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## *hic & nunc* / anticarpediem: LOW TECH POSTFUTURIST POETICS IN THE SERVICE OF THE SUBTONIC HI-FI

**ABSTRACT** Ever since humanity started a rush along the progress path, it seems that there has been an increase in desire to advance the endeavor in question. More often than not, the word faster has been used to signify betterment. How such erratic semantics can affect communication is among the issues pertinent to the thematic of this article. It looks at fictional portrayals of the hollowness of spam emails, swarmed interaction in the shadow of grotesquely absent fruitful conversation, and reverberation in the vast spaces void of communal cohesion. Neither demonizing nor lionizing either advanced technology or progress *per se*, but rather trying to discern in them—freed from distorted interpretation and perception—sources that render distraction and confusion soluble, the inquiry focuses on the idea and practice of the remix as a form of resistance to oppression, and a means in the service of the preservation of both individuality and unity epitomized in the notion of refacement. It seeks creative / critical responses against bewildering, yet remixable, cultural realities threatening to obfuscate language and dissolve solidarity within the community of human beings.

**Key words:** communication, creativity, critique, human, technology, distraction, focus

*The flock of birds had spiraled elsewhere, and Jean-Paul was gazing at the empty sky, which had nothing left to hint about itself unless blue air knows something I don't know.*

(Cooper 2011)

### AGAINST THE SPECTACLE OF ACCELERATION

If the information revolution enabled an internet of things, one wonders whether it renders human communication unthinkably marginal. If the technical aspect of technology can engender robo-poetics, one wonders whether it keeps poetry in the backyard of the adobe. Likewise, one wonders

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if literature is left at the door of the communication to which it is pivotal. And yet, the house calls for rethinking the rearrangements in question. It subtonically resists such a situation, since it perseveres in being unpopulatable by somnambulist symbolics.

In an age of peculiar cultural pluralism, twofold blessing enables voicing out diverse opinions and beliefs, simultaneously imposing boundaries on the vocabularies and threatening to cause disappearance of the human face. Thus, the means of peaceful/peaceable resistance against oppressive mechanisms of social control are sought to articulate that what refuses to disappear: opposing what contemporary culture imposes on one as the only way to read-write, think, and live. The endeavor is not entirely unlike the search for psychogeographic centers of gravity in the key of McKenzie Wark's observation about low theory presented in *The Beach beneath the Street: The Everyday Life and Glorious Times of the Situationist International* (2011). Drawing from Wark's ideas, low tech postfuturist poetics focuses on the possibilities for the remix. It galvanizes the tactics that reanimate semi-atrophied alertness to bewildering cultural flows, thereby reawakening the vitality of resistance against cynicism and forced, superficial entertainment as instances of a specific type of pollution-noise in the communication channel. It also illuminates the reintegrating potential of the remix.

Wark remarks Alexander Trocchi's pioneering and cohesive role in ensuring aggregating of people of akin persuasions around the Sigma movement. He invested in facilitating gathering of individuals of the shared experimenting affinities, thereby generating new forms of communality and vitalizing fresh modes of creation shielded from and opposing commodity culture. Utilizing simple technological devices, the new practice based on duplication and dissemination created a network for interpersonal and intercultural exchange. Centering the critique on Trocchi's interpersonal log and the use of stencil duplicator and mimeograph machine, Wark sums up the sense of communality where creative practice enables reimagining social relations:

“The term sigma stands in for a process, without beginning or end, without subject or goal, and yet which is not a mere abstract force, but something

experienced within the lived time of everyday life. This willful and collaborative play within and against creative forces is the thread that becomes lost under the conditions of spectacular society” (Wark 2011, 130).

Rather than confronting them frontally, this self-generating and self-dissolving practice provides subtle expressive modes of remapping cultural realities: “Trocchi found that this low-tech device also afforded a means for making low theory” (ibid., 132). The concept of low theory indicates a possibility for reconfiguring discourse reshifting it from high theory toward a more accessible, yet not oversimplified, not less rigorous vernacular. The advent of advanced technology inspires statements such as Wark’s: “The essence of technology is nothing technical” (ibid., 145). He goes on to ask: “But could it be something playful? Could it be a way, not of instrumentalizing nature, but of producing a new relation to it, as a totality?” (ibid., 145). He wonders: “Is it possible to imagine collective human agency as productive of something playful, joyous, communal, even beautiful?” (ibid., 144).

Part of the answer can be found in Stewart Home’s novel *Blood Rites of the Bourgeoisie* (2010). It presents visual arts relocated in the cyberspace of abstract literature where email communication operates as a voice sometimes manifest, at times subtonically present—a vessel for the information flow. Information exchange can be read as alternating cycles of noise and silence. These alternations can be perceived in the light of the remix: disambiguation of noise / silence in the communication channel. It is manifested as specific cyberpunk, albeit slightly modified, disruptions in the discursive, a subtle intervention on behalf of the DJ accentuating the significance of the verbally inexpressible, yet communicable, communication content. Not unlike the oneiric, yet lucid, James Joyce’s teaching in *Finnegans Wake* (1999).

