restricted web,” *détournememes* derive from the “unrestricted web,” that which is anonymous. As a result, they invite innovation beyond personal identification, and just as importantly, beyond careerist reward: they are in short, a form of what Guy Debord once called “literary communism.”²⁷

In this specific respect then the occupation movement can be understood as having taken a step beyond the so-called Facebook revolutions and Twitter revolutions, as social media-organized protests were referred to, from the Iranian Uprising of 2009 through the Egyptian Revolution and greater Arab Spring of 2011. From the centrality of Anonymous to the rise of *détournememes*, the immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity of the unrestricted web arguably played a more central role in the occupation movement than any previously.

Indeed, late 2011 was a telling moment for such a shift away from the central nodes of the existing social media, given what some economists described as the bursting social media bubble, which unfolded at the same time.²⁸ Ultimately then the lens of *détournememes* might help one to grasp a sense of what distinguishes today’s live theory from the periodic theory of the past.

Whether in para-academic, quasi-individuated social media form or in the form of the non-academic, transindividual unrestricted web, the centrality of identifiable, individual theorists has become less and less of a concern. But this has not necessarily equated to a decline of theory: indeed, in the condition of immediacy, thought itself has often taken center stage.

One result of this, of course, is that even those activist thinkers who are not professionally aligned with academia but who nevertheless posit themselves as central intellectual figures for social movements find themselves decentered in new ways. Consider, for instance, the case of Kalle Lasn and *Adbusters*. When the occupation movement started to pick up steam, much of the mainstream media focused on a search for origins.

While some were insightful enough to discern the great contribution of the Iranian Uprising, the Arab Spring, the Wisconsin protests and similar movements, many settled for Lasn himself as the central, originating figure. Indeed, after the many successes enjoyed by the

occupation movement, his person as well as his central publishing organ were brought into the spotlight as never before, cited in a range of media outlets as the movement's primary source.

Yet, while *Adbusters* were indeed the ones who put forth the original call to action, such historicist appeals to individual foundations do not hold up as they once did. Not only because a range of events provided additional, more fundamental conditions of possibility for the movement, but because the immediacy of the increasingly rhizomatic, resonant culture we live in destabilizes such claims.

Beyond the figure of Lasn himself, one need look no further than the primary activity to which *Adbusters* has been dedicated since its founding, in order to sense this. The Situationist practice of *détournement* was, of course, the central theoretical inspiration upon which the project was built, as Lasn has repeatedly stated. Rather than using that term, however, *Adbusters* renarrated it as “subvertising,” or the “subversive” restructuring and reinflection of corporate capitalist advertisements and related images.²⁹

The difference several decades onward is that just as theory is no longer monopolized by “academic rock stars,” neither is this popularized *détournement* the reserve of design school graduates or well-funded institutions. Along with the increasing ubiquity of visual manipulation software, the varied foci of meme-centered webpages, blogs and tweets, as well as the efforts of a multitude of people across multiple digital media nodes, the necessary productive as well as distributive processes have been largely horizontalized.

While most of what has resulted does not amount to subvertising in *Adbusters'* sense, all of those that we are concerned with here represent variants on the Situationist concept of *détournement*, “turning expressions of the capitalist system against itself.”³⁰ Indeed, despite *Adbusters'* initial impact on the occupation movement, not to mention claims of having initiated a “meme war,” their subvertisements rarely “go viral” in the decentered, rhizomatic immediacy of today's social media and post-social media networks.

More often than not, they remain locked within the same print capitalist mediums, and therefore, rhythms, of the periodic theory considered above. Perhaps then, rather than the early 2010s constituting the high point of subvertising, it may be something more analogous to the transformations in academic theory that we are witnessing: the *decline* of print-based subvertising and the rise of *détournememes* as live theory.

Détournememes, as defined here, are as irreducible to *Adbusters'* subvertisements as they are to their often nihilistic “meme” counterparts, at least in the form generally found on 4Chan or Reddit. Rather, they constitute a consciously political take on the aesthetic choices that early 21st-century slang describes as “meta,” turning expressions of mass culture against itself, in order to create a new, networked culture: a critical or even radical one.

The sprawling, variegated development of the occupations then was indicative of how this is playing out on multiple levels at once. Not only in terms of the representation of the movement online, but more broadly in the interweaving of Internet-based movements and street-based counterparts, following the Facebook and Twitter revolutions that preceded them. Just as the online movements of realtime have been marked by a groundbreaking plasticity, so too have those in real space, and in ways that leave the two domains inseparable.

After the proliferation of *détournememes* and related developments via the unrestricted web, *Adbusters'* loss of control over the aesthetic practices they popularized over the course of several decades cannot be separated from Lasn's inability to conclude the street-based actions he helped mobilize. Indeed, despite the “tactical briefing” he released on November 14, 2011 calling for the occupations to consider packing up and moving on, the continuing unfolding of the movement for several months afterward demonstrated that memes, because they are based upon more than a single origin, are unruly things, even if they need not be nihilistic.

Just as the countless variations on, for instance, the “pepper-spray cop” meme proved susceptible to a seemingly endless host of further alterations, so too did the character of the occupation as a whole, according to multiple temperaments. Additional captions, alternate *mise-en-scènes* and other elements were added to widely shared imagery with little less effort than breakaway groups opting to occupy vacant buildings, abandoned schools and other spaces themselves multiplied the content of the occupation movement.

And, just as the original image utilized in a *détournememe* can be located through online image-matching technologies so that it can then be remade differently, so too were the origin stories of the occupation movement plasticized, to encourage newly emergent politics. If the immediacy of the unrestricted web means that origins cannot be reduced to a single person, place or thing, this is also the case with the aftermath of the occupation movement, the period in which we now exist.

While the groundswell died down by 2012, what it started leaves open potentialities that can still be taken up, just as the *altermondialisation* movement did for the occupation movement. What is different in today's post-social media culture of immediacy is that while the lifespan of an uprising may be shorter than in the past, the interval between events may be shortening as well, thereby producing a more continuous form of resistance. The decline of individual theorists within academia then is not entirely unlike the decline of individual leaders within activism, or the declines of beginnings and ends.

While there are certainly costs involved in such a shift, one benefit is the rise of a movement that is more collective, more diverse and more democratic than much of what has been seen before. The overall challenge today is much like the challenge of *détournement*: to discover how to begin from the current, complex and contradictory state of affairs, and to then recombine various elements of it, so as to create new situations that will introduce new conditions of possibility that will then in turn enable a more emancipatory political culture.

Perhaps by returning to the original theory of *détournement*, we might discover what this means both for live theory in all of its forms as well as for the movements with which it has been and might again become engaged. Amongst Lasn's stated inspiration in the Situationists, Debord was the central thinker of the concept of *détournement*. In his 1954 broadside "A User's Guide to *Détournement*" (co-authored with Gil Wolman), the central task presented is that of removing art from its specialized, individually defined position in the bourgeois order of the time, to destroy the cult of "artistic genius."³¹

By mobilizing the positive dimension of the shift in productive forces of his time, Debord felt that what would be unleashed would amount to a political aesthetic of "extremist innovation."³² To get there, however, it would become "necessary to eliminate all remnants of the notion of personal property...[such that] any elements, no matter where they are taken from, can be used to make new combinations."³³ Rather than a bourgeois culture of "citations" (a term which Debord himself placed in scare quotes), revolutionary *détournement* would "express our indifference toward a meaningless and forgotten original, and concern itself with rendering a certain sublimity."³⁴

Indeed, Debord, like Walter Benjamin, held that far from the rarified world of high art, it was actually in the domain of advertising that this sensibility could already be observed.³⁵ There, in the midst of capitalist

productive practice at its purest, one could detect the seeds of bourgeois society already in decay, providing the conditions of possibility for “an ease of production far surpassing in quantity, variety and quality the automatic writing that has bored us for so long.”³⁶

This literary, or perhaps, aesthetic communism, would rely upon the provision by the new productive forces of preexisting materials in a much more accessible, participatory manner than those created from scratch. As a result, a limitless number of actors could for the first time take part in the *détournement* process. Where Debord suggested, for instance, altering D.W. Griffith’s *Birth of a Nation* by adding a divergent, critically oriented audio track, contemporary meme culture arguably does much the same.

Particularly in the form of *détournememes*, meme culture withdraws poignant images from popular circulation, recaptioning them so as to produce what Benjamin dubbed the “shock effect,” that which “cannot be fixed on,” in the manner of a painting, but which is instead subject to continuous variation.³⁷ What the immediacy of the occupation movement contributed not only through such processes, but also through its new foundation in the unrestricted web was something along the lines of what Debord called in the same essay *ultra-détournement*, a form of *détournement* that reaches such a degree of permeation that it becomes a central aspect of everyday life.³⁸

Indeed, he even argues that this was what was ultimately sought by Situationism as a whole, moving “to the stage of constructing situations,” a period in which “everyone will be free to detourn entire situations by deliberately changing this or that determinant condition of them.”³⁹ Arguably, this is what began to emerge within the occupation movement at its high point in late 2011: the emergent digital culture that had given rise to youth subcultures ironically drawing upon a pastiche of influences, to recombine them in unconventional ways, finally overcame the anti-activist sensibility of the G.W. Bush era and began to put the “new aesthetic,” as some referred to it, to work in everyday life.⁴⁰

However, in what sense might the nihilistic dimensions of meme culture, those that merely reproduce conventional habits of thought, be distinguished from those which enable a shock effect? Consider, for example, Agamben’s posthumous rejoinder to Debord, in which he asserted that what distinguishes *détournement* more than anything else is the manner in which it renders the relation of reality and possibility mobile, countering the static facticity deployed by “the media.”⁴¹

While for Agamben, “the media” referred to the mass media broadcast platforms of television, radio, newspapers and the like which were prevalent at the time of writing, perhaps there is also a manner in which network culture can also form an example of “the media,” a form that *détournememes* help to counter-effectuate. If this were the case, we might consider giving *détournememes* the place of privilege that both Debord and Deleuze afforded to the cinema, despite operating on a “lowbrow” popular cultural level.

As Agamben puts it:

Cinema does the opposite of the media. What is always given in the media is the fact, what was, without its possibility, its power: we are given a fact before which we are powerless. The media prefer a citizen who is indignant, but powerless. That’s exactly the goal of the TV news. It’s the bad form of memory, the kind of memory that produces the man of resentment. By placing repetition at the center of his compositional technique, Debord makes what he shows us possible again, or rather he opens up a zone of undecidability between the real and the possible. When he shows an excerpt of a TV news broadcast, the force of the repetition is to cease being an accomplished fact and to become possible again, so to speak. You ask, ‘How was that possible?’—first reaction—but at the same time you understand that yes, everything is possible.⁴²

This, of course, is also the central task of theory, of which today’s live theory practices, such as *détournememes*, prove no exception. What it seeks to extract is the particular forms of a medium such as film or memes from the conventional image of “the media” in order to assert what remains unstated within the conventional form.

In other words, insofar as one of their central qualities is that of bringing together timeliness and untimeliness, *détournememes* serve to counter-effectuate the event kairopolitically, in much the same manner as theory. Thus, one of the most important insights to take from Agamben here is that for all his critique of the spectacle, the most celebrated figure of Situationism used spectacular means to oppose it, and commendably so. Rather than interpreting this practice as a simple contradiction, he affirmed the zone of indistinction between reality and possibility, the zone that is *détournement*, or “turning expressions of the capitalist system against itself.”

As such, Debord himself understood the kairopolitical dimension of meaning even in spectacular, mass images, at least when exposed to critical perception, and potentially even, without the assistance of additional

alterations. Indeed, from production to distribution to commentary to redeployment, it is clear that social media repetitions never cease.

In the highest moments, even if they may be few at present, they are repeated not as the same, but as the different, and potentially, as the cinematic: the different *ad infinitum*. Ultimately, what is needed today in the epoch of immediacy is not a static, one-off *détournement* of “the media,” but the unending *détournement* of *détournements*, the resituating of traces so as to construct a multiplicity of new situations, the movement of the situation.

In 2011, unlike the previous decade, one no longer needed to rely on print-based institutions such as *Adbusters* to link reality and the possibility of production and distribution. Perhaps then, the remarkable virality and plasticity of the pepper-spray cop *détournememe* might serve as a harbinger of what today is in the offing. Just as with cinema in Debord’s time and the occupation movement in more recent times, the unrestricted web constitutes a medium within which the much-maligned spectators might recognize the spectator-creators they always were, as they replasticize the dichotomy of actuality and possibility into one of actuality and virtuality.

Rather than simple reversals, the life of the mind is best retained in a temporality of the live when a critical and creative affirmation is introduced into what is presented as objective, particularly when combined with advocacy of potential alternatives. Reversals of existing values, however, are not enough if one does not seek to merely encourage the nihilism and inegalitarianism of capitalism in instantaneous form. Rather, although one must pass through negation, the next step of subordinating the negative to the affirmation of something else must also be undertaken, without ever giving into the illusion of having arrived at a final conclusion.

What occupy theory did in the journalsphere, social media fora and *détournememes* did in other realms: they provided the contours of a non-periodic, live theory, one appropriate to the temporality of constant capitalism and realtime resistance alike, without being subordinated to one or the other. Rather than accepting the occupation movement as a static object composed of purely negative or positive qualities, live theory intervenes in the immobilization of such movements in the first place. In the case of the former, it questions the nihilist negativity of opposing the Wall Street system without suggesting an alternative, while in the latter it interrogates the nihilist positivity of any alternative whatever, without considering past lineages or future effects.

This understanding of live theory as creative rather than negative or positive can also be understood in relation to the temporality of the street-based resistance. As we will see in Chapter 4, whereas a general spatial strategy was introduced by *Adbusters* and other groups around the New York Stock Exchange initially, it wasn't long before a temporal tactics displaced it with one in which differently situated perceptions gave rise to different affections and new, more innovative actions. Only once a dialogical copresence emerged between the various elements could these affections be altered, thereby giving rise to new perceptions, followed by new affections and new actions.

While this collectivity can also produce the sheer thoughtlessness Arendt foregrounds, the emergence of a transindividual counter-temporality also enables at least the potential emergence of a living thought. In contrast to a being-toward-death that enables action only out of anxiety, what this enables is a becoming-toward-life, a creative affirmation that has placed the negative at its service, so as to give birth to new times, times that diverge from those currently ascendant. As Elizabeth Young-Bruehl emphasized in summary of Arendt, "temporality, far from having to be overcome for man to be, is the source of his possibility for action in which his being is intensified."⁴³

Notes

- 1 Header to the online comments section (discussed below).
- 2 See J. Adams, "On the Inseparability of High Theory and Low Theory: A Critical Review of David Graeber's 'Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology'" *Greenpepper Magazine* 1:2 (2004). Available at <http://flag.blackened.net/forums/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=71052>
- 3 Virilio specifically emphasizes Arendt's observation that the biblical injunction "thou shalt not kill" was reversed in this way by Hitler. The attempts by Nietzsche and Marx to simply reverse Plato and Hegel, for Arendt, do not help us to produce new thought, but rather to reaffirm the validity of Plato and Hegel. The result, Arendt says, is that "the moment they are applied to the realm of human affairs, it is as though they had never gone through the thinking process." The reason is that it produces a logic of negation, which is important to consider while in the early stage of the process of thinking, but only so long as thinking continues and does not come to an end. For Arendt, this simple reversal emerges from "the desire to find results that would make further thinking unnecessary." To the contrary, her view, and presumably Virilio's, was that "practically, thinking means that

- each time you are confronted with a new difficulty in life you have to make up your mind anew." H. Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1978), 176.
- 4 R. Grusin and J. Bolter, "Remediation" *Configurations* 4:3 (1996), 312.
 - 5 P. Virilio, *The Information Bomb* (London: Verso, 2005), 122.
 - 6 Gilles Deleuze from *A to Z*, Film, Directed by P. Boutang (2012).
 - 7 B. Jordan, *Occupy Tactics: Violence and Legitimacy in the Occupation Movement and Beyond: A Debate between Chris Hedges and the CrimethInc Ex-Workers Collective on Tactics & Strategy, Reform & Revolution*, Vimeo. Video. November 2012. Web. Accessed June 9, 2013.
 - 8 M. Blanchot, cited in B. Stiegler, Ed. *Technics and Time I: The Fault of Epimetheus*, Vol. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 1.
 - 9 See, for instance, S. Shaviro blog entries on *The Pinocchio Theory*, "Copyright Matters" (Available at <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=605>), "Copyright, Again" (Available at <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=690>), "Work for Hire" (Available at <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=1023>) and "Work for Hire Update" (Available at <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=1023>).
 - 10 Ibid.
 - 11 J. Williams, "The Brief, Wondrous Life of the Theory Journal" *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 16, 2011.
 - 12 C. Malabou, "Addiction and Grace: Preface," in F. Ravaissou, Ed. *Of Habit* (London: Continuum, 2008), vii.
 - 13 Blanchot, in Stiegler's *Technics and Time I*.
 - 14 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 457.
 - 15 B. Keim, "Nanosecond Trading Could Make Markets Go Haywire" *Wired*. February 16, 2012.
 - 16 Virilio, *The Information Bomb*, 93.
 - 17 Ibid.
 - 18 Ibid., 94.
 - 19 W. Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2008), 36.
 - 20 K. Marx, *Grundrisse* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 706.
 - 21 See entries for "reflect" and "reflex" *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Available at <http://www.etymonline.com/>
 - 22 H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (London: Penguin, 2006), 287.
 - 23 S. Lotringer and P. Virilio, *The Accident of Art* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2005), 79.
 - 24 G. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 185.
 - 25 Ibid.
 - 26 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (London: Verso, 1994), 108.

