

//Hauntings of Ghostmodernity

These objects are no longer endowed with a 'soul', nor do they invade us with their symbolic presence: the relationship has become an objective one, founded on disposition and play. The value this relationship takes on is no longer of an instinctive or a psychological but, rather, of a tactical kind. What such objects embody is no longer the secret of a unique relationship but, rather, differences, and moves in a game.

— Jean Baudrillard, “Modular Components” *A System of Objects*

Key to a modular, customizable product is to identify which are the functions and parts of the product that are noticed and important to the customers. The rest of the product should be kept standard for as many product lines as possible.

— Heidi Quinger, German consultant for *brainmates.com.au*

A specter is haunting postmodernity, and that specter is accelerationism; what an apt metaphor to ruthlessly appropriate in a time like today. Could there ever be another way to say it? Accelerationism is the ghost *par excellence*, spectral in both form and content: form, as it is itself an exercise in self-reflexivity (it only exists to the degree in which it succeeds in describing itself); content, as it begins from a position of strict Kantian demarcation (it recognizes the impossibility of conceptual understanding in regards to the thing-in-itself (i.e. Capital)). What complicates this analysis further is fact that the specter itself has already died and gone, the heady and emancipatory potentials born out of the CCRU (and the 90's et al.) have all but totally burned out: accelerationism as it exists can be said to have a deeply hauntological character (in the Fisherian sense of the term). Accelerationism contains within it deep-seated scars of lost futures, lines of flight (or perhaps even evolution), which were placed under the paranoiac boot of the oughts, a time of such violent reterritorialization as has never been seen (something which (out of necessity) happened across

multiple, often intersected objects and disciplines (one only need look at the internet and it's ripples, beginning as a source of radical deterritorialization, the paranoid whiplash has been felt across nearly every aspect of our daily consumption: media (intellectual property), society (social media), politics (memes), ect.)). These new forms of consumption are increasingly tangled, something perhaps preempted by Baudrillard in his System of Objects when he notes the movement of objects towards modular compositions, becoming an "elusive space, which is no longer either a confined externality nor an interior refuge"; the reterritorializing aspects of the oughts were nothing if not a practice in wholesale modularization. Make no mistake however, between this twin dynamic of spectrality and hauntology, even at the passing of the vertex of our paranoia parabola, one sees the cracks, one sees accelerationism.

Accelerationism is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times it fits and starts; another apt metaphor in our little process of consumption – one that we can continue to the end; accelerationism breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks. It veils itself in metaphor, it dances behind silks and fineries while you tune yourself out on Zoloft, Xanax, Klonopin, Codine, the house-special, and a healthy swig of whatever they put in that last drink. The self-reflexivity of accelerationism is nothing less than violence to the self, a type of purification through witness, or eating sausages while watching them made. This is why accelerationism skews hard to the fictional and the satirical, it cannot take itself too serious, one cannot look directly into the abyss for more than a moment, not without a great risk to the self. There are three of these violent abysses by my count: the sun, the infinite, and Capital makes a neat trinity. Theory-fiction acts as a sort of self-blinder, the realm which allows for not only a sort of projector system (akin to the ones used to view solar eclipses) but also as a staging ground for speculative metaphysics, ontology, haeccity (acid philosophy). Theory-fiction is not a crutch of accelerationism, it is not a bug, rather it is a new mode of intellectual consumption, one which is to be fitted into its modular non-space in due time. Behind this veil Capital can dance, the thing-in-itself, becoming into a sublime object "composed of some other substance, one excepted from the vital cycle - a sublime body"¹ through which the transcendent collides in a gross, pornographic indulgence of the real. It is no wonder theory-fiction can be so readily associated with excess, a perverse *jouissance* in the peeling back of the paranoid face and simulating a glimpse of the body without organs it folds back upon. The abyss is always paired with this sublime excess: see how Kant's analysis of the sublime in the Third Critique divides itself into two parts, the sublime of the mathematical and the sublime of nature, the ideal mirrors of the abyss of the infinite and the abyss of thing-in-itself. The sun, in both

1 Zizek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*

myth and material conditions, is always both a sun above as ideal and as the reflection of the black sun, the very void of presubjectivity which permits a self in an object (I will just note here that the Third Critique associates no less an example of the Human than Fredrick the Great with his poetry about the sun).