Quite a few thinkers have been inspired by the idea. They might have worded their responses slightly differently. Their accounts may be historically shaded. Yet, as long as the message is comprehensible, that what resists verbalization can be detected and acknowledged, if not entirely understood. McKenzie Wark:

“In this tiresome age, when even the air melts into airwaves, when all that is profane is packaged as if it were profundity, the possibility yet emerges to hack into mere appearances and make off with them. There are other worlds and they are this one” (Wark 2004, par. 389).

In Home’s book *Blood Rites of the Bourgeoisie*, communication is situated in the language of ones & zeros. Binary coding is the kind of interaction that reflects isolation of the characters from their fictitious bodies, nearly disassociated from their words.

Afflicted literature wants to be decoded:

“Abstract Literature implodes in a subdued fashion, like a slow motion reversal of an explosion or some other catastrophe. It absorbs all energy generated by writing as a cultural practice and neutralises it. Abstract Literature is a billowing series of syllables followed by an eruption of colour. It is usually red with purple flashes” (Home 2010, 5).

According to Home, “abstract literature” does not exist. Yet, its potential, sketchy definition obviously does. It seems that sometimes words are being dismissed and invented without much consideration about their relationship with the extralinguistic. One of the words that has undergone such hasty handling is alienation. In the world that dismisses and conjures up words with little concern for the everyday, communication acquires properties of “the imperceptible passages of distant galaxies through hyper-space” (ibid., 6). Thus, one wonders what to call an unpleasant feeling that some human beings experience in the cold of communication channels. One would be prone to suspect if, perhaps, it is the word communication that calls for reconfiguring. The dilemma informs ruminations about amnesiac noise pollution, about a nonexistent feeling of being isolated from something that does not exist, as is evident from Terry Eagleton’s meditations upon the subject matter:

“The depthless, styleless, dehistoricized, decathected surfaces of postmodern culture are not meant to signify an alienation, for the very concept of alienation must secretly posit a dream of authenticity which postmodernism finds quite unintelligible. Those flattened surfaces and hollowed interiors are not ‘alienated’ because there is no longer any subject to be alienated and

nothing to be alienated from, ‘authenticity’ having been less rejected than merely forgotten” (Eagleton 1986, 132).

Therefore, one reimagines human interconnectivity on the communal level in the way that ensures genuine exchange and relieves one from disconnectedness. In Home’s novel *Blood Rites of the Bourgeoisie*, communication is limited to overpouring spam emails. Ads promoting aids and supplements for sexual performance come in shapes and forms that could be appealing to any male concerned with his social status. In such a world, physical potency and cultural constructs curiously conspire with vocabularies of corporally conditioned hierarchies and power relations narratives. In a world of male supremacy, it is only the names of female artists that help re-define the type of pleasure typically articulated in terms of phallic symbolic (Home 2010, 7).

In the world that casts aside the concept of representation, representational arts have been gotten rid of, as well: “Theatre is dead. Cinema is dead” (ibid., 10). Such culture of confusion wants one to believe that literature abandoned readers-writers:

“Literature is dead. Time and space died yesterday. You eat dead food, you fuck dead men, even your words die in your mouth. Your sentences are rolled into the ebbing waters of modernism and then wash back like a bulimic’s forced vomiting” (ibid.).

Deceitful messages call for subtonic ruptures in discourse. They are constitutive of the remix of noise: an ecoinvention that redeems the union of the fellowship from semi-phantom alienation and pervasive proprietary social relations emptying resistance of the potential for containing, rather than escaping the problem of power. Noteworthy is the distinction in the context of reshifting and fine-tuning power relations narratives (Wark 2008, 10). The problematic evokes the questions of dominance and coercion manifested in the ways cultural fragmentation and compartmentalization threaten to afflict the right and freedom to the remix.

To say that we now live in a technologically advanced age is slightly redundant, as the fact seems more than obvious. To say that communal cohesion is disproportionate to technological development might be disputable. To define the disparity in terms of narrowly understood causality and conditioning would be crude reductionism and not an accurate articulation of the solidarity within the fellowship. Clearly, the remix is needed in order to reconstitute refacement—to reawaken the union of the community of selfless, yet reindividualized, humans. Accordingly, the DJ acts in concert with Terry Eagleton’s critique of radical constructivism: “Surely life itself must have a say in the matter” (Eagleton 2007, 67).

The poetics of Home’s novel demands a response against fashionable cynicism of contemporary culture. It calls for resistance against dispassionate acceptance of delusional thinking. It inspires thinking about language. Language is elusive: it resists absolutely precise and/or total signification. However, it is also protective. By making manifest its own imperfection, it silently acknowledges its limits. Analogously, it reconfirms the limits of human grandeur and reaffirms human potentials. It does so by demonstrating the impossibility of replicating what contemporary pluralist discourse suspiciously calls authenticity. By doing so, it also constitutes a decisive response toward disentanglement of a confusing apprehension of discourse and discursively conditioned realities, thereby enabling a clear view of the alternating cycles of noise and silence in the communication channel. It ensures keeping the focus on postfuturist forms of resistance against oppression, and in the service of the remix.