- 27 G. Debord, "A User's Guide to Detournement." Available at <http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/detourn.htm>
- 28 See, for example, E. Kolawole, "The Groupon IPO's Delayed: Wither the Social Media Bubble?" *Washington Post*, September 7, 2011, and C. Nerney, "Air Coming out of Social Media IPO Bubble" *IT World*, September 27, 2011. Available at <http://www.itworld.com/software/207411/air-coming-out-social-media-ipo-bubble>.
- 29 M. Kono, "From Advertising to Subvertising" *Adbusters*, Winter (1994).
- 30 D. Holt, *Cultural Strategy: Using Innovative Ideologies to Build Breakthrough Brands* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 252.
- 31 Debord, "A User's Guide to Detournement".
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 As Walter Benjamin puts it: "What, in the end, makes advertisements so superior to criticism? Not what the moving neon red sign says—but the fiery pool reflecting it in the asphalt." Excerpt from Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, 174.
- 36 Debord, "A User's Guide to Detournement."
- 37 Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, 53.
- 38 Debord, "A User's Guide to Detournement."
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 "People think of this as the iconic hipster nexus, but one of the cool things of Occupy Wall Street is repurposing places for political purposes like this," said Corey, who started the general assembly 45 minutes late and asked that we didn't use his last name. Welcoming the hipsters, the ex-hipsters and everybody else, he declared, "I think hipsterdom is dead. I think Occupy marks the end of it." A. Clark, "Occupy Williamsburg Welcomes the End of the Hipster" *The Atlantic Wire*, December 14, 2011. Available at <http://www.theatlanticwire.com/national/2011/12/occupy-williamsburg-welcomes-end-hipster/46163/>). The "new aesthetic" is described in I. Bogost, "The New Aesthetic Needs to Get Weirder" *The Atlantic*, April 13, 2012. In terms of theory, consider the remarks of Theodor Adorno on irony and pastiche: "Irony used to say: such it claims to be, but such it is; today, however, the world, even in its most radical lie, falls back on the argument that things are like this, a simple finding which coincides, for it, with the good. There is not a crevice in the cliff of the established order into which the ironist might hook a fingernail. Crashing down, he is pursued by the mocking laughter of the insidious object that disempowered him. The gesture of the unthinking that's-how-it-is is the exact means by which the world dispatches each of its victims, and the transcendental agreement inherent in irony becomes ridiculous in face of the real unanimity of those it ought to attack." T. Adorno, *Minima Moralia* (London: Verso, 2005), 211.

- 41 G. Agamben, "Difference and Repetition: On Guy Debord's Films," in T. McDonough, Ed. *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents* (Boston: MIT Press, 2004), 315.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 E. Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt: For Love of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 495.

3

Control-Time: Immediacy and Constant Capitalism

Abstract: *Chapter 3 engages the character of contemporary control by articulating the concept of “constant capitalism,” the emergent mode of production in the early 21st century. In short, the increasing prevalence of immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity force Marx’s dichotomy of constant capital and variable capital into a zone of indistinction, such that distinctions between worktime and freetime hold together no more well than that which once separated technology from humanity rhetorically. The chapter focuses on the process through which constant capitalism, tempo- and technocultural immediacy and neoliberal economics has given rise to a new form of financial dictatorship embodied most clearly in Michigan’s Emergency Financial Manager laws.*

Keywords: Occupy, Virilio, Deleuze Marx, capitalism, Detroit, Emergency Financial Manager

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To the people who want to protest, I say unless you come here with a leprechaun and a pot of gold in your arm, what are you adding to the process? This is serious business...I'm dealing with the facts and that's what's going to drive decision-making. Opinions and elbows everybody's got. I'm free. I'm not a politician.

—K. Orr, Emergency Financial Manager, City of Detroit (2013)

The decline of [the] State of civil law is as evident today as is that of the metropolis...[in] the devastation of the grand urban centers such as Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland and St. Louis, cities now discredited as centers of American industrial regions...[in] economic deregulation—the favored position of American new economists...[in] the end of the principles of territorial assembly and the law of the city...[in] the end of the unity of place of the old political theater of the City and its imminent replacement by a unity of time.

P. Virilio, *Lost Dimension* (1984)

As suggested in Chapter 2, whether in academic or popular form, the thought-time nexus is no more unidimensional under immediacy than under periodicity. While techno-utopians assume a deepening of democracy and the extension of social justice as the likely outcome of post-digital political development (as prior hierarchies horizontalize), critical thought is often diminished in the process, since it is perceived as out of step with immediacy and, as we see in this chapter, efficiency.

Although more creative approaches can circumvent some of the worst effects, Virilio is correct that more often than not, reflex prevails over reflection such that the actual obscures the virtual and alternative interpretations of political economic and cultural conditions become unthinkable, subordinated to an increasingly neoliberal habitus.

Which brings us to the subject of this chapter, the control-time nexus. In contrast with the centuries-long print capitalist era from which it emerged, today Marx's distinction between "Constant Capital and Variable Capital" (*Capital Vol. I*) has itself been remediated. The dead labor of productive technology and the living labor of productive bodies have entered into a higher-level convergence, such that an increasingly pervasive technoculture is rendered capable of producing value in work-time and freetime alike.

As with newspapers, magazines, books and other physical mediums, once the technological bases for production are subjected to the kairopolitics of immediacy, the demand for realtime availability overcodes previously established demand for periodic availability.

The result is that the variability of productive capital (the finitude of human being) is re-rendered as infinitude, a constant source of accumulation. Beyond social media, smartphones and related forms, the rise of a globally automated, algorithmic trading system makes this especially clear: just as the factory is no longer brick-and-mortar, so too has the stock exchange been remediated such that it no longer requires the physicality of location or bodies, in order to function.¹

As Virilio once put it, conjoining the spatiality of the British Empire to the temporality of digital empire, “the sun that never set on the empire of Charles the Fifth will never rise over the coming empire of digital time.”²

The empire of digital time, however, did not emerge from nowhere, or fully formed. It derives specifically from the assemblage of material conditions referred to here as “constant capitalism.” While today’s tempo- and technocultural disruptions break down individual and institutional boundaries, horizontalizing relations in a multiplicity of forms, the overall effect of realtime production exceeds deepening egalitarian values (an unintended outcome).

From a kairopolitical perspective, it more fundamentally intensifies tempo- and technocultural control, extending not only from worktime to freetime, but also from freetime to organized resistance, or occupied time: that which Jacques Rancière describes as “the nights of labor,” or “taking the time one has not.”³

For example, whereas political ideologies served historically as a technology through which critical thought could be vulgarized affirmatively and thereby connected to revolt, protest and other modes of contestation, today’s assemblages are subject to a becoming-miscellaneous that is derived from the remediation, convergence and overcoding of immediacy.⁴

Consider, for example, one viral image circulated widely at the high point of the occupation movement: it featured red and black, apparently anticapitalist graffiti on a cement wall, in which the children’s font-styled lettering spelled “Re-love-ution,” with “love” rendered backwards. Circulated anonymously by operatives of the Ron Paul presidential campaign, it was quickly reshared by numerous occupation-affiliated sites as well as leftist activists.

Indeed, a deluge of similarly astroturfed images were welcomed by an enthusiastic audience of occupiers, ranging from the ostensibly antiwar “Armed Chinese Troops in Texas” video meme to a libertarian rant at Zucotti Park proclaiming the urgent need to “End the Fed”: presumably, so as to enable an even more deregulated market than the one that caused the crisis to which the occupation responded.

With little to no knowledge on the part of the resharers, the efforts of the most recent movement to confront neoliberal capitalism were redeployed in the service of libertarianism, an ideology directly at odds with the occupation. Rather than turning expressions of the capitalist system against itself, as *détournement* sought kairopolitically, the virality of meme culture reterritorialized anticapitalist expressions, re-rendering them as partisans rather than opponents of neoliberalism.

Such a project becomes much easier of course, once Marxism, anarchism and other left-wing ideologies are detached from slowly acquired, periodically available printed texts: the kind historically produced, of course, by gradually acculturated writer-activists. Given the ubiquitous engagement by libertarians in occupations around the country, from which they quickly moved on to court anarchists and progressives alongside the base of the Republican Party, the advent of this “re-love-ution within the revolution” meme is significant.

Particularly so at a time in which political economic systems are transforming along with their technocultural counterparts. The dissolution of anarchism into right-wing libertarianism and of democracy into dictatorship cannot be separated from the conditions of possibility for that recoding: a tempo- and technocultural context of the kairopolitical, that in which “everything is miscellaneous.”⁵

In the following chapter, these emergent problems are engaged through the concept of constant capitalism, articulated as well as distinguished from related concepts, ranging from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s “cognitive capitalism” to Jodi Dean’s “communicative capitalism.”⁶ By recoding the non-economic attachments of anticapitalist ideologies into the neoliberal habitus itself (Paul’s aestheticized anti-imperialism and anti-militarism, for instance), the affective attachments of the occupations were redirected and revolutionary becoming was circumvented.

As used here then constant capitalism refers to the material conditions giving rise to this collapse of the constant/variable capital distinction as well as the politico-cultural effects that thereby result, from the recoding of left-wing ideologies to the biopoliticization of democratic governance.

Just as the previous chapter illuminated some of the positive potentialities of immediacy while eschewing techno-utopianism, here the encounter with its negative dimension resists any simple reversal or techno-dystopianism as well. Easy vacillations from the horizontalization of communication and the rise of new modes of creative thought to the monopolization of the decision and the instrumentalization of political ideology are not sought in a kairopolitical framework.

Rather, the central concern is a materialist encounter with a digitally restructured political economy and culture that has increasingly supplanted print capitalism with a multiplicity of democratic and authoritarian, egalitarian and hierarchical dimensions, each of which are deeply interwoven and bound up with one another.

While the emphasis on control-time here may produce the impression of techno-dystopianism, the resonance it holds with the previous chapter as well as the book as a whole should dissuade such assumptions. Just as Virilio asserts that to critique technology is not to condemn it but rather to reposition our relations with it, so too is the kairopolitical task to approach the contemporary technoculture as an art critic might: engaging each expression and genre that it produces both critically and creatively, so as to bring forth new conditions of possibility.

This chapter begins once again then not with an idealist, decontextualized theory of political economy, but with an event that provides an illustrative yet material basis for theory. In the first section, the rise of “emergency financial management” in the postindustrial, rustbelt cities of the Upper Midwest serves as a lens through which to initially consider constant capitalism and the conflict it produced with the occupation movement in the broadest sense.

This is followed in the second section with an articulation of constant capitalism: first by rethinking Marx’s philosophy of time, then by questioning the discourse of Hayek and Mises in relation to digital technoculture. The concluding section interrogates the concurrent rise of libertarianism and constant capitalism while illuminating the force of both upon the occupation movement.⁷

3.1 State and time: before democracy and dictatorship

One effect of immediacy noted in the second chapter is that traditional, hierarchical distinctions derived from previous temporalities are

increasingly leveled. Yet, distinctions between academic and popular discourse, high theory and low theory, critical and creative thinking are not the only ones impacted.

So too are distinctions which produce new hierarchies when leveled: those between left-wing and right-wing ideologies or democratic and dictatorial governance, for instance. When “time has ceased to be the number of periodical movement,” according to Deleuze, temporality becomes “time in itself, for itself,” or a “pure and empty time.”⁸

Before democracy and dictatorship then lies the materiality of time: the condition of possibility for both. What the analytic frame of immediacy provides is a presentation of this preconditionality as it exists today, in a number of different examples.

Because it is deployed in a decontextualized manner, existence as such is thereby opened to recoding, sometimes for better, but often for worse. One development this enables, for instance, is the transformation of the long-term and short-term memory of social movements as the representations of mass media reverberate through a seemingly deeply democratized social media.

This is particularly clear in terms of collective memory in the short term: as the rise and fall of movements have compressed into shorter and shorter durations, the perception and recollection of those durations have contracted further still.

Rather than recalling movements in the periodic concept of “the Sixties,” for instance, what is recalled instead are brief blips of dissidence that fail to coalesce into transformative countertemporalities despite their new capacity for simultaneity and ubiquity. Rather, they are abbreviated in terms of duration and simplified in terms of recollection.

The once-familiar concept of *zeitgeist* no longer signifies much besides what Deleuze, following Benjamin, asserted has increasingly been rendered as “pure and empty time”:⁹ in other words, the “spirit of the times” is no longer that of a decade or half decade, but the affect of an event lasting little more than a month, at least in terms of mass perception.

Whether that period is describable under such nomenclature afterward is, of course, a kairopolitical question. In other words, the recoding wrought by immediacy in the actual does not mean there can be no greater consistency in the virtual.

What it means is that the perception and recollection of consistency appear instead as non-event: compared to the Civil Rights or antiwar movements, which affectively colored “the Sixties,” since the rise of

digital technoculture, there has been no comparable, extended period that can be referenced so easily and obviously.

It is no surprise, therefore, that the occupation movement is typically recalled from within the abbreviated, simplified rhythms of immediacy. In an intensification of what George Orwell first dubbed the “memory hole,” the mass mediated, periodic forgetting of events is compounded. For instance, the occupation movement, is often understood to have occurred temporally in late 2011 and spatially in the Northeastern metropolis of New York City.

But just as “Occupy Wall Street” (OWS) itself was irreducible to this spatiality, so too should the university occupations in California two years prior and the factory occupations in Chicago three years prior suggest a temporal irreducibility.¹⁰ Indeed, the most important precursor, that of February 2011, disrupts all spatially oriented definitions, just as it does temporally oriented ones.

The 60,000-strong occupation of the Capitol Square and Capitol Building in the upper-Midwestern city of Madison differed from the events of November 2011 in that this occupation was not an event that followed the Arab Spring: rather it was the one that unfolded along with it. Yet, it was excised from the collective memory of an occupation movement that at least arguably, never quite matched its tenacity, by, for instance, actually occupying the New York Stock Exchange.

This memeification and spread of the earlier California and Chicago occupations in Madison was especially important as a precursor because as with the OWS, it was not divided spatially but conjoined in a state of immediacy, simultaneity and interactivity. Pizzas were ordered online for the occupiers from not only every state in the US, but from numerous locations in Middle Eastern countries, including most notably, Egypt.¹¹

Much as in the later occupation movements, cellphone-based livestreams from the occupied Capitol Building gained significant viewership, which was reshared on Facebook, Twitter and other social media nodes. Yet, temporally, these earlier occupations which sought to confront neo-liberal capitalism and statism alike are rarely considered in relation to the later occupations of that same year, just as spatially they are disconnected from the Arab Spring.

What is lost in the prevailing understanding then is not only the long *durée* of which movements are virtually composed, thereby preserving unrealized possibilities for future enactments, but also the primary

consequence of perceiving them as already present at a specific place and time. Namely, that from a kairopolitical perspective; it is the relational event rather than isolated event that matters most.

One of the most disturbing things that becomes perceptible when approaching the occupation movement from a kairopolitical perspective of this sort is the post-2008 convergence of democracy and dictatorship, as well as its inseparability from more immediate modes of authoritarianism in other spaces. Before democracy and dictatorship, as stated above, lies the materiality of time, the time of the decision: today's governance is not post-statist but post-democratic and immediatist, in which the "post" refers primarily to the decline of prior appearances.

Neither Hosni Mubarak's reign, which held sway for decades in Egypt prior to 2011, nor *Chrysi Avgi* (Golden Dawn), the neo-fascist party which rose to state power shortly afterward in Greece, can be separated from the neoliberal economic structures that propel them. Just as the leader of Golden Dawn Nikolaos Michaloliakos called for a "very democratic" vote on whether LGBT parades should be permitted or not, so too have the electorate in US states such as Wisconsin been called upon to support a range of explicitly authoritarian measures, precisely in the name of representative democracy.

If Governor Scott Walker was legitimately elected before the act, it is claimed, he necessarily retains the right to carry out his will after the fact, even if doing so intensifies economic inequality and state authoritarianism beyond limits preferred by the electorate as a whole, in the aftermath. The US-installed Mubarak dictatorship was overthrown as a result of radical democratic uprisings in that country, but the immediate authority he held for decades was also legitimated during that period by way of claims of representing the will of Egyptians, after seizing power.

The impetus for his overthrow then is not disconnected from that which inspired the occupation movement in the country that installed him, even if it is otherwise distinctive. In both cases, what was opposed was unilateralist decision-making from above, justified by the kairopolitical representation of the economic crisis and the supposed mandate of the people.

As protest signs as well as numerous additional expressions attest, it was this resonance that inspired Egyptian protestors to solidarity and support in the form of procuring food for the Wisconsin occupiers. As one reporter put it in *The Nation*, invoking representations of Mubarak's reign, Governor Walker was "acting as a dictator," seeking to impose his

will “without any negotiation” and “threatening to call out the National Guard.”¹²

Similar descriptions abounded at the time, from local publications such as *The Dunn County News* and *The Capital Times* to larger venues such as *Daily Kos* and *Current TV*. One Wisconsin circuit judge ruled that Governor Walker’s attempt at complicating voter ID requirements amounted to “voter suppression,”¹³ while Mitt Romney’s presidential campaign proceeded through the conclusion of early November 2012 to encourage Republican election observers to proceed as though these requirements retained the force of law, regardless of legal judgments to the contrary.¹⁴

While biopolitical governance in rustbelt states such as Wisconsin is obviously distinct from Mubarak’s national dictatorship in the formal sense, when approached from a kairopolitical perspective, in which the materiality of time precedes the decision, the resonances are much clearer. Dictatorship today is not only the direct, unimpeded rule of a single individual over a disenfranchised mass, in which the constitutional order is suspended: it is also an immediatist mode of governance in which nothing is allowed to slow down the execution of the decision. And, of course, representative democracy can be a form of this as well.