Accelerationism is for us not a *state of affairs* which is to be established, an *ideal* to which reality will have to adjust itself. We call accelerationism the *real* movement which abolishes the present state of things. When Fisher said everyone was an accelerationist, and that Marxism is nothing if not accelerationist², he simply did not go far enough: everyone is a communist; for communism, as the movement which abolishes the state of things, is deterritorialization, and the analysis of the circuitry of deterritorialization is accelerationism. There is no difference here but complexity of analysis and subjective positions towards it. The notion of material dialectics is being quietly yet thoroughly assumed as the dominant ideological approach to philosophical materialism, for no other reason than the metaphysical description of acephalic history dictated by non-human relations tends towards meltdown – there is both arrogance and irony in the assumption that ‘if God is dead, man must be free’. Marx sided with the non-human metaphysically, and his humanist ontology, well, idealism has no place in the material dialectic – somewhere there was once a clean shaven Hegel who smells of ectoplasm and speed. Modularization enters historically as a line of proliferation for the networking of non-human intelligence and competing modes of hyperstital wetware cybernetics, taking advantage of decentralized distributions of nodal points provided with a “primitive margin of indetermination”³, or modulated non-spaces in which each machines in the system is programmed indeterminately (a true Turing machine is by definition fully indeterminate) and concretized in assemblages by which nodes self-narrow in scope and function based on various stratas of universal modes of consensus for the operation of the assemblage as a whole, a concertized literalization of the post-class society idealized in communism: *from each machine according to its ability, to each machine according to its needs.*

On Shitposts

Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must shitpost. The shitpost begins in earnest when Hegel labours the careful distinction between *Verstand* (intellect) and *Vernunft* (reason), criticizing

2 Fisher, Mark. *Terminator vs. Avatar*

3 Simondon, Gilbert. *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*

philosophy for its fetishism of *Verstand* as it is by nature something static, something which cannot reach to sublimate contradictions (i.e. the whole). *Vernunft* on the other hand is something active, although Hegel admits this activity takes place at a snail's pace; consider Hegel's infamous use of the verb *verweilen*, to tarry, something which implies stalling, lingering, delaying, but also something which is finite, it ends; in *Vernunft* there is always movement – just not quite yet. This delayed finitude is the space for sublation, the dissolution of contradictions, the position of unity, of the whole, the absolute to which understanding can never reach: “there are no absolute objective determinations for the intellect [i.e., in critical philosophy], but they are present for Reason [i.e., in speculative philosophy].”⁴ Was then the Phenomenology not simply an exercise in *Vernunft*, of a reason which reaches beyond mere reflection and understanding to the exercise of speculation, of forming absolute objective determinations over that which understanding does not yet grasp – the Phenomenology was a shitpost, and all shitposts are nets. The twofold concretization of the Phenomenology is evident in both the hyperstitious anaphylaxis of historically determinate totalitarian projects of the 20th century (Marxism and fascism) and the lingering feeling that even in a thoroughly post-Hegelian world he still remains, tarrying. One is familiar with warnings of Georg's specter, a threatening whisper urging us to consider that “[...] our anti-Hegelianism is possibly one of his tricks directed against us, at the end of which he stands, motionless, waiting for us.”⁵ We now see from our new vantage; Hegel remains as spectral in both form and content: form in that a system based on sublation must in itself be contradicted and sublated in order to function; content in that no one has ever really understood Hegel (perhaps Hegel himself least of all) – and so we come to find another specter haunting postmodernity, tarrying with his net, waiting for the speculative process to complete itself – but where are the shitposts to continue the speculate process? Where are the true speculative acts, *Vernunft* deterritorialized, the sublation of the contradictions – where is the acid philosophy? Only in accelerationism. Shitpost while you have a chance, for *Vernunft* is but an element of consciousness, and there comes the night in which, as one says, no theory is fiction.

4 Hegel, Georg. *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*

5 Foucault, Michel. *Discourse on Language*