From the ashes of that self-dissolving / self-preserving act, the remix is being born. Language, while revealing its constructiveness, simultaneously disambiguates a misconception about the totality of discourse. By extension, it is reasonable to believe that culturally constructed realities we know are not immune from remixing, either. To acknowledge it is to choose. The choice is the right to the remix : To choose resistance to noise. To refuse to be absent from the abundance offered to humanity. To persevere in resensitizing to literary subtleties. To sustain subtonic hi-fi in the service of language. To whole-heartedly accept to hard-headedly endure in being present in life. Like refacement : rebirth of the human face through alternating cycles of noise and

silence : reintegration of the subtonic layers preserving the wholesome sound of creation.

## ALL THE WAY TO – BALANCE

What Richard Rorty criticizes romanticism for is the overlooked capacity to disavow the status of a privileged cultural vocabulary ascribed to poetry. Exalting the idea of a poeticized culture in *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), he certainly does not undervalue the redemptive potential of creation. Nevertheless, he strives to maintain the much needed restraint to unleashed interpretations of cultural remapping through the stages of diverse kinds of divinization of discourse. In *Consequences of Pragmatism: Essays, 1972-1980* (1982), Rorty fervently espouses what he calls weak textualism as a means of avoiding a deceitful idea about the totality of discourse and, simultaneously, taming the equally delusional thinking in the key of human omnipotence.

In one of his essays in cultural phenomenology, Steven Connor vocalizes rebellious reflections against “the imperialism of spirit” (Connor 2006, 1). He aptly criticizes the supremacy of and hegemonic streaks within the legacy of the age of reason, yet always reasserting the indisputability of the significance of the ability to reason. Further, in the context of the tendencies in certain schools of thought to overspiritualize, dematerialize, and/or overrationalize self, the world, and discourse, he proposes a balanced take on the reconfiguration of the traditional subject-object dichotomy. Not entirely unlike Baudrillard’s theorizing in *The Vital Illusion* (2000), Connor rejects objectification of that what cannot be thought of in terms of things. Likewise, he insists on refusing to credit the inanimate with the capacity to be subjects. Pondering the thematics, Connor states: “The things towards which the mind is directed are paradoxically both in the mind and outside them” (Connor 2006, 4).

In the tradition of the power of weakness, Connor’s thought is considered particularly with regard to his observation about the negotiations along the subordination-dominance scale: “Romanticism was particularly keen on motions of subsuming” (ibid., 1). Rather than in kinetic terms, the dynamics should instead be meditated upon in relation to the much needed dialectic of humbleness and elevation. Clearly, in the context which divinizes discourse, it

cannot be imagined and contemplated in a sufficiently precise fashion. If the romantics overspiritualized poetry, it only means that such a situation calls for disambiguation. The context in which this remixing sidekick technique is thinkable is certainly Connor's magnificent device called "impassioned emptying" (ibid., 8). Humbly, yet shamelessly, he remarks: "But to know yourself is to develop an intentional relation to yourself, to be able to constitute yourself as part of the world" (ibid., 7).

Connor, conditionally speaking, entertains the idea of losing oneself (ibid., 3), presumably within the dynamics of the notion of being oneself. The versatility of potentially misleading manifestations of the increments on such a scale is illuminated through etymological tracking of the modifications of the meaning of the word intentionality:

"In philosophical usage, particularly that of the medieval Scholastics, 'intentionality' has this meaning of 'directedness', rather than 'purposiveness'. Intentionality is the condition of having an aim or object, not meaning to do something" (ibid., 4).

The perception of so understood notion of intentionality stems from Connor's succinct scrutiny and reiteration of the idea of relationality. It is particularly observed in the context of the question of the correlation between the mind and the world. While, as Richard Rorty claims, the world might be indifferent to our descriptions of it (Rorty 1989, 6), that fact by no means invites indiscriminate linguistic proliferation of descriptions. While it is indisputable that what we can say about the world is what our mind filters allow, this by no means entails that any portrayal of it is discernible, cogent, and viable. In other words, what is needed is to humbly adjust our redescriptions, although we cannot expect either an absolute confirmation or renouncement on behalf of the world. That is what is here celebrated as unshakeable balancing of constant uncertainties: throughout the remix. While self identification is invaluable, self-referentiality is not.

If such a strategy can elucidate obfuscating self-centeredness, strangely aligned with de-individualizing hollowness, it does so from the perspective here known as the reconstitution and reconsolidation of the distinction



between individualism and individuality, between uniformity and unity. It is, in other words, the context here appreciated from the angle of refacement: rebirth of the human face through alternating cycles of noise and silence / subtonic hi-fi solidarity of selfless, yet reindividualized, fellow humans united in persistent and patient enduring hindrances to the creation of a free culture based on trust and love.