While the US system is based upon a relatively decentralized, federal system in which authority resides largely at the state and local levels, the temporal justification invoked to justify national dictatorship has often been mobilized locally or regionally in the US, particularly in the midst of economic crises. Indeed, unilateral policymaking by an alliance of authoritarian state governors is the most likely form in which something approximating national dictatorship would appear as in the US Constitutional system, as it already has in order to justify slavery in the South.¹⁵

But because an authoritarian governor like Walker can make a claim to having been legitimately elected before the act, the language of dictatorship is easily dismissed by right-wing rhetoricians. Indeed, if what is meant by this term is only the formal, definitional sense, they are correct. But this does not mean what is signified by the signifier is a stable phenomenon, across all spaces and times. This confusion derives from the growing interwovenness of authoritarian forms with formal democracy in the early 21st century.

In an earlier time, Marx’s concept of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” mobilized this rhetorical slippage in the opposite direction,

calling for what would actually have been a more democratic mode of governance than what is usually understood as democratic in the US. The Paris Commune, then, a near direct democracy without police, jails, bosses or unelected delegates, was described by Engels in *The Civil War in France* as the true form of proletarian dictatorship.

Rather than allowing individual politicians to mediate decisions separate from the electorate, in a truly Marxian democratic dictatorship, matters are decided collectively with the whole mass dictating the direction of politics and economics in as immediatist a manner as possible, much like the general assemblies made popular by the occupation movement. Therefore, in both hierarchical, “fascist” and horizontal, “democratic” dictatorship, the pure temporal form, the material condition of possibility, is that of immediacy.

Either one person rules unimpeded over the collective or all individuals rule unimpeded as the collective. Either way, the decision is unimpeded and direct. Generally, of course, it is that of transcendental *kairos* and *kronos*, not immanent *kairon* and *kronon*, but it is this that pure democracy and pure dictatorship share, the temporal relation.

Chrysi Avgi is exemplary of the former sense: the Greek neo-fascists seeking Michaloliakos’s immediatist decision-making power have taken violent, street-based and state-based measures to bring it about with as little delay as possible, to move from 18 seats in the Greek Parliament to full dictatorship. As such, the rise of *Chrysi Avgi* has been of global concern to those seeking to circumvent reactionary political currents brought forth by the crisis.

Yet, the tempo- and technocultural form within which the reporting and commentary on it has occurred is based on a reactive immediatism that facilitates neofascism. Consider the footer of one such article in the online version of the UK’s *The Independent*, which features a comment button enjoining its readers to follow their impulse to “React Now.”¹⁶

When juxtaposed to a movement such as *Chrysi Avgi* or the Tea Party, such a phrase should certainly give pause: if there is one center for reactionary political rhetoric in the contemporary media environment, it is the online comments section. As Benjamin put it, in such environments, the masses are not given the right to reorganize the property relations that produce class stratification, but the means to defend already-existing relations. What they are given, in short, is not a chance to transform their material conditions and in the process themselves, but the more truncated option, that of “a chance to express themselves.”¹⁷

If Noam Chomsky's central insight in *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* was that mainstream news outlets are controlled through the "five filters" of ownership, sourcing, funding, flak and fear, none of these have disappeared in the age of digital culture.¹⁸ Despite sometimes being understood as having been completely transformed in the wake of the Internet, all of them have in some manner or another have also been remediated and redeployed.

Ownership, of course, is still concentrated in a few hands, even if they are different hands from those of the past. Sourcing still relies upon "officials," even if these are primarily an individual network's "opinion leaders."¹⁹ Funding still flows from the greatest concentrations of privately held wealth. Flak still impacts what is published or stated, since possible negative responses from within a particular network are anticipated prior to posting. And just as anticommunism and Islamophobia served to filter mass media representations in the past and recent past, a non-specific, event-based fear affects what is posted and discussed and in what manner.

At present, comments such as those posted below online news articles serve primarily as flak: unlike meme anonymity in the case of *détournementes*, comment anonymity has not undergone such developments and thus generally serves as a venue through which reactionary perspectives are given voice. As with dictatorial decision-making, immediacy enables the circumvention of impediments to decision-making in the realm of publishing, which were previously present under periodicity. Physical letters that would have to be typed and mailed, read and retyped and only then published are replaced by a situation in which there is no editor to mediate and accept or reject commentary. The dominant perceptions of a culture then, regardless of how reactionary, inegalitarian or authoritarian they may be, are thereby given free reign to "express themselves," to "React Now."

This reactive politic is not limited to digital publication alone of course, but can also be seen in the rise of cell phone technologies, which have also increasingly normalized immediatist, emergency culture sensibilities. Sherry Turkle has observed, for instance, that the post-9/11 era was a period in which an always-on media environment was understood as a positive development, insofar as it seemed to ensure the safety and security of loved ones.²⁰

Rather than this being restricted to the macropolitical legislative or executive domains of government, spousal, parental, educational and

employment relations were all securitized through cell phone culture, subjected to an immediatist habitus in which realtime availability was increasingly not only a possibility, but also an expectation.

In a state of emergency, the simultaneity and ubiquity of immediate communication clears every impediment to interactivity. One is never truly alone, but always within the reach of everyone, from the caring parent to the impatient boss, from the concerned friend to the head of state, from the left-wing activist to the right-wing libertarian.

As will be seen below, this immediatist habitus recodes ideologies as well, reassembling their attributes in strange and deleterious formations, such as the occupation movement's contentious, yet resonant alliance between Misesian libertarians and Marxian socialists and anarchists.

Consider the case of Michigan: much like Wisconsin, here a similarly post-democratic, immediatist mode of governance emerged under Governor Rick Snyder, but with more extreme consequences, especially for low-income, minority-majority communities. Much as in Wisconsin, the policies also derived large amounts of funding from Charles and David Koch, only this time, not so much inspired by the Cato Institute, but more directly, by the Mackinac Center.²¹

Though it only provoked a minimal response from Michigan's occupation movement, Governor Snyder's immediatist authoritarianism was even more direct, replacing elected municipal governments with "emergency financial managers" (EFMs), who held unimpeded decision-making power over economic policy, not to mention all of the other affairs of the affected cities.

In this case as well, dictatorship can be understood as an effect of the ongoing quest to control the destabilizing effects of shifts brought forth by immediacy through implementing a decision-making structure based upon its formal qualities. Indeed, the legitimation of Snyder's EFMs was made in precisely these terms, since unlike the much slower governmental form of representative democracy, under the new plan "a single manager can respond to problems quickly, as meetings and board approvals are unnecessary."²²

As we will see in the next section, the origins of this development cannot be separated from an economic system mobilized by the most efficient disposal of time in the search for profits, which is in this case coupled with the historically authoritarian nature of American federalism.

The withdrawal of suffrage rights from Flint to Benton Harbor to Detroit at the beginning of the 21st century exemplifies the insights of

Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*: that, today, "the totalitarian State is not a maximum State but rather . . . the *minimum State of anarcho-capitalism*."²³

While the more common assumption today is that communism and fascism formed the totalitarian nexus of the 20th century that more enlightened 21st century liberalism avoids, Deleuze and Guattari point to Pinochet, whose Chicago Boys-inspired minimum state, anarcho-capitalism (or as we call it here, constant capitalism) served as a central inspiration for the US-backed dictatorship in Chile. As demonstrated in the example of the EFM's, this translates very well to the immediacy of authoritarian governance in the post-democratic, immediatist US, especially in minority-majority communities.

In short, what it suggests is that the fewer the elected officials, the more quickly decisions can be made: indeed, expenditures of time can be greatly reduced once election campaigns, civil deliberation, intergovernmental negotiation and other features of representative democracy no longer constitute an obstacle to decision-making. In this respect, even a "minimum state" can be authoritarian, despite the fact that those who call for "less government" frame the argument as a simple matter of expanding liberty and freedom.

Governance in such an environment is no longer slowed down by a majoritarian citizenry to which rulers are at least formally accountable, nor is to other officials with whom they are expected to share decision-making processes. Rather, governance is enabled to operate at the velocity appropriate to that of the immediacy of which it is an expression: in short, that of speed at the speed-limit, that of the instant. This is seen especially clearly, for instance, in the mass media legitimation of Flint, Michigan's EFM Michael Brown.

As it was put by *The Flint Journal*:

Some are equating Brown and his colleagues in a half-dozen other local governments in Michigan to dictators. That's harsh, but with an element of truth. With a swipe of his pen and state approval, Brown can make major changes in city spending, personnel and negotiated contracts; eliminate or combine whole city departments and even merge the entire city with its neighbors. So, yes, we can see why emergency financial managers make a lot of people uneasy. We are reassured, though, from what we've seen in Brown's first report to the state. It's almost entirely composed of ideas that should be familiar to anyone who has paid attention to city affairs for the past two or three years. No surprises, but plenty of ideas that were born

here. Nobody had the political will or the power to enact them. That's what's different now. Brown can make them happen.²⁴

That his rule was defended from critics in these terms comes as no surprise not only to anyone familiar with the concept of anarcho-capitalism, or what Virilio has called "turbo-capitalism,"²⁵ but even less so for those familiar with the most famous legitimating discourses for dictatorship of the last century, those of Nazi Germany. In short, in the name of empowering the "will to enact," governor-appointed officials are given free reign to fire the elected representatives that are the supposed hallmark of representative governance, so as to reduce their lengthy, necessarily mediated deliberations to the immediate, unimpeded decision of a single, unchallenged "decider."²⁶

Left unspoken, of course, is the neoliberal economics of efficiency and austerity that underlies it. Under constant capitalism, the rhetoric of urgency need not even be articulated, since the primacy of realtime is already presupposed. Consider the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt, who famously pointed to the same problem of representative democracy emphasized by *The Flint Journal*: that it is insufficient to deal with emergency situations, since its essence is to "permit the decision to be suspended forever in an everlasting discussion."²⁷

What is needed by the early 21st-century state is a politicized immediacy, not, of course, one of near direct democracy, as in the Marxist or anarchist tendencies of the occupation movement, but rather one of direct dictatorship, as with Walker, Mubarak, Michaloliakos, Brown and Snyder.

The state form appropriate to today's constant capitalism therefore is one that relies upon the emergent habitus that contemporary tempo- and technoculture has inculcated in order to justify an increasingly authoritarian mode of governance. Intensifying racial tensions between African-Americans and Euro-Americans appears to be quite central to its functioning, so as to justify vastly different modes of decision-making and governance for divergent populations.²⁸

While the subject matter considered here is unique to the US situation, it is worth noting Agamben's attention to the period that followed the First World War, in which he claims "military emergency...ceded its place to economic emergency."²⁹ The result was that the expansion of executive authority, although reduced in the broader, military sense during the interwar years, nevertheless remained clearly defined with

respect to economic policy. Without this retention of authority, he avers, Hitler could not have subsequently invoked Article 48, transforming the Weimar Republic into the Third Reich.³⁰

In addition to the transition from a militaristic Bush era to an economistic Obama era then, it is of particular interest that the EFM terminology was quickly changed, shortly after being enacted. Rather than “Emergency Financial Managers,” the much broader term “Emergency Managers” was deployed, confirming in a new situation the previous historical pattern of dictatorship outlined by Agamben.³¹ The development, of course, also echoes the interpretation of Virilio, Deleuze and Guattari, that state capitalism is increasingly giving way to an anarcho-capitalism, one that is totalitarian in its minimum state “anarchism.”

If fascism is essentially “capitalism in decay,” as some Marxist-Leninist thinkers held, where does this decay lead when there is no viable communist or anticapitalist opponent against which it must defend?³² Rather than reacting, as historians have argued characterized 20th-century totalitarianisms in which elites had to contend with the looming prospect of communist revolution, the absence of any such threat means that capital moves from the critical to the creative, as well.³³ It is left free to affirm whatever it dares to imagine and to thereby affirm its own, unique mode of control, one that need not reflect past forms of dictatorship.

Thus, rather than the standard triumvirate of early 20th-century fascism, Hitler (Germany), Mussolini (Italy) and Franco (Spain), a minimum state totalitarianism, such as we have considered here, might have much more in common with that of Kotoka (Ghana), al-Zaim (Syria), Mobutu (Zaire), Peron (Argentina), Armas (Guatemala), Sung-Hee (Korea), Balaguer (Dominican Republic), DeBayle (Nicaragua), Doe (Liberia), Rojas (Colombia), Suharto (Indonesia), Noriega (Panama), Marcos (Philippines) and Pinochet (Chile).

Along with libertarianism, which is perhaps its highest expression, minimum state totalitarianism is enabled to draw upon the rhetoric of liberty and freedom to claim the mantle of anti-authoritarianism that had opposed it prior to 1989 (as seen in this chapter’s epigraph from Detroit’s Emergency Manager Keyn Orr: “I’m free. I’m not a politician”). Before engaging the immediacy/ideology nexus, however, we will first consider the temporal and economic underpinning of minimal state totalitarianism: *constant capitalism*.

3.2 Capital and time: after variability and constancy

Though it is not faced with nearly as formidable an opposition as were the capitalist-allied fascists of the early 20th century, the emergent state form appropriate to constant capitalism does not emerge from an economic void, any more than it does a tempo- or technocultural one. Indeed, it is rooted in the control-time nexus that has been a central concern not only for capitalists, but also for cultural and political critics, at least since Marx argued that economics is ultimately a matter of time.³⁴

His assertion that the efficient accumulation of capital through the extraction of surplus value is the primary goal of firms in capitalist societies, rather than the expedient provision of goods and services, already suggests that ceaseless acceleration is a necessity of the first order. But, as we will see, today it is the demand for realtime accumulation and a newly immediatist economics that is the driving force of contemporary political economy.

For Marx, the reason the accumulation of time was even more primary than the accumulation of profit was that the time saved producing profit in one area of production thereby enabled more production time to be dedicated to accumulation in other areas.³⁵ As a result, the only rational course for capitalist firms to follow in such an order is the implementation of time-saving measures, such that they might work together toward the maximization of profit, which is to say, time.

In foregrounding temporality in this way, as well the extraction of surplus value as surplus time, Marx provided a temporally materialist basis for his economic theory, beyond idealist assertions promoted by liberal economists for whom time, space and other conditions of possibility are of secondary importance.³⁶ While Virilio explicitly disclaims any foundation in Marxism, his understanding of political economy is resonant with Marx's own thought, insofar as the latter asserts temporality as the central basis from which critical analysis must depart.³⁷

Indeed, in this respect in particular, Virilio may be closer to the spirit of Marx than many of the leading figures that represent themselves as "Marxist."³⁸ For this reason, Marx can be read through Virilio and Virilio through Marx as common critics of constant capitalism, even though neither opposes all forms of immediacy, per se.³⁹

While there are numerous differences between the two, perhaps the most central is Virilio's judgment that, because historical materialism was conceptualized prior to Einstein's discovery of space-time, some

Marxists were led into being “hoodwinked by the dominant ideology of a one-dimensional duration.”⁴⁰ Nevertheless, even if Virilio’s own approach is not that of historical materialism it is still a form of temporal materialism in that for him, as for his teacher Merleau-Ponty, the condition of time consolidates the perceptual field.⁴¹

In the contemporary period, however, the multidimensionality of duration has been obscured by the triumph of immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity such that for Virilio, the potentiality of a revolutionary now-time, or *kairos*, has been appropriated: it is the perpetual present, for him, that is now the primary basis for control.⁴² Over the course of the modern period and on through its late modern extension, the experience of time also underwent changes due to shifts in the general tempo- and technocultural context.

The modern state, of course, arose along with print capitalism, which itself coincided with the rise of precise chronometers and a capitalist political economy: this was followed by the enhancements of radio and television broadcasting, as well as a range of other mediums that held sway until the 1990s.⁴³ With the rise of the Internet, however, print capitalism and its analogs entered into a fundamental transition: since the turn of the 21st century, in particular, immediacy has given rise to a new mode of production that has increasingly broken down traditional oppositions between the temporal and the spatial, the virtual and the actual and the technological and the organic.

This new tempo- and technocultural order, produced in a context of deregulation and immediate communication is one in which the traditional Marxist division between constant capital and variable capital has entered into a zone of indistinction. While the extraction of surplus value is ultimately the extraction of time for Marx, in his articulation, the variable capital of living beings upon which the technologies of constant capital are dependent remain separate from the technologies themselves. Today, however, variable capital is as dependent upon constant capital as constant capital is upon variable capital.

