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HOW SOON SOON IS: DYS-TO-PIAN IS NOT IN IT

ABSTRACT The communication channel in the community of human beings can be sound socioscope ensuring genuine exchange. Conversely, it can be polluted by noise-diverse forms of oppression. The advent of advanced technology and the mutually conditioning relationship between language and discursively conditioned cultural realities expose some of the salient aspects of this dual dynamics. This article looks at Jeff Noon's short fiction from the collection *Pixel Juice* in conversation with Douglas Rushkoff's critique in *Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now*. It is sensitized both to the thematic and stylistic streaks of the texts in question. They resonate with the key of the reading-writing, as it is generated in the encounters with them. Presenting and demonstrating the characteristics pivotal to the remix – based on the idea and the practice of the potential of/for thriving human communication – the article is suggestive of immediacy, yet it objects to instantaneity. Summoning up revolutionizing thoughts from the past, notably those found in Plato's and Thomas Kuhn's writings, it reinstates both the significance of tradition and its remixable nature. While relying on the existing samples, it engenders idiosyncratic content. It plays with the sources preserving their integrity. Celebrating experimentation, it understands the connection with the heritage. It seeks wholesome social responses to individuality and communality. Reflecting on, depicting, and emerging in the intersection of the time axes, it reconsolidates the relevance of redeeming the past, reimagining the future, and resurrecting the present. It is a manifestation of the vitality of the remix.

Keywords: language, communication, discourse, community, individuality, technology, oppression, noise, the remix

NO RUSH

There is a town in a faraway country where stories intersect, tracks resonate, and space and time have languages of their own. Jeff Noon's story "Crawl Town" depicts a settlement located in a fictitious world somewhere

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“to the north of Manchester” (Noon 2000 [1998], 294). It is veiled by a *mi-asma* of staleness, torpor, and inhibition. The graveyard domineering this urban elf is more vividly populated than the town itself because no one ever escapes from that haunted locus of brooding enchantment: “That’s why the sun worked like a fridge light, and the rain like a toilet flush” (ibid., 293). A prominent site in this ghost town is the amusement arcade called the Vanishing Palace. It is inhabited by the quirky character of Tom Sharpsaw – the mystery keeper. Or, so it seems.

There is also the Factory, that obscure deliverer of unlikely objects on a monthly basis. The opacity of it lies in the fact that it cannot be said to have ever delivered anything. Instead, the objects found in front of it were delivered. No one ever saw or knew how. It could not even be claimed that the Factory actually produced anything. Nevertheless, any object found there needed to be taken to Town Hall and dutifully registered. Then, those now in possession of the objects could proceed as they pleased. Tom, for example, would always work on advancing, perfecting those objects by combining them somehow: “We just don’t know the weirdness of the way, that’s all” (ibid., 302).

One of those objects is the machine called the Intravenous. It is for adults only. The central character of the story is a kid, a girl. How adult she is when the retrospective narration reveals a chronological distance from which she refers to herself as a child is not certain. She “work[s] for the council now, processing the Factory’s products” (ibid., 306). Initially, alongside two other girls and a boy who withdraws from the endeavor, she gains access to the forbidden weird thing. She learned the tricks from the master as an apprentice in his stealing adventures. The Intravenous can only be set in motion using old coins that are available for purchase from Tom, who keeps them locked. The narrator and her gang steal the key to the coin box from the master. Through two peeping holes, they are provided with a vision of darkness fragmented by the beams of light.

She got caught, of course. That is how she learns: “Tom had a thing about stealing things. He didn’t see it as crime, because everybody knew he’d done it. And mostly the stuff he stole was useless anyway, nobody wanted it back” (ibid., 295). For example, Tom stole Oris from the library, the robot who helped him run the palace. The name allegedly stood for Automated Re-

trieval of Information System – a useless thing, as the narrator notes: “If you’ve ever seen the Crawl library, you’ll know why they really didn’t need an Automated Retrieval Information System. There just wasn’t enough information to retrieve, that was it” (ibid., 296). That was not the only thing the place did not need: “Well who needed a clock in Crawl? What was there to get to on time?” (ibid., 295–296).