## FOR DISSENSUS CONSENSUS IS NEEDED

The thematic portrayed here is partly an acknowledgement of the idiosyncrasies pivotal to the genre forged through the hybrid form such as essay at cultural phenomenology—a crossbreed between a style of writing, an epistemological perspective, and a discipline. Partly, it can be perceived as the cluster of questions informing the subject matter of Steven Connor’s piece entitled “Obnubilation” (2009).

Few can deny the intensity of the experience of immersing oneself in cloudgazing. The symbolic of clouds oscillates between the ominous and the numinous, between the benevolent and the sinister, between form and insubstantiality, between monstrosity and solace. In Connor’s essay, clouds roll now as lumpy, slimy miasma, now as thick gaseous formations, yet magically penetrable by majestic rays. Like obstacles in the communication channel, clouds hinder the flow. And yet, the rays persist. Like obstacles in the communication channel, clouds distort the image of the sky. And yet, they are also “a source of vitalising rain” (Connor 2009, 5). They epitomize the idea of density. Overarching the sites below, they fuse the concepts of volume and tumult. Like a swarmed motion, they exude a sense of turbulence. They breathe into the atmosphere rhythm of collision. Their movements are restless and chaotic. And yet, suggestive of quirky consistency. The rays persist.

Elevated, like inflated droplets, swollen divinities, clouds appear as “the scene or source of visions of prodigious horror” (ibid., 7). Like magnified bulbous travelers across the horizon, (self)-dissolving terror-vapor — between water and air / between earth and air.

The notion and the phenomenon suggested in the title of Connor's essay can be thought through the idea of the historicizable ahistorical. To bring the context closer to the core debate of this work, one is prone to invoke the frequently stated historical fact about the contribution of certain artists on the way creation is perceived. For example, it has often been indicated how revolutionary the sound of the Stooges, especially the 1969 self-titled album, has been. As much as that particular one can be thought of in the context of the revolutionary role, so can it be said that the following ones have been of very specific significance for the history of subcultural voices. *Fun House* (1970), for instance, relies on a darkish psychedelic strain inherited from the preceding decade, and yet, featured in a slightly modified fashion. Not only did it bring to the music scene reflections about and echoes of the liberatory predilections for the experiment such as the sound of the Stooges, but it also introduced a hint of where such inquisitiveness was going to find fruition, albeit conditionally speaking. More precisely, *Raw Power* (1973) vocalizes rebellion the way rusty, slimy sewers would display a commentary on the manners and nuances of discharge layers manifesting themselves over time.

This fervent unorthodoxy, innate to the music of the band, set the tonal frame in the light of the signature unadulterated invocation of the opacity imbued in fuzzy, grumpy, unrefined, untamed intensity of nonconformity : the alphabet of resistance : a selective approach to the vacillations between dissensus & consensus. Thus, it, if not foreshadowed, then inspired the nascent punk rock generation to adopt certain aspects of the subversive idiosyncratic idiom and intertwine them with the novel creative / critical accounts of the world. As if it were now, the hybrid including both robust, defiant edginess and a vibrant, yet gentle, lyrical streak of sorts opened up the avenue of exploring, on the one hand, a troublesome socioscope calling for an increase in communal cohesion and, on the other, demands at the level of the individual in the key of integrity, as well.

How the band's music redescribed the musical pattern of the sixties seems to be of particular relevance. Given the following decade that brought the advent of punk rock, little doubt can be cast upon such an assumption. And yet, the generations that have been introduced to the fruits of this paradigm modification in the aftermath are highly unlikely to ever experience the

authentic freshness of the sound in question. This by no means diminishes either the pleasure gotten from or the reverence for either the revolution or its fruits.

Conversely, other contexts do not seem to necessitate the same kind of historicity. For instance, no firsthand experience of the epoch is needed in order for one to be provided with an unhindered access to the reasoning depicted in Michelangelo Antonioni's 1961 film *The Night (La Notte)*. No historication is needed to discern the significance of poise. Namely, in the wee hours of the morning, amid decadent luxury of the party at the Gherardini family, Lidia (stunningly acted by Jeanne Moreau) wanders in solitude. Directionless, she comes across a young man named Roberto. A sudden spell of a night summer shower entails a seductive conversation in the stranger's car. Driving through the forest of rain. A romance is emerging from the horizon of the mansion where they return. Soaked. What it is that motivates Lidia's withdrawal confronted with Roberto's (charmingly subtle, yet courageous, cameo played by Giorgio Negro) lips approaching hers might elude verbal articulation. Perhaps, it is not something entirely divergent from that what makes Valentina Gherardini (glamorously portrayed by Monica Vitti), having almost gotten involved in a wild adventure with Lidia's husband, Giovanni Pontano (the role, sublimating the troubling hollowness borne out of sweeping—dazzlingly solemn—alienation, presented by Marcello Mastroianni), restrain herself from interfering with the marriage.

Given the subtext within which inexplicable dynamics of the overarching question about what it is is sought, it is not unreasonable to contemplate the humbleness of accepting the answer and understanding it without entirely comprehending it in the context of Connor's idea of impassioned emptying, as presented in his essay "How to Get out of Your Head: Notes toward a Philosophy of Mixed Bodies". It may easily be the very kindred concept that ensures the perception of the significance of bands such as the Stooges. Likewise, it could appease the hardship of the conundrum epitomized in the idea anchoring the notion of the historicizable ahistorical.