Further, the immediacy of realtime accumulation breaks down the separation, producing an assemblage of the human and the technological. But because bodies are no longer separated from productive technology in either a practical or rhetorical sense, the human material of variable capital now contests its conditions more easily, pervasively and repeatedly compared to the recent past. Even if they have only begun to do so, the new tempo- and technocultural environment does not only

create new forms of control, but it also sets new conditions of possibility, conditions through which it might be resisted: as Homi Bhabha once put it, “the state of emergency is also always a state of *emergence*.”⁴⁴

The rise of minimum state totalitarianism, however, makes clear how fraught the emergence is. While it brought together protesting city residents and the larger occupation movement once word spread through social media, it did not in and of itself preclude the coexistence within its ranks of the economic arguments that gave rise to it.⁴⁵ Indeed, just as the January 25, 2012 edition of *The Financial Times* featured an op-ed by the economics subgroup of Occupy London in which Friedrich Hayek was lauded, Ludwig von Mises has registered a comparable influence on American occupiers through his primary interpreter Ron Paul.⁴⁶

As he was celebrated in *The Revolution: A Manifesto*, “the great free market economist von Mises... continued to swim against the tide until his death in 1973, teaching and theorizing about freedom at a time when Keynesian and other kinds of central planners dominated academic economics.”⁴⁷ It is no surprise, of course, that the resurgence of these thinkers would occur during a period in which the consequences of neoliberal economics has converged with the tempo- and technocultural intensification of immediacy. Indeed, as *The Economist* recently observed,

Economics, perhaps more than any other discipline, has taken to blogs with gusto... [as] the crisis has made the academic establishment fractious and vulnerable... this has created an opening for the less decorated members of the guild, and the truly peripheral.⁴⁸

While the Misesian discourse spread within the American occupation movement, the architects of post-democratic, immediatist governance in Michigan are closer to Occupy London in their praise of Hayek, since it derives not from the Mises Institute, but the Mackinac Center. For instance, in a piece celebrating his influence upon Internet stalwarts such as Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales, Isaac M. Morehouse of The Mackinac Center, champions Hayek’s claim that economic planning is unsupportable, since no single individual can attain sufficient knowledge about all the unique, contexts in which needs would be identified and resources allocated.⁴⁹

Rather, as the self-edited Wikipedia pages suggest, this must be left up to separate, autonomous individuals to discover, bringing dispersed knowledge together in an efficient and expedient disposal of time that

brings together many actors to share the production process between them. Under conditions of immediacy, the entries could be continuously updated as new events occur, so that the encyclopedia would never be outdated but would always be present, unlike those produced under print capitalism.

As Morehouse puts it, “most often the edition on your shelf has facts and figures that are already out of date and can never keep up with the rapidly changing world.”⁵⁰ Insofar as the Wikipedia pages are temporally superior in that they are altered in “real-time,”⁵¹ just as Facebook pages and blogs trump periodicals because they are updated “instantly,”⁵² they are said to exemplify the Hayekian claim that “millions of individuals’ localized knowledge freely pooled together is greater than any central authority could compile alone.”⁵³

Never mind, of course, that the same Mackinac Center that published Morehouse’s article on the folly of allowing economic planning by “any single individual”⁵⁴ also lobbied for Emergency Financial Management over the course of the past decade, asking in 2005, for instance, “Can Detroit’s Problems Be Corrected by an Emergency Financial Manager?”⁵⁵ with funding from the billionaire families behind Amway, Walmart and other major corporations.⁵⁶ This disjuncture within the Mackinac Center is itself significant evidence of the dissolution of the democracy/dictatorship dichotomy in the contemporary period.

While it might be argued that this constitutes a contradiction, it is more accurate that their understanding of liberty is actually giving rise to new forms of power and authority that support rather than contradict the definition they employ. The legitimation process, although it uses the rhetoric of Wikipedia and the occupation movement alike, ultimately employs the same libertarian discourse that confronts working-class and middle-class people in the realm of mortgages and student loans: that of efficiency.⁵⁷

The rise of constant capitalism in the form of financial dictatorship provides one of the clearest examples of the manner in which the immediacy of contemporary capitalism is not only about democratically empowering dispersed individuals to pool collective knowledge in digital encyclopedia entries, but is also, on an ideological level, deeply antidemocratic, and immediatist.

Where, however, does this particular paradox emerge from? To quote the title of a recent book, the new media environment is one in which *Everything Is Miscellaneous*. David Weinberger argues in that book that

digital culture is producing a “digital disorder” in which everything that was previously defined according to the hierarchies of space are now being recontextualized horizontally, according to the immediacy of time.

In the occupation movement then, rather than being strictly opposed, ideological categories that came into being in the era of print capitalism dissolve into a post-ideological, virtual space just as democracy and dictatorship dissolve into one another as well. As people use Wikipedia and other user-generated sites to define political ideologies, political terms and political networks, each of the old categories becomes subject to the influence of individual idiosyncrasy.

This is especially the case since at the same moment that acceleration has arrived at the immediate temporality that enabled the spread of the occupation movement, so has efficiency and expediency supplanted the Keynesian basis for representative democracy.

The success of the once-marginal Austrian wing amongst both right and left can certainly be attributed in part to the culture of reflex, in which rapid-fire dissemination is prioritized over the content of what is disseminated. Whereas in the past, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary political movements alike relied upon predictable, periodic intervals separating publication and organization, today, as the Mackinac Center seems to celebrate, the immediacy of communication blurs all rhythms and distinctions. In doing so, it produces a generalized miscellaneity within which political categories are opened to relativization and resignification, even while an anti-interpretive discourse reigns over what is then resignified.

Given the simultaneous legitimation of financial dictatorship, it is also no surprise that references to liberty in online discourse rarely mention democracy, but instead draw upon those attracted to vague invocations of anarchism. While original sources such as the chapter “Democracy,” in Paul’s *Liberty Defined*, reveal explicit hostility to equally enfranchised, shared decision-making, by avoiding all such references in public, online discussion, an emergent, post-democratic immediatism is enabled to reinflect terms such as liberty that would otherwise be signified differently.⁵⁸

In this manner, policy agendas such as the installation of EFMs and the Paulist/Misesian call for the deactivation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are increasingly understood as advancing rather than obstructing “liberty.”⁵⁹ It is little distance from this point to further posit that

representative democracy itself is opposed to liberty and should thus be abolished, as Paul often suggests throughout his writings. In the name of liberty, the freedom to engage in it is restricted, while a post-democratic, immediatist movement is primed for expansion.⁶⁰

To conclude this chapter recall Virilio's emphasis on Arendt's meditations on thinking, particularly her observation that the biblical injunction "thou shalt not kill" was reversed by Hitler, much as Paul reverses liberty.⁶¹ Importantly, she says, the attempts by Nietzsche and Marx to reverse Plato and Hegel do not necessarily help us to produce new thought, but rather to reaffirm, however paradoxically, the validity of Plato and Hegel. The result of these reversals, Arendt says, is that "the moment they are applied to the realm of human affairs, it is as though they had never gone through the thinking process."⁶²

The reason, as we saw in the second chapter, was a reactive logic of negation, which is important in the early stages of thinking, but only so long as thinking continues and does not come to end. For Arendt, this simple reversal not only fails to recognize how quickly power can re-narrate seemingly emancipatory discourses in its own service, but also how doing so is rooted in "the desire to find results that would make further thinking unnecessary."⁶³

To the contrary, her view and Virilio's view alike is that thought must be continuously renewed, if for no other reason than that power itself is continuously in motion, continuously producing new, unprecedented situations.⁶⁴ For the same reason, resistance must also remain agile, ready for whatever may emerge, from meaningless concession to active cooptation to post-democratic, immediatist rule.

Notes

- 1 At the beginning of Hurricane Sandy, Goldman Sachs and other Wall Street firms initially planned to continue trading online, since the physical stock exchange, as well as corporate offices, would be unavailable. See J. McCrank and C. Humer, "Wall Street Shuts Down as Hurricane Sandy Hobbles New York" *Financial Post*, December 29, 2010.
- 2 P. Virilio, *A Landscape of Events* (Boston: MIT Press, 2000), 2.
- 3 J. Rancière, *The Nights of Labor: The Worker's Dream in Nineteenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).
- 4 This historicized definition of ideology derives from A. Toscano, *Fanaticism: On the Uses of an Idea* (London: Verso, 2010). For a more productive example

- of the “vulgarization” of ideologies in the Tunisian case, see M. Foucault, *Remarks on Marx* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991).
- 5 D. Weinberger, *Everything Is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder* (New York: Holt, 2008).
 - 6 For “cognitive capitalism,” see, for instance, A. Negri, *Reflections on Empire* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 64; and for “communicative capitalism,” see J. Dean, *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).
 - 7 Another concept that might have been used is Sheldon Wolin’s “inverted totalitarianism.” But whereas Wolin’s concept describes “abstract totalizing powers, not by personal rule” (44), ours refers to a form of rule that is, in fact, the executive authority of a single individual. Further, in amending the concept of dictatorship with the term “financial,” we invoke the terms used by the State of Michigan, while conjoining them to Carl Schmitt’s assertion that dictatorship is not necessarily separate from liberalism but is, in fact, a constant potential of all modern constitutional republics. See S. Wolin, *Democracy Incorporated: Managed Democracy and the Specter of Inverted Totalitarianism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008) and C. Schmitt, *Dictatorship* (London: Polity, 2012); *Constitutional Theory* (Duke University Press, 2008); *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (MIT Press, 1988); C. Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Theory of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).
 - 8 G. Deleuze, “Synthesis and Time,” Lecture at Vincennes. March 14, 1978. Available at <http://www.webdeleuze.com/php/texte.php?cle=66&groupe=Kant&langue=2>
 - 9 For the latter’s version, see W. Benjamin, “On the Concept of History,” Thesis XIII and XIV, in W. Benjamin, Ed. *Selected Writings, Vol. 4, 1938–1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 395.
 - 10 For a similar approach, see M. Wark, “How to Occupy an Abstraction” *Verso Blog*, October 3, 2011. Available at <http://www.versobooks.com/blogs/728-mckenzie-wark-on-occupy-wall-street-how-to-occupy-an-abstraction>
 - 11 See, for instance, M. Shiner, “From Cairo to Madison, Some Pizza” *Politico*, February 20, 2011. Available at <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0211/49888.html>
 - 12 J. Nichols, “A ‘Dictator’ Governor Sets out to Cut Wages, Slash Benefits and Destroy Public Unions” *The Nation*, February 13, 2011.
 - 13 A. Harris and S. Stern, “Scott Walker’s Wisconsin Voter ID Law Violates Constitution, Judge Rules” *Bloomberg News*, March 13, 2012.
 - 14 D. Edwards, “Romney Campaign Falsely Training Wisconsin Poll Watchers That ID ‘Must Include Photo’” *The Raw Story*, October 30, 2012. Available at <http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2012/10/30/romney-campaign-falsely-training-wisc-poll-watchers-that-ids-must-include-photo/>

- 15 For an interesting argument about the statist and capitalist dimensions of this in the South, see K. Lawrence, *Marx on American Slavery* (Freedom Information Service, 1976) and R. Blackburn, Ed., *An Unfinished Revolution: Karl Marx and Abraham Lincoln* (London: Verso, 2011).
- 16 This is also the source of the first epigraph for this chapter. For an example, see L. Penny, “The Golden Dawn: A Love of Power and a Hatred of Difference on the Rise in the Cradle of Democracy” *The Independent*, October 14, 2012. Available at <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/the-golden-dawn-a-love-of-power-and-a-hatred-of-difference-on-the-rise-in-the-cradle-of-democracy-8210724.html>
- 17 This translation is from W. Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 241.
- 18 N. Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon, 1988), 1–35. For a post-digital media update, see S. Rampton, “Hast the Internet Changed the Propaganda Model?” *PR Watch*, May 22, 2007 and P. Jay and E. Herman, “‘Manufacturing Consent’ 25 Years Later” *The Real News*, April 21, 2013.
- 19 J. Hunsinger, L. Klastrup and M. Allen, Eds. *The International Handbook of Internet Research* (London: Springer, 2010), 283.
- 20 “I think that 9/11 is a very important actor in this story because I’ve interviewed so many people who they talk about the emergency of what would happen. What would happen? They won’t go to the candy store. They won’t go to the convenience store without their cell phone. Even when they have their children with them. And when I interviewed them about why that is, their thoughts go back to 9/11. And I think that 9/11 . . . Well, the 9/11 culture has—the convergence of the cell phone, this technology, with the 9/11 culture is a very, very important part of our story, and of the story of this technology. And you know, I mean I think there comes a point where, you know, are we going to live every day of our lives on high alert? And I guess I’m willing to live today not on high alert.” S. Turkle, “In Constant Digital Contact, We Feel ‘Alone Together’” *NPR*, October 18, 2012. Available at <http://m.npr.org/news/Technology/163098594>
- 21 A. Kroll, “Behind Michigan’s ‘Financial Martial Law’: Corporations and Right-Wing Billionaires” *Mother Jones*, March 23, 2011.
- 22 “Democracy and Financial Crisis Management” *Center for International Finance and Development*. January 20, 2012. Available at <http://uicifd.blogspot.com/2012/01/democracy-and-financial-crisis.html>
- 23 G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 462.
- 24 Editorial Board, “Our Voice: Flint Emergency Financial Manager’s Plans Are Familiar, His Power Is Not” *The Flint Journal*, January 22, 2012.
- 25 P. Virilio, *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 98.

- 26 The increasingly decisionist dimensions of early 21st-century liberalism became especially clear under George W. Bush, who in 2006 popularized the term “the Decider,” as a reference to himself. See E. Henry and B. Starr, “Bush: ‘Im the Decider’ on Rumsfeld” *CNN*, April 18, 2006. Available at <http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/04/18/rumsfeld/>
- 27 Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 63.
- 28 For instance, in West Michigan, as soon as the Michigan State Police announced they would cease helicopter patrols, over 21% African-American Grand Rapids, due to public complaint, they then proceeded to shift the patrols to 78% African-American Muskegon Heights. See D. Falzone, “MSP Chopper Changing Patrols in Grand Rapids” *Fox 17*, May 21, 2013. Available at <http://fox17online.com/2013/05/21/msp-chopper-will-no-longer-fly-over-grand-rapids/#axzz2U4wUDAKQ>
- 29 G. Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 13.
- 30 Indeed, throughout the late 1920s, it was invoked hundreds of times, primarily for economic reasons. *Ibid.*, 15.
- 31 Public Act 436 (2012) changed the language from “Emergency Financial Manager” to “Emergency Manager.” See the website of the *Michigan Department of Treasury*. Available at http://www.michigan.gov/treasury/0,1607,7-121-1751_51556-201116-,00.html
- 32 The quote is often attributed to Lenin online, but appears to have originated in an application of Lenin’s theory of imperialism to fascism. See R. Dutt, “The Question of Fascism and Capitalist Decay” *The Communist International*, XII.14, July 20, 1935 (New York: Worker’s Library Publishers, 1935).
- 33 See, for instance, R. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Vintage, 2005).
- 34 K. Marx, *Grundrisse: Critique of Political Economy* (London: Penguin, 1993), 173.
- 35 “The less time society requires in order to produce wheat, cattle, etc., the more time it gains for other forms of production, material or intellectual,” D. McLellan, Ed., *Marx’s Grundrisse* (London: Paladin, 1971), 87–88.
- 36 One brief, interesting secondary text on this topic is F. Berardi, “Time, Acceleration and Violence” *E-Flux* (2011). Available: <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/time-acceleration-and-violence/>:

In the very first chapter of *Capital*, Marx explains that value is time, the accumulation of time—time objectified, time that has become things, goods. It is not the time of work, of working in time, that produces value, for it matters little whether one is lazy or efficient. The important determination of value concerns the average time needed to produce a certain good. All of this is clear: value is time, capital is value, or accumulated time, and the banks store this accumulated time. Then, all of a sudden, something new happens in the relationship between time, work, and value, and something happens in technology. Work ceases to be the strong, muscular work of industrial production, and begins producing signs—products that are essentially semiotic. In order to establish the average time needed to produce a glass, one simply needs to

- understand the material labor involved in converting sand into glass, and so forth. But try to decide how much time is needed to produce an idea, a project, a style, a creation, and you find that the production process becomes semiotic, with the relationship between time, work, and value suddenly evaporating, melting into air.
- 37 Compare Virilio: “One usually says that power is tied in with wealth. In my opinion, it’s tied first and foremost with speed; wealth comes afterward,” to Marx: “economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself.” Nevertheless, his approach of disclaiming Marxism while still keeping Marx and Marxian thought within his intertextual economy is perhaps the most thoughtful way to engage him. Not by being a Marxist, but by being a thinker who uses Marx’s ideas, just as one might Plato, Nietzsche, or Hegel. See P. Virilio, *Pure War* (Brooklyn: Semiotext(e), 1997), 49 and Marx, *Grundrisse*.
- 38 The distinction of Marx and “Marxist” derives from the argument made in “The ‘Marx Legend’: or, ‘Engels, Founder of Marxism,’” in M. Rubel, Ed. *Rubel on Karl Marx: Five Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- 39 An interesting attempt to lay the groundwork for an economy of speed: rather than an economics of time, however, the main point of convergence they identify is Marx’s argument that concomitant with the increasing importance of exchange value as a factor of production, there also emerges a symmetrical increase in the importance of the means of transportation and transmission, so as to facilitate the general increase in exchange volume. See J. Armitage and P. Graham, “Dromoeconomics: Towards a Political Economy of Speed” *Parallax*, 7.1: 111–123.
- 40 P. Virilio, *Open Sky* (London: Verso, 2003), 133.
- 41 “The synthesis of horizons is essentially a temporal process, which means, not that it is subject to time, nor that it is passive in relation to time, nor that it has to prevail over time, the thing and the natural world but that it merges with the very movement whereby time passes. Through my perceptual field, with its spatial horizons, I am present to my surrounding, I co-exist with all the other landscapes which stretch out beyond it, and all these perspectives together form a single temporal wave, one of the world’s instants. Through my perceptual field with its temporal horizons I am present to my present, to all the preceding past and to a future.” M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962), 385–386.
- 42 P. Virilio, in J. Armitage, Ed. *Virilio Now* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 29: “It is the ‘kairos’ of the real-time of immediacy and ubiquity which today governs the real space of geography, thereby putting duration, temporality and human history into a profound crisis derived from the sudden emergence of interactivity.”
- 43 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

- 44 Italics in original. H. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 59.
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63 Ibid.

64 Deleuze and Guattari also note the Virilio/Arendt nexus (linking chapter 1 of *L'Insecurity du Territoire* on the “suicidal state” and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*), “although Hannah Arendt identifies Nazism and totalitarianism, she expressed this principle of Nazi domination: ‘Their idea of domination was something that no state and no mere apparatus of violence can ever achieve, but only a movement that is constantly kept in motion’... even the war, and the danger of losing the war, acted as accelerators.” Deleuze and Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus*, 538. As we will see below, recent debates in cultural and political theory around the question of “accelerationism” point to this Virilio/Arendt/Deleuze nexus, arguing that the earlier Deleuze of *Anti-Oedipus* was more nihilistic in his embrace of deterritorialization, while, following his and Guattari’s reading of Virilio and Arendt, they began to encourage a cautious deterritorialization, so as to prevent the formation of “realized nihilism” (230). Virilio and Arendt alike argue that the Nazi state was predicated on individualizing and totalizing modes of power, which isolate individuals such that their only possible collectivity is that organized by the state. This is what keeps “the movement... in motion”: that each specific subject is a permanent subject in a movement that is also permanent, that seizes power only in order to more wholly “organize as many people as possible within its framework and to set and keep them in motion.” H. Arendt, *Totalitarianism: Part Three of the Origins of Totalitarianism* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1976), 24. Arendt, in turn, derives this argument directly from *Mein Kampf*, as well as Dieter Schwarz: “National Socialism as an ideology will not abandon its struggle until... the way of life of each individual German is has been shaped by its fundamental values and these are realized every day anew” (24).

4

Conclusion: Defense-Time: Immediacy and Realtime Resistance

► **Abstract:** *Chapter 4 concerns “realtime resistance,” the manner in which immediacy has transformed protest in the early 21st century, just as it has thought and control. In particular, we consider examples from the occupation movement that demonstrate how temporally oriented, tactico-strategic forms of resistance have increasingly overtaken previous dichotomies of strategy vs. tactics. The primary task, these examples suggest, is neither that of accepting immediacy by conforming to the imperatives of accelerationism, nor that of resisting it through decelerationist refusal, but instead affirming an ethos of realtime resistance, the collective deployment of speeds such that, in Deleuze’s words, a singularity or a collectivity becomes “the master of [its] speeds.”*

Keywords: Occupy, Virilio, Deleuze, Agamben, Sun Tzu, accelerationism, strategy, tactics

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On December 3rd, we took a park and were driven out of it by riot police; that much made the news. What the media didn't report is that we re-took the park later that same evening, and the police realized that it would be senseless to attempt to clear it again, so they packed up their military weaponry and left.

L. MacGurdy, *The Portland Occupier* (2011)

Time is lived—physiologically, sociologically and politically—to the extent that it is interrupted. While perhaps, continuous time is that of chronology or history, it is not that of everyday experience. Interruptions of productivity are essential to the structuring of real time.

P. Virilio, *Lost Dimension* (1984)

In this concluding chapter, we consider two forms of “realtime resistance” as it has emerged amidst conditions of immediacy after the occupation movement. It is here, in the realm of defense-time, that the distinction of *kairos/kairon* and *kronos/kronon* becomes most visible and relevant, though this is also the case in the realms of thought-time and control-time.

First then, we consider the rise of tacticality as an externally conditioning force that seeks the creation of new *kaironic* and *krononic* conditions that might enable a situating strategy in the longer run, even in the face of *kairos* and *kronos*, the time of already-spatialized, strategic power. As used here, “realtime” refers to the real temporal conditions contemporary movements are faced with as well as those they are enabled to mobilize themselves.

Rather than proceeding in an idealist manner, realtime resistance takes stock of these conditions in order to proceed according to a temporal materialism, one that is aware of both the situatedness of contemporary movements, as well as their own situating, strategic capacity.

Second, we consider the emergence of simultaneity and ubiquity as internally compositional forces that are transforming the movement into movement as such, while movements at their best at the same time affirm movement selectively. Here, “realtime” refers neither to an accelerated nor decelerated condition of time, but rather to the immanent, collective conditioning of temporality as such, after the rise of immediacy.

Thus, whereas in the second chapter, we considered how live theory negotiates the appearance of perceptual immediacy under temporal

immediacy, here we consider how shifts in perception can enable a capacity for affection and expand the capacity for action. Similarly, while in the third chapter we engaged constant capitalism's channeling of perception and affection in order to strategically direct action, here we consider how its pluralization of affection can enhance the capacity for strategic, directional movement, kairopolitically.

While constant capitalism may be more flexible than previous assemblages of tempo- and technoculture, the forces that might resist it today are also increasingly plastic. As Michel Foucault might put it, this is because, as in other domains of power and authority, there are no temporalities of control-time without temporalities of defense-time, already folded into them.¹

Much the same could be said about the temporality of live theory, of course, since new, more plastic forms of thought also enable new, more plastic forms of resistance. To reinflect the thesis of Karl Marx, this chapter asserts that the point is not only to interpret the world, nor only to change the world, but to change how we perceive and are affected by the world in order to change how we act upon it.

4.1 Resistance and time: before *kairos* and *kronos*

We begin with the tactical dimension of realtime resistance as it has appeared within the occupation movement, a concept developed here in dialogue with Virilio's concepts of "popular defense" and "revolutionary resistance." While there are many situated examples through which realtime resistance might be understood, one of the most compelling of them occurred on the evening of December 3, 2011, during the defense of occupied Shemanski Park by Occupy Portland.

The occupiers retained control of the park space not by locking arms and going limp, nor by directly confronting the Portland Police Department (PPD) when they attempted to reclaim it, but by temporarily disappearing into the city prior to reappearing later, once the police had left. In doing so, they mobilized a kairopolitical tactic Sun Tzu refers to in *The Art of War* as "temporizing ground."²

In short, temporizing ground refers to prioritizing the occupation of time in order to more effectively occupy space. As Sun Tzu argues, if one's forces are unlikely to gain by an aggressive move due to an already-spatialized, strategic power, it is often tactically superior

to produce the appearance of a regressive move so as to advance clandestinely:

In a position of this sort, even though the enemy should offer us an attractive bait, it will be advisable not to stir forth, but rather to retreat, thus enticing the enemy in his turn; then, when part of his army has come out, we may deliver our attack with advantage.³

In this case, time no longer functions as a noun but is rendered as a verb, an immanent, material becoming. Occupiers do not engage the preexisting, transcendental order of time imposed from above by the already-spatialized, strategic power, but instead produce a new, immanent order of time from below, by way of tactical action.

In retreating at the first sign of police attack, the Portland occupiers may have superficially appeared to operate according to both the transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* of the PPD, thereby acting as though, for them, the maintenance of its jurisdictional authority were of the utmost importance.

But doing so maintains their safety amidst unfavorable temporal conditions: when the police arrive, in other words, they do so within the domain of the already-spatialized, strategic power. The “right” chronology for protestors, from that perspective, is to obey and leave—if not *de jure*, by the letter of the law, then *de facto*, by the force of law, that which preexisting, established institutions can assume to be in sway.

The process of temporizing ground, for the occupiers, is one in which, much to the contrary, they go back before the transcendental establishment of *kairos* and *kronos*, to the materiality of time that Arendt referred to as “non-time.” In doing so, *kairos* and *kronos* are countered with *kairon* and *kronon*, immanently and clandestinely. From this position, they ensure that when the police move on, they can return and occupy the park again according to their own timetable.

From the perspective of already-spatialized, strategic power Occupy Portland chose the “wrong moment” (*kairon*) and the “wrong chronology” (*kronon*), even while appearing to choose the “right moment” (*kairos*) and the “right chronology” (*kronos*). Mobilizing an alternate, immanent timetable to counter that which already orders time transcendently is a variation on Sun Tzu’s tactic of temporizing ground.

The ground of Shemanski Park, of course, was already temporized by the PPD’s spatialized, strategic power. But since this is an intrastate conflict between the state and the people within it, retemporizing the same

ground immanently is a means through which to occupy time tactically so as to begin to occupy space strategically.

The real task, of course, is to move beyond a purely tactical approach, so as to occupy on a scale far more expansive than a city park and for a duration far longer than a few months. As we will see, this is arguably what the occupation movement began to do at the height of its power, even if it was eventually suppressed.

For now, consider the occupiers' own account of the Shemanski Park event, as recounted in *The Portland Occupier*:

On December 3rd, we took a park and were driven out of it by riot police; that much made the news. What the media didn't report is that we re-took the park later that same evening, and the police realized that it would be senseless to attempt to clear it again, so they packed up their military weaponry and left... The tactical evolution that evolved relies on ... the tactical superiority of light infantry over heavy infantry, and the tactical superiority of the retreat over the advance. Heavy infantry is a group of soldiers marching in a column or a phalanx that are armed with weaponry for hand to hand, close quarters combat. Heavy infantry function as a unit, not individual soldiers. Their operational strength is dependent upon maintaining the integrity of that unit. Riot police are heavy infantry. They will always form a line and advance as a unit... [In contrast], cops firing tear gas, rubber bullets, water cannons, bean bag rounds, etc. are light infantry. They remain to the rear of the phalanx of riot cops (heavy infantry) and depend upon the riot cops maintaining a secure front and flanks to provide them a secure area of operations... [but] because of the lack of organization in a crowd of protesters, light infantry cops firing tear gas, etc. has little effect because it just serves to disorganize a group that relies upon disorganization in the first place. All it really does is disorganize the riot cops, who then resort to brutality... The lack of weaponry on the part of the protesters grants them the luxury of opposing riot cops at close quarters, or remaining at long range in a refusal to engage the heavy infantry riot police at all. They have the advantage of the retreat, they can quickly move away, or in any direction, and the heavy infantry riot cops lack the swiftness to respond.⁴

Maintaining the tactical advantage by way of temporary retreat required the occupiers' "light infantry" to maintain realtime communication, in order to facilitate the later reoccupation in an immanently *kaironic* and *krononic* state that would be capable of circumventing the PPD's "heavy infantry." While the occupiers accomplished this by marching around the city collectively and developing ad-hoc plans face-to-face (by way of vocalized, embodied speech), realtime resistance differs from similar

concepts in that it even if it is not reducible to them, it does not exclude mediated, instantaneous communication technologies such as cell phones or social media.

What defines “realtime” resistance is not the “unmediated” reality and intimacy of embodied speech and communication, but instead the coexistent temporalities of immanent rather than transcendental simultaneity and ubiquity. Occupy Portland’s temporizing tactic is important to the understanding of realtime resistance in this respect, because in employing it, occupiers reactualized the immanent traditions of popular defense and revolutionary resistance within an entirely different technocultural context, one that might otherwise have suppressed the possibility.

As in Virilio’s popular defense and revolutionary resistance, in realtime resistance there is no single condensation point for the functioning or unfolding of the event. But whereas in popular defense and revolutionary resistance, there is only a generalized, tactical *potentia*, for realtime resistance, the goal is to go beyond this unplanned approach, by building the collective capacity for a strategic *potestas*.

Whereas the conventional debate between violent and nonviolent resistance reflects the twin, transcendental imperatives of moralism and nihilism, realtime resistance diverges from both so as to privilege the kairopolitical, or the critical and creative affirmation of situated tacticality with a view toward executive strategy. What realtime resistance allows us to consider is how a *kaironic* and *krononic* approach of temporal tacticality might begin to strategically redirect immediacy through a process of immanent, collective remediation.

This is essentially where realtime resistance departs from Virilio’s concepts of popular defense and revolutionary resistance. It is well-known, of course, that Virilio is critical of militarism in general and military technology in particular, but one way to read his early writings on the topic is not as an exclusively pacifist theory of disarmament, but instead as a dynamic thinking of “transarmament,” one that is neither moralist nor nihilist, but materially situated and ethically grounded.

In this reading, popular defense and revolutionary resistance conceptualize an approach to transarmament in which modern, offense-oriented military/police institutions are countered and/or replaced by defense-oriented yet affirmative revolutionary bodies. For Virilio, this cannot occur by way of specialized weapons of destruction and communication

but only by way of “the transgression of the ordinary use of tools and the environment.”⁵

Temporally speaking, repurposing the existing tool/environment milieu could potentially displace, or at least, destabilize, the transcendental time of *kairos* and *kronos* with the immanent time of *kairon* and *kronon*. For Virilio, however, popular defense emerges from *kairos*, from the order imposed by already-spatialized, strategic power. Historically, it appears as a constitutional right after the dissolution of the ancient epoch of non-institutionalized, tactical warfare and the emergence of the modern pact of semi-colonization, between militaries and the peoples they capture.

With the rise of constant capitalism, however, semi-colonization gives way to endocolonization or total colonization, and the right to popular defense is withdrawn *de facto*, if not *de jure*. Insofar as these ancient rights are interrupted by the ascendance of constant capitalism, endocolonization becomes total war and time-space as such is remediated transcendently, according to the imperatives of strategic power.

The question this presents for the occupation movement and its analogs has generally been considered in a binary, mutually exclusive fashion. That is, whether to embrace the transcendental, spatial-strategic logic in return, or to reinvent popular defense as a nihilistic reading of pure immanence, Deleuze’s “yes of the ass,” which seeks nothing more than the temporal-tactical *kairon* and *kronon* afforded by the situation at hand.

It is *kronon* that Virilio’s popular defense and revolutionary resistance suggest, if read at the least interesting degree of resonance. Two historical forebears are cited by him in this respect: the Spanish Dos de Mayo uprising in Madrid and the Paris Commune. In the former, 30,000 occupying troops were overcome by an almost entirely unarmed, but also nearly-universal revolutionary resistance. In the case of the Paris Commune, says Virilio, what appeared was something very similar:

a socialism which refused war. Thus the conflict between the two generals...who wanted to organize a popular war, and the Communards who didn’t, who wanted it to be the people’s war, a war without strategy.⁶

It is on this basis that the socialism of the Paris Commune differed from that of the Soviet Union for Virilio, since for the Communards, “socialism [was] a continuation of peasant guerrilla warfare by other means—and not a passage to industrial war.”⁷ Despite the dissolution of Dos de

Mayo and the Paris Commune shortly afterward, Virilio may be correct that popular defense and revolutionary resistance are more likely to produce desirable outcomes than the militarism of that which is usually understood by “revolution.”

But Virilio himself retains the term within revolutionary resistance because the essence of revolution, read at its best, is that of an affirmative, tactically centered, popular defense of still-emergent, transformative institutions: institutions, for instance, such as the Paris Commune. Revolutionary resistance, then, is a situation in which:

the unity of time and space explodes... [it is] is no more than a war of time, a war of scheduled encounters. Indeed, if the Spanish fighter is no longer master of the terrain, he is still master of time. The speed and ease of his movements allow him to choose his time, to avoid being cornered into desperate combat, to harass, to surprise and finally to conquer Napoleon's army, a “gigantic automaton” slowed down by its logistical heaviness in an inhospitable country.⁸

Militarist understandings of revolution, in contrast, do not enable the revolutionary resistance fighter to “choose his time,” to displace the transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* with an immanent *kairon* and *kronon*. Indeed, in Virilio's view, militarist revolution, in the contemporary situation, would only reproduce the transcendental logic it seeks to oppose.

Since the minimal state is almost entirely stripped down to the policing function under constant capitalism, not only would casualties, imprisonment and surveillance be massively increased, but the few advantages that might otherwise emerge in the transformational process would be compromised.

This, however, is where realtime resistance diverges from Virilio's argument, since the collapse of the binary, mutually exclusive choice between tactical and strategic resistance, ultimately, follows from the ascendance of immediacy, just as it does for high theory and low theory, democracy and dictatorship, libertarianism and communism.

If the people and the state alike are increasingly rendered horizontally by the immediacy of contemporary technoculture, the capacity of the people to function tactically and strategically is not only restrained but also potentially enhanced. Twenty-first-century analogs of the Dos de Mayo and Paris Commune events demonstrate that contemporary technocultural conditions allow social movements to become not only

masters of time tactically but also, in the right conditions, masters of space, strategically.

Renegotiating the tactics vs. strategy dichotomy under the condition of immediacy need not mean that Virilio's approach is suddenly irrelevant. It is still correct that in the interim, by relying upon a tactical aesthetic of disappearance, the longer-term outcome may be determined not by brute force, but by "the duration of the populations' physiological resistance, their degree of adaptation to an environment which [has] suddenly become foreign and deadly."⁹

What we can still glean from Virilio today is the tactical importance of "daily ingenuity and patience more than heroics."¹⁰ In the early 21st-century situation following the occupation movement, a realtime resistance of ingenuity and patience is still one that transgresses the ordinary use of tools and the environment. But in the process, due to the new conditions of the time, it also transgresses the concepts of popular defense and revolutionary resistance.

While Virilio periodizes the epochs of strategic and logistical war as having privileged weapons of destruction and communication rather than the preferred weapons of obstruction that prevailed in the past, realtime resistance transgresses the ordinary tools and environment as well.¹¹ But it does so as they exist in the present moment: while the immanent *kairon* and *kronon* interrupt the transcendental imperatives of *kairos* and *kronos*—with the wrong time and the wrong chronology—these only remain "wrong" for so long as they remain defined by what is "right."