## REALISTICALLY UTOPIANISH SPEAKING

### 1 LOOK! DIFFERENTLY

In “Nostalgic Technology: Notes for an Off-Modern Manifesto,” Svetlana Boym theorizes erroneousness of technology as a parallel to human fallibility, implying that technological imperfection reveals a possibility for the “exploration of the side alleys” (Boym n.d., n.pag.). Paradoxically, this provides a platform for reading-writing, thinking, and living differently from what cultural realities tend to impose on one. It informs the capacities to see a streak of imperfection not as justification, proof, or a definition of human nature, but rather as a potential for reaffirming other aspects of humanness.

This opens up an off-modern avenue for neither quixotically fighting the technological goliath nor sheepishly following its commandments. It presents one with a possibility to see the world afresh if one opts for off-modern alleys, instead of modern, postmodern, antimodern, hypermodern, or any other variant to signify the discourse and culture in the light of the linguistic turn. By extension, the question of the human face is reinstated, inspiring one to think that “to err is human” should not be confusedly equated with “to be human is to err”. Because to simply be—to resist the noise of a mindless “progress” rush—is human, as well. Terry Eagleton: “Because we are able to be false to our natures, there is some virtue in our being true to them” (Eagleton 2003, 110).

Pressing the power button on an electronic device often entails a visual sensation. The focus of the activity is communication between the sense of sight and the brain. When the communication is initiated by a signal from the screen, the screen becomes a participant in the communication flows. How that complicates the interaction between it and the interlocutor is encapsulated in Jan Jagodzinski’s notion of the inverted gaze. In *Youth Fantasies: The Perverse Landscape of the Media* (2004), he investigates the effects of the exchange between the viewer and the screen. Despite the seeming activity, that in the cases of heavily addicted gamers nearly equals a round-the-clock engagement in digital adventures, a mutual effect on the participants Jagodzinski characterizes as interpassivity. In the context of the inverted

gaZe that jagodzinski analyzes primarily with regard to computer gaming, the subject gazes at the object and the object gazes back. Gazing and being gazed at generates an interaction that triggers certain activity and, at the same time, subverts it. In cyberspace, the subject is involved in the communication within which is developed a sense of absolute control: “This is a perverted subject since it can act as a god—a demigod” (jagodzinski 2004, 195).

As a matter of fact, the subject is being submerged in interpassivity—deceptive communication with the object. In his psychoanalytic reading, jagodzinski calls such a situation “a psychosis where authority disappears” (ibid., 97). jagodzinski contextualizes the world of demigods within Ego-games that inform a deceitful idea of the aggrandized self and a perverted image of power. Within such interaction, the relationship between the subject and the object is the horizon of disappearance of interpassive demigods.

Seemingly, terra digita is the land of opportunities that requires no strenuous moral efforts. And yet, it is hard to imagine effortless perpetual hyperreal networking. Even if freed from all ridiculous ethical burden, threatening to overshadow the light from the screen, at least one unpleasantness remains: that one has the body. The other one is that there is an unstoppable activity of the mind. jan jagodzinski: “Such technology has made all of us walking cyborgs. So where is the ‘No!’ to be found?” (ibid., 186).

Resistance to robozomboid mentality should not be confused with the activity as it is promoted in contemporary culture, which does not leave a single empty second, which worships passivity inhibitor placebo—self-celebratory muscular kinetics, coupled with infantilized euphoric-ecstatic sentiment, which makes the world a bottomlessly somnambulist empire. Resistance against reckless instrumentalization hides, among other places, in reconfiguring the subject-object nexus neither via re-examining their political positioning in terms of narrowly defined power relations nor solely via redescribing their ontological statuses. Rather, by being “free to undo” (Joyce 1999, 208), as high priest of the supreme imagination teaches.

A possible trajectory of undoing, disentangling the knots of noise infested cultural flows can be found in Paul Virilio’s book *Open Sky* (1997), in which

he remarks pollution by velocity: “Alongside air pollution, water pollution and the like, there exists an unnoticed phenomenon of pollution of the world’s dimensions that I propose to call *dromospheric* – from *dromos*: a race, running” (Virilio 1997, 22; original emphasis). The pollution is related to “forgetting *the essence of the path, the journey*” (ibid., 23; original emphasis).

He proposes dromology as antidistracted antidote against desertification resulting from dromospheric contamination. Thus, dromology: an ecology recuperating “the pace of public life” (ibid.), redeeming the public realm void of communication, despite verbal content being the apparent currency. In that context, the center of the subject-object (thematic) is reconfigured. It is replaced by being relocated on the path erroneously kept out of focus of the critical debate: “Between the subjective and the objective it seems we have no room for the ‘trajective’” (ibid., 24). Or, do we not, indeed?