Just as the Dos de Mayo and Paris Commune utilized features favored by Virilio, such as temporal interruption, mental mapping and the perceptual alteration of space, so too did the occupation movement. From the temporality of cell phones to social media and from the spatiality of Shemanski Park to Zuccotti Park, occupiers enacted both a popular defense and, to a lesser extent, revolutionary resistance, in new conditions.

In the space of Zuccotti Park, where the occupations began, temporizing ground proved an equally important tactic in the process of enacting realtime resistance. The difference was that in this case, temporizing proceeded first by transforming the Zuccotti Park events into what MacKenzie Wark describes as the "weird global media event," which transformed it into a template that could be reproduced anywhere within the US or beyond.¹²

This process could have brought the occupation movement, had it continued to gain momentum, to the tipping point between primarily tactical action and primarily strategic action. That it did not reach that point, ultimately, does not erase the fact that the capacity for executive strategy grew exponentially. The implications of this expansion bear further consideration for this chapter.

The initial plan, as stated in the early promotional material, had been to quite literally “Occupy Wall Street,” with a force of “20,000” occupiers.¹³ But when the already-spatialized, strategic power enforced by the NYPD enabled the prohibition of tents and other structures around the New York Stock Exchange, the hundreds who had showed up instead proceeded in a temporal and tactical manner, marching through the streets, rather than remaining in one place and getting arrested.

In the process, as the occupation was unmoored from any one space, the ground of lower Manhattan was temporized in Sun Tzu’s sense: in our terms, the kairopolitical dimension of any such encounter shifted from *potenza* to *potestas*, and did so via *kairon* and *kronon*. Since the occupiers remained tactical masters of time, as Virilio calls for in the concepts of popular defense and revolutionary resistance, one might suppose that these concepts were never transgressed. Nevertheless, this did not, in and of itself, constitute the most important dimension of the events: neither locally, nor globally.

Far more significant from a strategic rather than tactical perspective was the moment a few days later, when NYPD officers assaulted two female occupiers on September 24. The video recording of the event was quickly uploaded to YouTube, after which the events, temporally and spatially situated up until that point, “went viral,” spreading throughout the social media and mass media alike, in a weird global media event of a new kind.

From reshares on Facebook accounts to comedic recontextualizations on *The Daily Show*, the remediation of the previously temporally and spatially situated events resulted in a rapid acceleration of numbers in the streets, from hundreds to thousands of occupiers. Arguably then, realtime resistance of this sort diverges from popular defense and revolutionary resistance in that while it still transgresses the “ordinary” use of tools and the environment, it does so not as the tools and the environment have existed historically, but as they exist today within the network-centric, immediatist technoculture of the early 21st century.

In this way, the *kairos* and *kronos* enforced by the already-spatialized, strategic power was circumvented and displaced kairopolitically, by the *kairon* and *kronon* deployed immanently by the occupation movement. While it could easily have ended as abruptly as it began, the occupiers temporized ground in lower Manhattan once again by switching tactics and consolidating a new base a few blocks from where they had initially been denied.

Zuccotti Park, which until that point had served as a camping and staging ground, became the central focus for the NYC-based occupations precisely because it was not a public park subject to the city curfew laws, but instead a privately owned park with a public mandate to remain open 24/7.¹⁴ Rather than foolishly taking on a battle they would have lost in a space more wholly subject to the strategic power of the NYPD, the “speed and ease of [their] movements allowed [them] to choose [their] time, to avoid being cornered into desperate combat.”¹⁵

Paradoxically, the neoliberal imperative to privatize public space in this case allowed the occupation movement to reestablish lower Manhattan as an epicenter despite the usually deleterious function of private property for resistance movements. Whereas already-spatialized, strategic power generally affords only tactical engagement on its own terms, constant capitalism’s emergent tool-environment milieu produced a situation in which the increasingly blurred line between private and public space allowed for new forms of resistance. In Sun Tzu’s terms, the occupiers made “the devious route the most direct and turn[ed] misfortune into advantage.”¹⁶

Shortly after the post-September 24 expansion of the movement in NYC, the Zuccotti Park social media template inspired local occupations to go viral, materially. Throughout the US, cities including Boston, Philadelphia, DC, Atlanta, Memphis, St. Louis, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Chicago, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Berkeley, Portland and Seattle all featured occupations of hundreds to thousands of participants, as in NYC. Just as importantly, all of these in turn reinforced the momentum of the lower Manhattan epicenter, creating a feedback loop of generalized intensification.

This became particularly clear following the “Take Times Square” rally less than a month later, on October 15. While it was the first materialization of the 20,000 that had initially been called to “Occupy Wall Street” in the city itself, the date also marked the spread of the movement to nearly 1,000 cities worldwide including metropolitan areas of the UK,

Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Armenia, Cyprus, Nigeria, South Africa, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mongolia, Colombia, Mexico and Canada, amongst several other countries.

By beginning with an open timetable, not only were new, initially hesitant participants in NYC enabled to become involved at their own, slower-to-engage pace, but so too were would-be participants in thousands of other spaces, nationwide and worldwide and not only in realspace but also in realtime. In other words, despite Virilio's critical characterization, in this case the simultaneous and ubiquitous distribution of networked communication technologies set the stage for realtime resistance to repurpose strategic/logistical "weapons of communication" as tactical, or at its highest points, as tactico-strategic "weapons of obstruction."

Insofar as they were engaged in a selective and reflective manner, the realtime resistance of the occupation movement remained a "resistance without body." But in this case, the acorporeal, mediated nature of the resistance was augmented not only by the technoculture, but by its repurposing. The occupiers proceeded, in other words, by immanently transgressing the tools and environment that were already produced by the already-spatialized, strategic power, which thereby enhanced their own capacity to move from tactical resistance to strategic power—even if this was never wholly actualized.

In order for occupiers to become and remain masters of time and space, as in the Dos De Mayos resistance and the Paris Commune, the movement's tools and implements were derived from those which were already widely distributed well before they were selectively utilized and actively repurposed. Just as this did not equate to simple pacifism in every instance, then, nor did it equate to the instrumentalization of existing technologies within a predetermined, narrow range of utility.

Much to the contrary, what the occupiers produced was new modes of resistance that were to proceed kairopolitically, precisely through and by way of the transgression of the existing technoculture. The realtime resistance enacted by the occupation movement resisted transcendental subjectivization by the *kairos* and *kronos* of immediatization while also affirming its own immanent subjectification through radical remediation, through *kairon* and *kronon*.

In this respect, the occupation movement proceeded much like Ansell, the more tactically oriented of the two combatants featured in Joseph Losey's *Figures in a Landscape* (1970). Cited by Virilio as a prime example of popular defense (and, perhaps, for our purposes, revolutionary

resistance), the film depicts Ansell and MacConnachie positioned within a desert landscape, as they are under pursuit by a military helicopter.

Attempting to disappear into the environment to avoid detection throughout, they experience success as well as failure. When they do so successfully, MacConnachie seeks to conjoin their brief successes with nighttime raids on isolated villages in search of supplies that might ensure their survival. Generally, they find little of value, given their frantic, endangered position, but even when they do, what they find is attainable only at great risk.

When they finally end up face-to-face with the landed helicopter and its operator, MacConnachie brutishly shoots the operator, thinking doing so will enable him to take control of both the helicopter and the machine gun wielded by the operator. As a result of this action, however, both are confronted by additional troops who chase them further into the desert, finally cornering them into fighting face-to-face even while being pursued again by the helicopter, which is now commandeered by a different operator.

Losey's film stages several aspects of popular defense and revolutionary resistance that were at play throughout the occupation movement, while at the same time suggesting how immediacy might be repurposed kairopolitically, in the favor of realtime resistance. In terms of content, the film suggests that military institutions and technologies, however seemingly unmediated or unimpeded, are not value-neutral and cannot simply be seized from below, in every instance.

Rather, as with the Shemanski Park and Zuccotti Park events, the time and technology already materially at hand must be engaged in a selective and reflective manner. In some moments, following police orders, or appearing to follow them, is precisely what enables one's forces to affirm its own, greater strategy in a later moment. Similarly, in some instances, utilizing social media to expand one's forces is called for, as it was after the NYPD attacks: in others it is not.

In the concluding moments of *Figures in a Landscape*, when Ansell and MacConnachie arrive at the snow-capped peak of a mountain range, the pair appears to have reunited with their comrades, safe and sound. MacConnachie, however, is then gunned down by the same helicopter he fired upon as it engages them once again. In leaving Ansell rather than MacConnachie alive, what *Figures in a Landscape* suggests is that in the current situation, the old adage that a "good offense is the best defense" has been reversed: today, a "good defense is the best offense."

For Virilio, aerial targeting of the type suffered by Ansell and MacConnachie in *Figures in a Landscape* emerged during the second half of the 20th century. It is for him, a central origin of today's immediacy. After the first use of drones in the Vietnam War, he asserts, "a technological revolution gradually pushed back the limits of investigation into space and time until aerial reconnaissance, with its old modes of representation, appeared in instantaneous, 'real-time' information."¹⁷

Thereafter, the development of infrared and thermographic sensing technologies extended the time of war not only to that of immediacy but also to the temporo-spatiality of simultaneity and ubiquity: anytime, anywhere. In such a situation, the truly tactical resistance, or rather, tactico-strategic resistance, is that which is similarly simultaneous and ubiquitous.

Amongst other qualities then, realtime resistance favors an aesthetic of disappearance, that of blending into the environment in order to displace the transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* of opposing forces with the immanent *kairon* and *kronon*, the kairopolitics of, in this case, the occupation movement. As demonstrated by the Portland occupiers at Shemanski Park and the NYC occupiers at Zuccotti Park, one of the most compelling ways to do this is that of simultaneity and ubiquity, being everywhere and nowhere at once.

Thus, the significance of distantiation for Virilio, in *Figures in a Landscape*:

those who conduct the hunt visually are concerned to annul distance, first on board their means of transport, then with their guns. As for the escapees, they use their weapons not so much to destroy as to establish a distance: they live only in what separates them from their pursuers, they can survive only through pure distance, their ultimate protection is the continuity of nature as a whole.

P. Virilio, War and Cinema, p. 19

The difference today, when popular defense and revolutionary resistance are transgressed by realtime resistance, is that the ultimate protection lies not within the ecology of nature *tout court*, but within the ecology of "nature-culture."¹⁸ The battles of Shemanski Park and Zuccotti Park were based not only upon the establishment of a distance from the NYPD or PPD, but more centrally upon the establishment of simultaneity and ubiquity that was mediate and global, more than immediate and local.

In short, at the height of the occupation movement it was not space-time but time-space that was occupied, the basis from which it became impossible to declare when precisely it began, and when precisely it ceased. Similarly, it also became impossible to declare where precisely it was located, and where precisely it was not. Which brings us to the second dimension of realtime resistance, which is not the external, conditional relations between the occupation movement already-spatialized, strategic power, but instead its internal, compositional relations.

4.2 Movement and time: after acceleration and deceleration

Just as defense-time was transformed in the occupation movement conditionally, so too was it transformed compositionally in the transition from periodic to immediate temporality. The shift affected composition in that, whereas in the past, categorical distinctions retained hegemony with relative ease, in the contemporary period, the material forces of simultaneity and ubiquity, as Zygmunt Bauman might put it, “liquified” such distinctions.¹⁹ Those that previously separated one movement from another, such as nonviolent vs. violent, reformist vs. revolutionary or identity vs. class, are all rendered unstable and at least temporarily, folded into one another.

The uniformity and stability of these distinctions in the past derived from the material quality of periodic rather than immediate temporality and thus also from particular time-space rather than simultaneous or ubiquitous time-space.²⁰ As has often been noted, whether it is organized daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually, periodic temporality encourages the formation of large-scale, broadly shared perceptions that are then juxtaposed to those held by other large-scale collectivities.²¹ The decline of periodic temporality, for this reason, is often understood pessimistically as ensuring a loss of transformational capacity.

Periodicity is one major element that grounds the rhythms of modernity along with all of its central institutions: the nation-state, the capitalist economy, the military and the mass media are all based upon it, as are movements that have sought change in each of them. Similarly then, it is no surprise that these institutions have entered into a state of crisis as immediacy, and along with it, simultaneity and ubiquity, universalize

their affects, the bases of all institutions and counter-institutions are necessarily transformed.

Given that it was under the influence of periodic temporality that the compositional dimension of social movements was consolidated in the past, the emergence of immediacy produces considerable confusion, as each movement attempts to either uncritically embrace liquification or to fight back against its effects. But because immediacy provides an instantaneous rather than delayed link between an initial perception, an incipient affection, and an executive action while also producing a simultaneous and ubiquitous interactivity with other movements, dichotomous positions tend not to hang together for long.

This was seen repeatedly throughout the occupation movement, when debates emerged about how the movement was to be understood categorically. Was it a uniformly nonviolent movement or one based upon a diversity of tactics? Was it an essentially liberal movement or one open to socialists and anarchists? Was it a movement of the white middle-class or a multiracial movement of the proletariat?

Of all city-based occupations, Occupy Oakland produced the most intense disagreements around these questions, since in most other cities, a tenuous mix of all of the above generally cohered with comparatively minimal conflict.²² However, even the compositional disagreement within Occupy Oakland derived, at least partially, from the differently collectivizing effects of simultaneity and ubiquity. Members of the black bloc, for instance, affirmed their right to a diversity of tactics, while others insisted on the uniformity and stability of nonviolence: yet this disjuncture did not prevent either side from following their own internal protocols, when push came to shove.

Citing the nonviolence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK), opponents of the diversity of tactics protocol asserted the moral rather than strategic importance of unified means and ends. By retaining this imperative in every situation, they held, the occupation would remain “prefigurative” and “horizontalist,” the ideology of the General Assemblies and of immediatism more broadly, in its most one-dimensional form. But as we will see shortly, it was MLK’s meditations on temporality more than his meditations on violence, that are of greatest interest in assessing what the occupation movement became. This is because MLK’s thoughts on time derive not from an idealist or moralist perspective, but much to the contrary, from the Nietzschean untimeliness of *kairon* and *kronon*.

Yet, even at the birth of the occupation movement in NYC, the compositional effects of simultaneity and ubiquity were already at issue, though not in the form of disagreement. While the events in lower Manhattan gave birth to Occupy Wall Street, the simultaneity and ubiquity of the technoculture enabled the emergence of Occupy the Hood-Queens (OtH), just as it did OtH-Detroit, OtH-Chicago, OtH-Cincinnati, OtH-St. Louis and OtH-Los Angeles (which is not to even mention all of the other occupations, in cities nationwide and worldwide).

The occupation movement then could either be described as a white, middle-class movement or as an early 21st-century movement with no stable, central constituency. Indeed, even the birth of the occupation movement raises the question of its original relationship to the Arab Spring, amongst many other inspirations. As stated previously, the antiglobalization movement of the early 2000s was compositionally inseparable from the Zapatistas, even though it is often remembered as solely a movement of the North: here too, the early, emergent effects of simultaneity and ubiquity were at play.

All that was required for the occupation movement was the addition of one more Facebook page, one more physical location and one more perspective, alongside those already occupied. The occupation movement then, was not just “Occupy Wall Street,” but also Occupy the Hood, amongst many other formations. Just as the existence of smart phones and tablets mean that one is never simply alone with whoever they are with physically, so too does the contemporary temporality mean that one is never simply alone with one particular movement: and therein lies the kairopolitical question of composition.

Given the new collectivizing effects of simultaneity and ubiquity, wherever one might have previously located a specific movement, every node of the contemporary technoculture is now simultaneously and ubiquitously linked with and cognizant of divergent viewpoints. From conditional questions of the proper tactico-strategic approach to compositional questions of the proper constituency of alliants, today, the center cannot hold. Therefore, just as contemporary movements are rarely defined by a single thematic, they are also rarely defined by a single ethos.

The real compositional question posed by the occupation movement is whether this multiplicity can cohere into a greater, collective whole—an “open whole,” perhaps, in Deleuze’s terms—or whether it must remain an entirely tactical, temporary formation without any overall strategic

direction. While this may still involve the rehashing of old dichotomies, even in the case of Occupy Oakland, a variety of subterranean threads arguably linked more of those on either side than most were wont to admit.²³

That subterranean thread, this chapter argues, is that of realtime resistance: the network-centric successor to popular defense and revolutionary resistance, as it appears in the age of immediacy, simultaneity and ubiquity. The open whole, however, need not reify a merely all-embracing, purely nihilist or tactical approach that establishes no real division: strategy requires selectivity, just as for Nietzsche, “*Beyond Good and Evil*... does not mean ‘Beyond Good and Bad’”²⁴

In such a situation, taking into account the conditions presented in a given moment prior to engaging in “nonviolent” or “violent” action is one compositional position at least that can be agreed upon when both sides give up trying to win the argument. Indeed, it is this unspoken, virtual agreement that could have in the right scenario, transformed the occupation movement from a primarily tactical, resistant force into a primarily strategic, revolutionary force.

If it were to produce a new collectivity appropriate to the kairopolitics of simultaneity and ubiquity, however, it would have needed to privilege dissensus rather than consensus, so as to affirm a higher-level “metaconsensus.” When movements begin from the position of temporal materialism, doing so is no longer as complicated as it is when beginning from a moralist or idealist perspective, one that takes no account of the conditions a collectivity is faced with in realtime.

If arriving at such a metaconsensus were to become understood as a precondition for strategy, the old periodic dichotomies could be discarded such that *the* movement would reappear more simply—but also more dynamically—as *movement*. No longer would *the* movement speak for the people, thereby idealistically producing the people spoken for in that moment regardless of the situation at hand, but people in the everyday sense would speak for the people, introducing a dissensus centered upon the participatory strategy appropriate to an open whole.

Not as a single mass public or an array of disorganized individuals, but as an immanent, collective body open to redefinition and redeployment according to the situation at hand, as well as, more importantly, according to its emergent capacity to resituate the situation at hand. An approach of this sort is communist in the sense deployed in *The German Ideology*: it is “the real movement which abolishes the present state of

things,” but is also that which begins from the materialist perspective, that which recognizes that the “conditions of this movement result from the premises now in existence.”²⁵

Jodi Dean argues something like this in her book, *The Communist Horizon*: the collective, strategic dimension of the occupation movement remains a potentiality that could be actualized as an alternative to the neoliberal, individualist approach of “tactics-as-brand,” which remains content with the “singular happening.” Since elements of the occupation movement already indicate a capacity for collectivity of some sort, in short, this collectivity could be transformed into something with greater capacity for political transformation:

Occupation contrasts sharply with the singular happening, because even as specific occupations emerge from below rather than through a coordinated strategy, their common form—including its images, slogans, terms, and practices—links them together in a mass struggle.²⁶

Later in the same work, she points out this same disjuncture between openness and collectivity as a source of its most commonly cited problem: that while it was able to organize a broad cross-section of the population, “this inclusivity had detrimental effects, hindering the movement’s ability to take a strong stand against capitalism and for collective control over common resources.”²⁷ The openness of the occupation movement, in other words, came close at points, but ultimately failed to coalesce into an open whole.

According to Dean, the phrase “we are the 99%,” despite deriving from this same context, was one of the high points of the movement, in that it demonstrated this possibility by “disindividualiz[ing] interest and desire” and asserting “the people as a divisive force.”²⁸ What matters most in other words, is that a true division is established, so as to situate the situation at hand in the favor of “overturning [the] present society and making a new one anchored in collectivity and the common.”²⁹

Dean’s strategic vision for how to achieve that is the party: while a newly imagined, broadly based communist party that operates “diagonally,” or between the horizontal and the vertical, may well be a goal worth pursuing, it goes without saying that no such party is likely to succeed in the absence of an effective street-based movement, as well. The concept of metaconsensus may be of strategic, or rather tactico-strategic assistance on both fronts.

Aside from Marx and Engels' description of the communist movement, another thoughtful consideration of the compositional question is to be found in Giorgio Agamben's brief genealogy of "the movement."³⁰ As he notes, the use of the term to refer to social movements emerges most significantly in the 19th century with the German sociologist Lorenz von Stein.³¹ Along with Marx and Engels, his partition of "the movement" and "the state" (with the former referring to "the expression of the dynamic forces of society" and the latter "the static and legalistic") inaugurates the understanding of movements as verbs rather than nouns.³²

Agamben goes on to trace the development of the term through a range of thinkers, including Arendt's juxtaposition of parties and movements, in which from left to right, the movement is the primary foundation upon which the party attaches itself secondarily, that which is sometimes referred to in the American context, as "the base." For Agamben, however, such definitions are not only overly self-congratulatory in the assumption that movements effect parties from the ground up, they are also naïve, and indeed, dangerously so.

His return is that, for the modern period, it is Schmitt who most compellingly defines the movement. Doing so in the German/Nazi context, he asserts that the movement more often than not becomes a loyal opposition, an unofficial arm of the state that rather than keeping the parties in line with the popular consensus, instead functions as a kind of "fourth branch." In this case, the movement's ultimate function is not revolutionary social transformation but providing for the security of "the people."

The movement of the periodic era then, was one in which, because actual people were not primary, but could only "grow under the protection of the movement," the movement, in turn, subordinates them to the capitalist state. Because the people are depoliticized and biopoliticized in such circumstances, the rise of the movement after the World Wars signals, for Agamben, the decline of the people as an inherently political body and, with it, the decline of liberal democracy.

In our own terms we might say that the movement of the periodic era was one in which composition remained uniform and stable, thereby enhancing strategic capacity. At the same time, however, strategic capacity became coupled with dictatorial capacity, as in the German/Nazi example provided by Agamben. The compositional difference in the era of immediacy is precisely the opposite: that there is too great an emphasis on the "open" and not enough on the "whole." The task for

contemporary movements, therefore, is a mode of composition that is inclusive yet selective, tactical yet strategic.

In contrast with the movement as it appears in Virilio as the basis for popular defense or revolutionary resistance, for Agamben the specificity of the movement under periodic temporality is that it positions itself between the people and the state, not as the people. Even if the movement may be framed as the people rhetorically, much as for Virilio, the military presents itself as the protector of the nation-state it produces, so too does the movement present itself as the protector of the people it produces. While it is not itself the people, the movement in the era of periodic temporality is understood both as the expression of the people and the protector of what expresses it.

The movement, then, is as subject to the critique of the vanguard party that anarchists and radical democrats have put forward as is the vanguard party they have critiqued. And it is this paradox in turn that perhaps best illustrates that of the occupation movement as it has appeared in the era of immediacy: that in which, while a transformation of mediation has placed more screens in front of faces than ever before, it is nevertheless now understood, as Grusin and Bolter intuited long ago, as not just a reduction of mediation, but as an elimination of mediation.

Just as seemingly unmediated posts on Facebook and Twitter are now filtered by new types of editors, from opinion leaders to data harvesters and from reactive *ressentiment* to conditioned perception, so too was the seemingly leaderless and tactically centered occupation movement diverted by libertarian strategists, as considered in the previous chapter. These strategists had little to nothing to do with the goals of the occupation movement, but this did not stop them: in many cases, they simply assumed control of the open, participatory media environment.

The fetishization of an idealist, universal consensus rather than a materialist, unstable metaconsensus meant there was little attempt to move from tactics to strategy or from the movement as noun to the movement as verb. What this suggests is that the appearance of an open whole, even when it was not one in the truest sense, was one central effect of immediacy amidst the events. Just as Grusin and Bolter assert that there is no true immediacy, but only remediations of previous mediations that are then rendered to appear immediate, so too is there no purely tactical movement but only movements that are tactico-strategic or stratego-tactical.

If the task of movements is to enter into a becoming-movement as such, to develop a strategic direction of the whole without at the same

time excluding an open-ended simultaneity and ubiquity, it must be the former rather than the latter that prevails. But this is rendered particularly complicated when the stratego-tactical appears in the form of the tactico-strategic. In such a situation, the only way in which depoliticized and biopoliticized people become political again is through the identification of a commonly formulated, situation-based, strategic direction.

The partitioning of who the people are and are not, in other words, was the work of movements in the era of periodic temporality. If it is a communist movement, the goal of the 99% is not a rebalancing of forces between the 1% and the 99%, but the elimination of 1% and 99% alike, the emergence of an entirely different “100%.” Rethinking the movement in the era of immediacy requires remediating immediacy kairopolitically: rethinking the conditions that might prevent the depoliticization and biopoliticization of people while reconstituting their primacy. This would have to occur without at the same time reinstating the transcendental subjectivization of the people as the basis for the state, but instead as the immanent subjectification of people.

Just as simultaneity and ubiquity buttressed the occupation movement conditionally in Shemanski Park and Zuccotti Park, so too might both do so compositionally by enhancing awareness of multiple temporalities that today coexist in any given situation. One way in which this could occur is by rethinking popular defense and revolutionary resistance as realtime resistance: a metaconsensus in the higher level of the virtual rather than lower-level agreement in the actual may indeed be a necessity for realtime resistance, and in a way that it may not have been previously.

For Agamben, the task of movements today, as he puts it, is interrogating “the relation between *potenza* and act.”³³ Rather than defining movement as the transition from the virtual to the actual, the virtual itself is most significant because “movement is the constitution of a *potenza* as *potenza* . . . an unfinished act, without telos.”³⁴ But one need not reject strategic direction, in order to do this: while the movement in such a situation is no longer a noun but a verb, not *the* movement, but *movement*, in no longer subordinating the people it formerly produced, people produce movement in a particular strategic direction.

We might say then, that movement in the time of immediacy is not the movement of actual force but of virtual force, as it must be if it is to take into account the material conditions as they exist in a particular situation. During the Seattle WTO Protests in 1999, members of the

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) wore pins juxtaposing an image of a coiled cobra to the words “If Provoked, I Will Strike.” Realtime resistance proceeds similarly in that it reconstitutes the coordinates of the situation in relation to its own capacity to act selectively, as opposed to an unselective materialization of this capacity.

Even while the strike threat could be perceived as potentially violent when coupled with an image of a snake ready to strike, the rhetorical force derives from a power that lies in initial perception and incipient affection, not unselective, extended action. That it is neither a call to strategic nonviolence nor an embrace of unstrategic, tactical violence places it in the tradition of popular defense and revolutionary resistance, even while it exemplifies realtime resistance even more thoroughly.

To speak of movement as it exists in the time of immediacy is not to suggest that a particular movement is wholly determined by the emergent temporality but to raise the question of what movement might become while grappling with its emergent development. What the occupation movement suggests is not the neutrality of immediacy but the necessity of strategically directing that new temporal order such that while it derives from immediacy, it is also capable of remediating it according to a kairopolitical immediatism: the immediate as realtime, selective affirmation, not that of realtime, nihilist negation.

While realtime resistance occurs within the order of immediacy actually then, it is not entirely of it in every respect. Virtually, realtime resistance goes beyond the possibilities of the situation at hand in order to resituate the situation, to repotentialize the possible itself. The terms immediacy and realtime are often understood as synonymous in popular usage, yet when linked with tactico-strategic movement, realtime temporality produces a countertemporality at odds with the already-spatialized, strategic power. It does so by proceeding kairopolitically, by confronting the transcendental time of *kairos* and *kronos* with the immanent time of *kairon* and *kronon*.

Just as a central debate emerged over the question of violence within the occupation movement, so too did the question of momentum prove central, particularly following the coordinated suppression of late 2011. Both questions were raised compositionally, with respect to the nature of the movement, as well as conditionally, with respect to those forces favoring its expansion or forcing its decline.

In terms of momentum, as already stated, while some commentators held that the occupation movement ended prior to the end of 2011, others assert that the ongoing engagement of occupation-related projects several years later such as Occupy Our Homes, Occupy Sandy and the Occupy National Gathering, indicate continuity. While this is partially a matter of description, it is also a matter of kairopolitics: when periodizing a movement that has gone into decline, ought one emphasize the brevity and overcoming of past limitations, or the continuing capacity for the movement's reinvigoration? Further, the question of momentum extends into that of which forces might favor the movement's expansion: those of speed, or those of slowness?

The momentum debate within the broader anticaptialist movement, beyond the occupation movement itself, is divided between the camps of "accelerationism" and, though it is not properly articulated as such, "decelerationism." Although they are not sufficient in and of themselves, an engagement with the terms of that debate allows both the conditional and the compositional dimensions of the occupation movement to be fruitfully engaged, particularly in terms of metaconsensus.

Generally speaking, accelerationists argue that speeding up the technological and political economic condition under constant capitalism will also "accelerate the contradictions." Doing so, they assert, will also produce new crises that will thereby bring forth new opportunities for resistance. Of course, Marx and Engels already made an argument very much like this in *The Communist Manifesto*, asserting the "most revolutionary part" that the bourgeoisie has played in creating the conditions for communism, by, for instance, having:

put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations...[having] pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors" ... [having] left no other nexus between people than naked self-interest, than callous "cash payment." ... [having] drowned out the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor ... [having] stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe ... having converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers ... [and, having] torn away from the family its sentimental veil ... [reducing] the family relation into a mere money relation.³⁵

But because "the bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production," the relations of production are also revolutionized in the process: and from this contradiction,

society as a whole may also be revolutionized, eventually.³⁶ Whether it does or does not, however, is not a matter of acceleration as such, but as we have argued, of resituating the situation at hand, of intervening kairopolitically.

The decelerationists, to the contrary, follow E.F. Schumacher, Kirkpatrick Sale and others (including a variety of Protestant denominations) in the belief that slowing down the technocultural and political economic pace, by engaging in local forms of democracy, will render global and national economic structures irrelevant. Purchasing from local producers, riding bicycles, participating in local elections and for the more publicly engaged, attending embodied, space-based General Assemblies will all contribute to the creation of a dual power to replace or at least put pressure on global and national institutions.

If the accelerationists are correct, then there is little need to worry about any decline of the occupation movement, since constant capitalism will continue the global speed-up that is not only already well underway, but which has already reached the level of immediacy. Over time, the ongoing collapse of the global middle class will create equally global, proletarian masses primed for revolution, regardless of what localist activists have to say about it.

If the decelerationists are correct, ironically enough, there is also minimal cause for concern: while there is much to be done in this schema, in many liberal, coastal cities at least, things are already proceeding much as they should be, with or without the occupation movement. By and large, however, unlike the movement at its height of influence, most of this activity does not interrupt the continuity of the existing system, since it focuses on a slow, local form of consumption and interaction that in most respects is simply a consumer option.

Both accelerationists and decelerationists then are missing something: as the Shemanski Park and Zuccotti Park occupations indicate, engaging time kairopolitically, as situated and material phenomena rather than idealist, immaterial phenomena enables movements to confront the pretense of immediacy produced by already-spatialized, strategic power in order to remediate it immanently, in the strategic direction sought.

Ultimately, it is the failure to recognize this that renders accelerationism and decelerationism conjoined, non-oppositional approaches on a deeper, more subterranean level. Since neither move beyond the realm of situated tactics to situating strategy, both enable the rudderless nihilism that is early 21st-century capitalism to continue unabated.

The success of temporizing ground at Occupy Portland and Occupy Wall Street demonstrates a contrary point: that diverging from transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* need not posit accelerationism or decelerationism as such, since both are already defined by the already-spatialized, strategic power, that of constant capitalism. The real task is not that of asking “which temporality” or “which momentum,” nor that of selecting from amongst already-available temporalities or momentums, but instead proceeding kairopolitically, producing a countertemporality.

In other words, the task is that of temporizing ground, moving from situated tactics to situating strategy, but in a manner that begins with tactics and is thus tactico-strategic rather than stratego-tactical. Just as realtime resistance is irreducible to dichotomies of strategy vs. tactics on the one hand or dichotomies of violence vs. nonviolence on the other, so too is the question of momentum irreducible to accelerationism or decelerationism.

Diverging from transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* reifies neither an accelerated, wholly directionless politics, nor a decelerated, wholly directed politics, but instead a politics of realtime that engages time as it appears in specific, materially determined situations. Situations, in other words, that may favor or disfavor the goals of movement and which therefore call for differing tactico-strategic approaches.

Of the two options, accelerationism is by far the more relevant, insofar as it does not fetishize the local, the ideal, or the slow, as favored by the decelerationists. Nevertheless, although it began as a counterargument to Virilio, the assertion of accelerationism by thinkers such as Nick Land fails to grasp the complexity and potentiality of his argument. As such, it also fails to offer a more compelling alternative.

As suggested above, Virilio’s concepts of popular defense and revolutionary resistance are not opposed to revolution, but at their most developed, seek the reinvention of revolution and the defense of its emergent accomplishments, within new conditions. Popular defense and revolutionary resistance begin first with situated examples of popular resistance, such as that of Occupy Portland, Occupy Oakland and Occupy Wall Street: realtime resistance takes all of this one step further still.

Drawing on the early, conjoined work of Deleuze and Guattari while opposing Virilio’s supposed fetishization of slowness, the accelerationist argument was initially presented by Land such that the best strategy for moving beyond constant capitalism would be to allow it to increase its speed.³⁷ This would then hasten the production of what Marx and Engels described as “its own gravediggers.”³⁸

Yet, while constant capitalism does apparently harbor suicidal tendencies, realtime resistance, as developed here, diverges from the conclusion that “if capitalism generates its own forces of dissolution then the necessity is to radicalize capitalism itself: the worse the better.”³⁹ Rather than accelerationism or decelerationism, realtime resistance proposes an approach in which speed is no longer solely transcendental phenomena but is instead rendered open to a multiplicity of forces beyond constant capitalism itself.⁴⁰

Realtime resistance does not acquiesce to the authority of already-existing speeds in the actual but instead favors that which it actualizes from the virtual, however slowly or quickly it is materially able to do so. Temporizing ground, in whatever form it takes, produces a situation in which “for a moment [the people] stop being a cog in the technical machine and . . . become a motor . . . in other words a *producer of speed*.”⁴¹

Land himself recognized this as the central disjuncture separating *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. Noting the influence of Virilio on Deleuze and Guattari, he pointed out that it was only after reading and engaging with Virilio that Deleuze and Guattari problematized their own notion that “schizopolitics is the coercion of capital into immanent coexistence with its own undoing.”⁴²

Virilio’s influence upon their later formulations derives from his theorization of the suicidal state, considered in this and the previous chapter’s first sections. In its Nazi, fascist or sometimes even proto-fascist form, the capitalist political economy takes war itself as its central objective, to the point of declaring war on its own people. As stated above, no longer is this a situation of partial endocolonization, but instead one of total endocolonization, a situation also referred to by Virilio as total war.