In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Richard Rorty writes:

”I can crudely sum up the story which historians like Blumenberg tell by saying that once upon a time we felt a need to worship something which lay beyond the visible world. Beginning in the seventeenth century we tried to substitute a love of truth for a love of God, treating the world described by science as a quasi-divinity. Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century we tried to substitute a love of ourselves for a love of a scientific truth, a worship of our own deep spiritual or poetic nature, treated as one more quasi divinity” (Rorty 1989, 22).

In the light of the critique of a distorted understanding of progress as an allegedly advanced version of the legacy of the Enlightenment, in *Open Sky*, Paul Virilio examines the evolvment of scientific axioms of sorts. One of the aspects of the debate particularly focuses on the adjustment being made within the time / space / distance triad. Situated in relation to the categories of speed and acceleration, the three seem to be undergoing considerable redescriptions. Virilio is prone to back up the discussion with the constant called the limit of the speed of light, thereby ensuring a critical distance toward and indicating a limit to potential, uncontrollable reconfigurations of the components of the equation and the equation itself.

Namely, the mutually conditioning relationship between discourse and cultural realities have apparently brought about a resultant confusion, so to speak. More precisely, emphasizing speed tends to entail shifts in the perception of temporality to the point of a radical destabilization of the notion and experience of chronology, “an unprecedented temporal breakdown” (Virilio 1997, 71), as Virilio puts it. This is more often than not manifested in uncritical debunking of historical thinking.

Coupled with this is a propensity enabled by advanced technologies that creates an impression of space reduced solely to virtual dimensions. In the vein of Virilio’s critique of telepresence--virtual interaction, outdoing other modes of communication--it is possible to seek seeds of recuperation from the ashes of dissolving dialogue associated with ascribing to the human and, by extension, to the virtual properties incommensurable with these categories, notably omnipotence and ubiquity.

Virilio claims that certain transmutations are occurring within the time / space / distance triad polluted by the dominance of speed, i.e., within cultural realities that impose distorted relations among the three, hence entailing negligence of the very central notion and phenomenon: the journey. This he calls dromospheric pollution. One of its manifestations is a threat of the colonization of the bodily realm by “prostheses that make the super-equipped able-bodied person almost the exact equivalent of the motorized and wired disabled person” (ibid., 11).

These tectonic spatiotemporal reconceptualizations that Virilio suggestively and aptly dubs as “the desert of world time - of a *global* time – complementing the desert of flora and fauna rightly decried by ecologists” (ibid., 125; original emphasis) call for a specific type of greening. Such a state of affairs, implying spatiotemporal desertification, threatens to cause redescriptions of the concept of *durée*. And yet, *durée* endures. To explain the paradox in question requires, perhaps, an intervention that fortunately fails to meet expectations, thereby simultaneously reconfirming the limits and the greatness of the human.

Where eradication of the historical perspective sabotages a sense of the future, insistence on euphoric instantaneity seemingly obliterates the focus on the here and now. Through the prism of Steven Connor's parlance, the polemic can be approached from the perspective of the refined perception of intentionality as directedness, rather than a goal oriented activity. Likewise, Connor's trope of impassioned emptying vividly illustrates the redemptive potential of the otherwise devastating situation of telepresent bodiless bodies.

Noting, yet not anathemizing, overstatements about the value of virtual spatiotemporality, simultaneously acknowledging the role of the cyborg sphere, pondering the perplexities re-focuses on the distraction-free domain. Were it not for the context of Virilio's thought that ensures a different perspective, one would not be surprised by his dystopian account. Likewise, had he not explicate a take on a hidden perspective (ibid., 2) in the crevice of the somewhat apocalyptic portrayal, one might succumb to the idea of ruthless, coercive desertification – a conquest of velocity over the trajectory – one could surrender to a reckless, oppressive tyranny of acceleration, dislocation into a distraction called noise in the communication channel.

And yet, *durée* endures. Virilio indicates an angle that enables defiant resistance to a verisimilitude of noise. In an empire of the ocular, domineering visual sensations inflict overexposure as a prevalent mode of noise. Here, the "*right to blindness*" (ibid., 96; original emphasis) is asserted against politics of distraction. Paul Virilio: "Sometimes all you have to do is look differently to see better" (ibid., 97).

Thus, *hic & nunc / anticarpediem* poetics celebrates the power of weakness as an enduring source of a critical / creative perspective worshipping the investment in a balanced approach to discourse, cultural realities, and their mutually conditioning relationship. By so doing, it not only secures critical distance toward the misconception about the totality of discourse, but also demonstrates the point from which remixable character of cultural realities is revealed. Specifically, highlighting the idea of the historicizable ahistorical, the remix neither lionizes the past nor romanticizes the future. It does not glamorize ecstatic sensationalism of instantaneity, either. Rather, it glorifies the possibility of redeeming the past, reimagining the future, and resurrecting the present.



## 2 AFTER VELOCITY : DROMOLOGY

Reflections about objectivity/subjectivity have led to the insights into the possibilities arising from the repositioning of the categories in question within the communication in hyperreality. Jean Baudrillard speculates about it in *The Vital Illusion*. The crux of the thematic Baudrillard sees in hyperreality of the world of fabricated information and proliferated, media saturated realities. Within a portrayal of a quirky epistemological shift manifested in objective irony, Baudrillard aptly remarks that hyperreality ensures an environment for a reconfiguration of the traditional hegemonic subject epitomizing the classic epistemological paradigm. In a new, hyperreal scenario, the subject no longer discovers the object by knowing it, but is also discovered. This enables the remix of both. Clearly, it also alters the relationship between them. Such reshifting creates a context that reveals both tradition and contemporary cultural realities as remixable.

According to Baudrillard's cultural critique, in hyperreality, the classic epistemological narrative featuring the traditional hegemonic subject that discovers the object by *knowing* it is redefined. In hyperreality, passivity rules; hence, it is not through the activity of the subject that the object is discovered. It could be inferred that the object, being invented rather than discovered by the subject, simultaneously discovers, or, rather, invents the subject. The passivity of the object tends to deprive the subject of its subjectivity either by objectifying it, or, simply, by rendering it redundant. By the same token, the object is being reconfigured within its own self-dissolving inactivity: "This duel engaged in by the subject and the object means the loss of the subject's hegemonic position: the object becomes the horizon of the subject's disappearance. Obviously, this new scenario, this new dramaturgy, is opposed to the classic theory of knowledge" (Baudrillard 2000, 76–7). The epistemological shift at play Baudrillard calls reversion and compares it to a discovery of a virus. Such an object is indifferent to both being discovered and the subject that it discovers. Yet, such indifference generates a specific kind of activity out of passivity: "This is what I call objective irony: there is a strong probability, verging on a certainty, that systems will be undone by their own systematicity" (ibid., 78).

It inspires metaphorical thinking about language as an epitome of the dialectic of consumption and creation. Language is elusive. It resists an absolutely precise and/or total signification. However, it is also protective. By making manifest its own imperfection, it silently acknowledges its limits. Analogously, it shows the limits of human grandeur and reaffirms human potentials. It does so by demonstrating the impossibility of replicating what contemporary pluralist discourse suspiciously calls authenticity.

Such a situation calls for a further elaboration: interrogating specificities of its impact on the object. Or, the subject. Or, the way human beings read-write, think, and live: how objective the subject should be/can be in order to recuperate human dignity; how a culture of distraction frees the object in the world of the dethroned subject; how free a value-free subversion is; how disinterested a value-free subject is; how victory defines itself in the newly created situation.

Possible explanations to a great extent depend on the reading mechanisms utilized in reconfiguring vocabulary of culture. To simplify it, without being simplistic, one is prone to see disinterested reading of subjectivity as somewhat similar to metaphorical blindness, meaning being metaphor-blind, but, perhaps, also metaphorically blind. This indicates an alarmingly high degree of irony-sensor scarcity. Essentially, it results from being desensitized to literary subtleties necessary for refining the remix.

From the ashes of that self-consuming/self-preserving act, the remix is being born. Language, while revealing its constructiveness, simultaneously disambiguates a misconception about the totality of discourse. By extension, it is reasonable to believe that culturally constructed realities we know are not immune from remixing either. In order to sustain that awareness, one is (re)sensitized to the literary subtleties needed for “discovering” the necessary object in which, as Baudrillard urges, not to believe. In the world of slippery boundaries between the living and the inanimate, the very notion of the animate is being rendered disputable. In such a context, realities might be merely hypostatized worlds engaged in by participants, but they can also ensure the participants’ rebirths.

That said, Virilio's desertification trope is a helpful tool. It can devise a technique for describing peculiarities in the lacunae: to read ironically the triumph of the supposed subversive interventions and to understand such victory as an exodus crowned by the fruits of the promised land. After velocity, dromology. After the bewildering wilderness, purifying water. After the passage across the river, the radical light shift. After the oblivion-inducing desert, resensitizing to the power of metaphor.

### 3 WEAVING THE WEB : REINTEGRATING POTENTIAL OF THE REMIX

A way to reawaken those atrophied sensors is reading how Dennis Cooper's novel *The Marbled Swarm* (2011) weaves an obscure world of a mysterious linguistic web epitomizing self-dissolving / self-preserving potentials of language:

"I learned this quote-unquote exalted style of speaking from my father, who originally cooked it up after several early business trips around the Western world. He nicknamed it 'the marbled swarm', which I agree is a cumbersome mouthful, and its ostensible allure received a decent portion of the credit for accruing his, now my, billions" (Cooper 2011, 48).

The story is told in a low-pitch voice...an enigmatic husky whisper, in the key of measured, balanced kitch'n'sink mystery-meets-horror narrative. Its seductive, meandering tunnels tell a tale about a boyish young man, sickeningly rich, emotionally sickening, and metaphorically sick. S/he inherited from quote-unquote father the language called *the marbled swarm*, a blissfully devilish, enchanting weaponry woven into idyllic countryside and urban labyrinthine battlefields alike: *Paris über alles!*

S/he comes to the chateau that s/he is about to buy. The family who are selling the haunted castle immediately reveal the presence of the ghost of their late son Claude to be part of the reason for deciding to sell it. Claude's brother Serge befriends the future owner. Having shaken on that one, they see potential for the deal opening up the avenues for solving the mystery of the death that could be a suicide, a murder, or neither.