Recognizing this insight from Virilio, which derives from his own interlocutions with Hannah Arendt, Deleuze and Guattari rethink the schizopolitical doctrine of accelerationism, thereby cautioning against “too-sudden destratification” in a manner largely unrecognizable from the original position presented in *Anti-Oedipus*.⁴³ As a result, Land’s nihilism ends up affirming that which Deleuze critiqued as the “yes of the ass”: the yes which does not know how to say no. As Land sees it, the problem with Deleuze and Guattari’s Virilian/Arendtian reformulation is:

the resurrection of prescriptive neo-archaisms that come creeping back as a bulwark against the jack-booted unconscious: liberal-humanism, watered-down paganism and even the stinking relics of Judeo-Christian moralism.⁴⁴

Perhaps this explains why the resonance emerged within the occupation movement between the various, strategically opposed forces even while those forces which were strategically closest metaconsensually parted ways over tactical questions on the level of the actual, as in Occupy Oakland. As Ray Brassier notes in his critique of accelerationism, Land's embrace of increased velocity as an end in itself reifies the nihilism of constant capitalism in which like the unstrategic resonance machine thereby produced, "your enemy's enemy is your friend."⁴⁵

However, given that today acceleration has largely been displaced by immediacy, perhaps it actually is the late rather than the early Deleuze and Guattari that is most relevant to the contemporary condition. Movement today is less about directionless, global acceleration or directed, local deceleration than it is a situationally perceptive process, a materialist process of realtime resistance. Since this is the condition in which we live, this is the condition in which movement lives, as well.

Which returns our focus from the conditional to the compositional, from which it is inseparable. To conclude, consider the thoughts of MLK on time mentioned previously. Although the last great leader of the last great social movement (prior to the decline of periodic temporality) is rarely commented upon in this manner, one of the most overlooked dimensions of his writing, for instance, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, is the extent to which it is an immanently materialist, kairopolitical engagement with time.

For our purposes, what is most interesting about MLK's engagement is that it posits time much as it appears within the acceleration/deceleration debate, while exceeding its terms in a highly productive manner. The question for his period, *Letter* suggests, was not whether segregation and other policies of the Jim Crow era should or should not be undone: indeed, that much at least was agreed upon by most liberals and radicals at the time. Rather, the question was at what pace they should be undone: MLK, in short, emphasized the kairopolitical.

According to MLK, the slower pace preferred by white moderates resonated with the more directly oppressive positions of white supremacists, the courts and the police. Thus, black Southerners and white allies who were serious about social change should consider this reification of the transcendental *kairos* and *kronos* to be its greatest obstacle, greater even than that of the directly opposed. From his perspective, the white

moderate who champions a slower pace for the undoing of Jim Crow is one who:

paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."⁴⁶

While MLK's position might superficially sound like accelerationism, it is actually much closer to the kairopolitical perspective of realtime resistance. Since the alternative to a mythical concept of time is one that is neither transcendental nor idealist but situated in a specific situation, amongst specific people, the affirmation of an immanently produced timetable diverges from those that either embrace or oppose those already on the table.

As in the abolitionist movement then, in which the "immediatists" sought the immediate abolition of slavery, MLK also provides a spin on immediatism that diverges from that which continues to prevail today. While King himself is often represented as a partisan of precisely the "liberal humanist" bent Land opposed when it comes to the question of tactics, his materialist, strategic affirmation of countertemporality was one premised, to the contrary, upon the "fierce urgency of now."⁴⁷ The now he posited was neither accelerationist nor decelerationist, but materialist: the now of realtime.

MLK's countertemporality, in other words, was premised upon the situated circumvention of all transcendental timetables, particularly those that assume, in a liberal, idealist manner, that the multiplicity of coexistent temporalities somehow spontaneously coalesce into a single, universal time.

Realtime then, refers to far more than just the time appropriate to immediate, instantaneous communication. Whether the transcendental *kairos* or *kronos* is represented as acceleration or deceleration is ultimately of little importance. What counts is whether the multiplicity of time embodied in a variety of coexisting forms is rendered imperceptible or perceptible and whether this multiplicity is taken into account when the count is taken.

The paradox of immediacy is that, conditionally, it brings the problem of realtime to the fore, with which it is at odds. Realtime in turn, radicalizes the capacities of simultaneity and ubiquity: it asks not what comes before or what comes after, not whether we are accelerating or decelerating, but instead what exists simultaneously, at the same time as this moment that we represent as one of regress or progress.

Just as accelerationism alone proposes a nihilism that is rudderless, tactics alone proposes an experimentality that is directionless: the real task today, therefore, is adding a rudder to immediacy and a strategy to tacticality.⁴⁸ Insofar as it senses the condition of our time and acts appropriately, realtime resistance is the precondition for realtime revolution.

Notes

- 1 “Even though the relation of power may be completely unbalanced or when one can truly say that he has ‘all power’ over the other, a power can only be exercised over another to the extent that the latter still has the possibility of committing suicide, of jumping out of the window or of killing the other. That means that in the relations of power, there is necessarily the possibility of resistance, for if there were no possibility of resistance—of violent resistance, of escape, of ruse, of strategies that reverse the situation—there would be no relations of power.” M. Foucault in J. Bernauer and D. Rasmussen, *The Final Foucault* (Boston: MIT Press, 1988), 12.
- 2 S. Tzu, *The Art of War* (New York: Cosimo, 2010), 32.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 L. MacGurdy, “Occupy Portland Outsmarts Police, Creating Blueprint for Other Occupations” *The Portland Occupier*, December 15, 2011.
- 5 P. Virilio, *Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1990), 53. “For example: hatchets, sickles, mowers, hunting equipment, ambushes and various kinds of traps in the country; barricades, machine shut-downs and strikes in the city.”
- 6 P. Virilio, *Pure War* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2008), 118. Virilio notes in particular that although later “Marxism” diverged from Marx’s own consideration of the Paris Commune as the proper means of revolutionary resistance, total war was not the strategy originally advocated, for instance, in writings such as *The Civil War in France*.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Virilio, *Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles*, 50.
- 9 Ibid., 51.
- 10 Ibid., 52.
- 11 Aside from the examples considered here, see N. Jurgenson, “Welcome to the ‘Augmented Revolution’” *Salon*, November 6, 2011. Available at http://www.salon.com/2011/11/06/the_21st_centurys_augmented_revolution/. N. Caren and S. Gaby, “Occupy Online: Facebook and the Spread of Occupy Wall Street” *SSRN*, October 24, 2011. Available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1943168#. T. Casey, “Occupy Wall Street Pushes Social Media in New Directions” *Clean Technica*, October 13, 2011. Available

- at <http://cleantechnica.com/2011/10/13/occupy-wall-street-pushes-social-media-in-new-directions/>. J. Bialer, "Occupy Wall Street Growth Map: How Fast Are 'Occupy' Facebook Pages Growing?" *Huffington Post*, November 10, 2011. Available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/11/11/occupy-wall-street-growth_n_1074304.html. T. Lee, "Smartphones and Occupy Wall Street" *Zero Divide*, November 2, 2011. Available at http://www.zerodivide.org/learning/blog/smartphones_and_occupy_wall_street_part_1. D. Schechter, "Occupy Protests: There's an App for That" *Al Jazeera*, November 9, 2011. Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/10/20111030111545619.html>. N. Sharkey and S. Knuckey, "OWS Fights Back against Police Surveillance by Launching 'Occupcopter' Citizen Drone" *Alternet*, December 22, 2011. Available at http://www.alternet.org/story/153542/ows_fights_back_against_police_surveillance_by_launching_%22occuicopter%22_citizen_drone
- 12 M. Wark, "Escape from the Dual Empire" *Rhizomes*, Spring (2003). Available at <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue6/wark.htm>. Referring to September 11, stock market volatility and other examples, Wark defines the concept as such:
- Weird global media events... are events because they are singular. They are media events because they happen in a vectoral space of communication. They are global media events because they call a world into being. They are weird global media events because they defy explanation. They subsume every explanation as mere ripples and eddies in their wake. The weird global media event always begins in the middle. Something happens for which there is no readymade story instantly to hand. If only for a few moments, news media has to present the troubling images while it casts about for a story, inventing a beginning and positing an end. In the weird global media event what happens is always contrary to expectation. A new narrative trajectory has to be created to accommodate its singularity, after it happens. But in the moment when it happens, the weird global media event announces the presence of an unstable, ineffable world—a world immune to interpretation. For an instant, we gape and gasp, confronted with the inexplicable.
- 13 "On September 17, we want to see 20,000 people flood into lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street for a few months. Once there, we shall incessantly repeat one simple demand in a plurality of voices." Editors, "#OCCUPYWALLSTREET: A Shift in Revolutionary Tactics" *Adbusters*, July 13, 2011. Available at <https://www.adbusters.org/blogs/adbusters-blog/occupywallstreet.html>
- 14 J. Kayden, "Meet Me at the Plaza" *New York Times*, October 19, 2011.
- 15 Virilio, *Popular Defense and Ecological Struggles*, 50.
- 16 This version of the quote is derived from S. Tzu, *The Art of War* (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), 34.
- 17 P. Virilio, *War and Cinema* (London: Verso, 2009), 18.
- 18 B. Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 7.

- 19 Z. Bauman, "On Being Light and Liquid" in *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 9:

Liquids, unlike solids, cannot easily hold their shape...while solids have clear spatial dimensions but neutralize the impact, and thus downgrade the significance, of time (effectively resist its flow or render it irrelevant), fluids do not keep to any shape for long and are constantly ready (and prone) to change it; and so for them it is the flow of time that counts, more than the space they happen to occupy: that space, after all, they fill but "for a moment". In a sense, solids cancel time; for liquids, on the contrary, it is mostly time that matters. When describing solids, one may ignore time altogether; in describing fluids, to leave time out of account would be a grievous mistake. Descriptions of fluids are all snapshots, and they need a date at the bottom of the picture... Thanks to its newly acquired flexibility and expansiveness, modern time has become, first and foremost, the weapon in the conquest of space. In the modern struggle between time and space, space was the solid and stolid, unwieldy and inert side, capable of waging only a defensive, trench war—being an obstacle to the resilient advances of time. Time was the active and dynamic side in the battle, the side always on the offensive: the invading, conquering and colonizing force. Velocity of movement and access to faster means of mobility steadily rose in modern times to the position of the principal tool of power and domination... the long effort to accelerate the speed of movement has presently reached its "natural limit." Power can move with the speed of the electronic signal—and so the time required for the movement of its essential ingredients has been reduced to instantaneity. For all practical purposes, power has become truly exterritorial, no longer bound, if even slowed down, by the resistance of space (the advent of cellular telephones may well serve as a symbolic "last blow" delivered to the dependency on space: even the access to a telephone is unnecessary for a command to be given and seen through to its effect. It does not matter any more where the giver of the command is—the difference between "close by" and "far away," or for that matter between the wilderness and the civilized, orderly space, has been all but cancelled.) This gives the power-holders a truly unprecedented opportunity: the awkward and irritating aspects of the panoptical technique of power may be disposed of. Whatever else the present stage in the history of modernity is, it is also, perhaps above all, post-Panoptical. What mattered in Panopticon was that the people in charge were assumed always to "be there," nearby, in the controlling tower. What matters in post-Panoptical power relations is that the people operating the levers of power on which the fate of the less volatile partners in the relationship depends can at any moment escape beyond reach—into sheer inaccessibility. The end of Panopticon augurs the end of the era of mutual engagement: between the supervisors and the supervised, capital and labour, leaders and their followers, armies at war. The prime technique of power is now escape, slippage, elision and avoidance, the effective rejection of any territorial confinement with its cumbersome corollaries of order-building, order-maintenance and the responsibility for the consequences of it all as well as of the necessity to bear their costs... The disintegration of the social network, the falling apart of effective agencies of collective action is often noted with a good deal of anxiety and bewailed as the unanticipated "side effect" of the new lightness and

fluidity of the increasingly mobile, slippery, shifty, evasive and fugitive power. But social disintegration is as much a condition as it is the outcome of the new technique of power, using disengagement and the art of escape as its major tools. For power to be free to flow, the world must be free of fences, barriers, fortified borders and checkpoints. Any dense and tight network of social bonds, and particularly a territorially rooted tight network, is an obstacle to be cleared out of the way. Global powers are bent on dismantling such networks for the sake of their continuous and growing fluidity, that principal source of their strength and the warrant of their invincibility. And it is the falling apart, the friability, the brittleness, the transience, the until-further-noticeness of human bonds and networks which allow these powers to do their job in the first place.

- 20 Here I understand nihilism and militarism as essentially synonymous.
- 21 Aside from the voluminous theoretical literature on the topic, the sociological research of Eviatar Zerubavel is particularly outstanding. See, for example, E. Zerubavel, "The Standardization of Time: a Sociohistorical Perspective" *The American Journal of Sociology* 88:1 (1982); "The Benedictine Ethic and the Modern Spirit of Scheduling: On Schedules and Social Organization" *Sociological Inquiry* 50:2 (1983); "Timetables and Scheduling: On the Social Organization of Time" *Sociological Inquiry* 46 (1976); "The French Republican Calendar: A Case Study in the Sociology of Time" *American Sociological Review* 42 (1976); *Patterns of Time in Hospital Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); "Private Time and Public Time: The Temporal Structure of Social Accessibility and Professional Commitments" *Social Forces* 58 (1979).
- 22 While the debates were covered in mass media sources such as *Time Magazine*, the Facebook debates are especially instructive. See, for instance, B. Riley, *In Occupy Oakland*. Retrieved Saturday, June 15, 2013 Available at https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=10150386269828664&id=520078663%20
- 23 See, for instance, Riley, *In Occupy Oakland*.
- 24 Emphasis in original quote. F. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 33.
- 25 K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 57.
- 26 J. Dean, *The Communist Horizon* (London: Verso, 2012), 14. Also see J. Dean, "After the Anarchist Moment" *Socialist Register* 49 (2012).
- 27 *Ibid.*, 56.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 202.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 G. Agamben, "Movement" in *Generation Online*. Available at <http://www.generation-online.org/p/fpagamben3.htm>
- 31 L. von Stein, *The History of the Social Movement in France, 1789–1850* (Somerville: Bedminster Press, 1964).

- 32 Agamben, "Movement."
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Verso, 2012), 38.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 "Capital cannot disown schizoanalysis without de-fanging itself. The madness it would fend off is the sole resource of its own future; a fringe of de-socialized experimentation which corrodes its essence and anticipatively mocks the entirety of the currently existing modes of civility... the deep secret of capital-as-process is its incommensurability with the preservation of bourgeois civilization, which clings to it like a dwarf riding a dragon. As capital 'evolves' the increasingly absurd rationalization of production-for-profit peels away like a cheap veneer from the positive-feedback detonation of capital-for-production. If capital is a social suicide machine, it is because it is compelled to advantage its assassins." N. Land, "Making It with Death: Remarks on Thanatos and Desiring-Production" *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 24:1 (1993). The relevant passage in Deleuze and Guattari is: "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 theory and a practice of a highly schizophrenic character. Not to withdraw from the process, but to go further, to 'accelerate the process,' as Nietzsche put it: in this matter, the truth is that we haven't seen anything yet." G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Continuum, 2003), 260.
- 38 "The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers." K. Marx and F. Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," in S. Larsen and B. Nissen, Eds. *Theories of the Labor Movement* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 34.
- 39 B. Noys, quoted in S. Shaviro, *Post-Cinematic Affect* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2010), 136.
- 40 While constant capitalism is, of course, the condition to which movements must respond materially, since resistance does not take place in a vacuum, the distinction here is between the materially possible and the materially virtual, as Deleuze frames it.
- 41 P. Virilio, *Speed and Politics* (Brooklyn: Semiotext(e), 2007), 29.

- 42 Land, "Making It with Death."
- 43 Here though, one should note that Deleuze's articulation of the "yes of the ass" precedes Anti-Oedipus and thus, Land most likely missed some of the complexity of the original argument as well. See G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 183.
- 44 Land, "Making It with Death."
- 45 R. Brassier "Accelerationism" (audio recording, Backdoor Broadcasting Company). Available at <http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2010/09/accelerationism/>:

This is a conceptual problem with interesting practical and political consequences. It has a political valence, because I think it explains Nick's political trajectory from a kind of radical ultra-left anarchism. From a point when, in a paper called "Kant, Capital and the Prohibition of Incest: a polemical introduction to the configuration of philosophy and modernity," he says "the state apparatus of an advanced industrial society can certainly not be defeated without a willingness to escalate the cycle of violence without limits." Interestingly, in this paper, it's radical guerrilla militant lesbian feminists who are the only revolutionary subjects. He moves from this moment, where he's perfectly willing to endorse or affirm radicals, where his critique of the Marxist left is that it's not radical, revolutionary, or critical enough, and then five or six years later he seems to realize there is no bearer of revolutionary intensification left. Therefore politics must be displaced, it must be deputized, and all you can do is endorse or affirm impersonal processes which at least harbour the promise of generating or ushering in the next phase of deterritorialization. What does this mean? It means affirming free markets, deregulation, the capitalist desecration of traditional forms of social organization, etc. Why? Not because he thinks it's promoting individual democracy and freedom. He has to instrumentalize neo-liberalism in the name of something allegedly far darker and more potentially corrosive.

- 46 M. King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," in D. Jeske and R. Fumerton, Eds. *Readings in Political Philosophy: Theory and Applications* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2011), 218.
- 47 M. King, "I Have a Dream" in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 218.
- 48 As has appeared with recent calls for what might be referred to as "navigational accelerationism" and "diagonal authority." See A. Williams and N. Srnicek, "#ACCELERATE MANIFESTO for an Accelerationist Politics" *Critical Legal Thinking*, May 14, 2013, and Dean, *The Communist Horizon*, 238.

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