Claude, possibly his own patricidal father Jean-Paul, is out of his mind while performing the transcendental confirmation of his presence in the memory of the fictitious impersonation of his late brother Serge, “a most unsightly daydream in which a beet-red, hyperventilating infant gave birth to another crimson, screaming infant” (ibid., 4). Safely hidden from the public eye in the trunk of the car heading for Paris, their mother Claire indulges in the bestiality of a fratricidal act conducted on the twins called Jean and Paul engaged in the act of a mutual, self-imposed *affixation*.

Claude-Paul’s suicidal girlfriend is an emo-faced version of Claire’s subterranean swamp empire in the basement of the chateau, “if that mixture of recalcitrance and focus is even possible” (ibid., 7). The *éminence grise*, the family chauffeur, orchestrates the family saga remotely. The idyllic, pastoral scenery acts as the rhetorical code of the narrative, which enables its participatory properties. The arcadian landscape becomes a literary device whose role is that of a semi-permeable membrane selectively remixing the flow from the abutting tales. Its rustic charm assumes the function of prenatal performative ontoethics of postmortem aesthetics:

Q: We are not robozombies!

A: We are not robozombies!

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Accordingly, and as mentioned before, McKenzie Wark’s vocabulary in *50 Years of Recuperation of the Situationist International* proposes containing, rather than escaping the problem of power. This finds fertile soil in an attempt to grapple with the fusion of the problem of power, the question of knowledge, and the notion of commodity. Fabrication of knowledge might be the crudest example of it, but a no lesser evil is expropriated knowledge, quite frequently mobilized as a vehicle oiled by and fueling a misconception about the totality of discourse and the way it is reflected on the dynamics within cultural realities – ivory/babylonian atopia between ruritania and cyborg urbanity, between the nodal and the central.

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*hic & nunc anticarpediem* low tech postfuturist poetics re-focuses on the distraction free cyborg interconnectivity. Solidifying the web, it re-consolidates solidarity within the fellowship of learners. Anchored in humbleness, it glorifies the possibility of redeeming the past, reimagining the future, and resurrecting the present, thereby reintegrating forms of resistance against noise, and in the service of the remix.

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If this way of DJing the roots of mafotherlands is linguistically sinful, let's immerse our good selves in the blasphemy of creatively critical corrosion of discursive authenticity. If the flow is a potential anagram of something else, let's play Silent Spelling Bee. Yo! If a communicational tunnel can become the communication channel, please stay tuned *just* phunkie green. Yo!

If it is antisubtonic to assume that a dream of self-creation is incompatible with selflessness and / or cultural remixing in the spirit of communal cohesion, one would humbly opt for an allegiance with the offspring of the bloody phunkie DJ postfuturist mafothers. If this way of reimagining literature, practice, and the everyday sounds too utopian for the pluralist critical taste, too bad for the consensus. Postfuturist storytelling finds the challenge worthy of resistance. Because the remix simply is in alignment with life.

If to follow the radical guiding light of refacement is perceived as contradictory to critical / creative supracultural remapping, one should be modest enough to be reborn through silence and solidarity of selfless, yet re-individualized, fellow humans engaged in enduring hindrances to the creation of a free culture based on trust and love.

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Primljeno: 24.08.2015.

Prihvaćeno: 2.10.2015.

## *hic & nunc / anticarpediem*: Low Tech & Hi-Fi

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**Sažetak:** Otkako je ljudski rod počeo da hita putem napretka, čini se da je potreba za intenziviranjem tog iskustva sve veća. Veoma često se reč *brže* koristi u značenju dobrobiti. Način na koji tako opskurna semantika može da utiče na komunikaciju je među pitanjima usko vezanim za tematiku ovog rada kontekstualizovanu u okviru proznih skica, ispraznosti *spam i-mejl*ova, bizarnoj interakciji u senci grotesknog odsustva smislene konverzacije i odzvanjanju praznine prostora bez solidarnosti i zajedništva. Niti anatemišući, niti idealizujući savremenu tehnologiju ili napredak *per se*, nego pokušavajući da se iz njih apstrahuje – bez balasta iskrljenih tumačenja i shvatanja – izvor reagensa koji rastvara distrakciju i konfuziju, tekst istražuje idejni i praktični aspekt remiksa kao oblika otpora protiv represije i kao sredstva u službi očuvanja individualnosti i jedinstva ovaploćenih u pojmu rifejsmenta (rekonstituisanja ljudskog lica). Osnovu promišljanja navedenih tema čini potraga za kreativnim / kritičkim odgovorima na zbunjujuće, ali remiksu podložne, kulturne realnosti koje prete da unesu pometnju u sferu jezika i umanje solidarnost u okviru ljudske zajednice.

**Ključne reči:** komunikacija, kreativnost, kritika, ljudsko, tehnologija, distrakcija, fokus