Now that Tom is dead, she remembers it all and tells it as it was in this story where numerous samples from the book *Pixel Juice* meet. Tom’s advice regarding reading books one word a day is reminiscent of the story “Alpha-box,” in which one letter a day is read. The object called Pixelkids Come Out Tonight made by Janus Fontaine appears in the story “Fetish Booth #7” as the title of the song of a pop star named Janus Fontaine. In the story “Crawl Town,” however, it is described as follows: “It was a flat circular object, about thirty centimeters in diameter and made out of plastic. And this plastic was etched with a spiral groove on both sides of the disc. A paper label had been glued to the central area, and this was covered with writing” (ibid., 300). There are echoes of the story “The Silvering,” here the title of the book written by Zenith O’Clock, “which was one of the names Tom sometimes used for his writing” (ibid., 297). It is a book of poems from which the heroine reads one word a day, and manages the first seventeen words only. Those are the first words of the actual story.

“Find me, help me, retrieve me. Stop me” (ibid., 240).

The rest of it might be for adults only, the concept of which nowadays is just that. The world alarmingly infantilized is populated by maturized infants whose sexuality is a pixelated echo of the media imposed images. Douglas Rushkoff notes a bizarre disparity and incommensurability pertinent to the falsehood of the age-looks collusion: “Twelve-year-olds and forty-year-olds both aim for about age nineteen, making children look promiscuous and women look, well, ridiculous” (Rushkoff 2013, 151). Is this politically incorrect? Is the observation discriminatory? Is it provocative? Radical? Possibly. Is the claim reactionary? Conservative? One would highly doubt it. Is it relevant? Most certainly so.

The statement reflects the knot woven through a mutually conditioning relationship between language and cultural realities. The key to the enigma of the perplexity might be that: “The tragedy of old age is not that one is old,

but that one is young” (Wilde 2007 [1891], 293). Because no one knows how young young is, as Joyce inspires one to think. When houses of Horne reach fruition in an unlikely marriage of fornicating sleaziness and erudite sterility, a subversively humane – vibrantly distanced, yet undoubtedly passionate – response is constituted: “The young surgeon, however, rose and begged the company to excuse his retreat as the nurse had just then informed him that he was needed in the ward” (Joyce 1986 [1922], 332). His dignified role is to assist with the partly afflicting, partly rejuvenating labor and delivery serenity. How young this surgeon is, one wonders.

Can this insight help us realize that the critique such as Rushkoff’s signals neither moral panic nor purist platitudes, advocates neither exclusion nor the rigidity of normativity? It may concern the question of appearances, one’s approach to them, and the capacity pivotal to human beings to manage the attitude toward them, toward control.

“Find me, help me, retrieve me. Stop me” (Noon 2000 [1998], 240).

ON TIME: THE HISTORY OF THE NOW

Once upon a time, there was no time. Because it was not named. There were no devices to express it, no gadgets to represent it. Presumably, there was a sense of there being something that should have been done, had to be done, shouldn’t have, couldn’t, or did not need to be done. Nowadays, we know what time it is. We are also capable of estimating whether it is the right time for something or if it is not. It might mean that because it is 3:30, it is the right time for a certain kind of contemplation or some other activities. However, that it is the right time for something may not be linked to any particular increment on a clock or a watch. It might merely indicate that numerous circumstances and factors are harmonized, thereby ensuring a fruitful outcome of a certain endeavor. Analogously, one can reason what for some enterprises the right time is not. If what our watch or clock displays coincides with the sense of what the right moment is or is not, then the situation might be said to feature the synchronicity between *chronos* and *kairos*. If our estimation cannot be related to symbolic chronological expressions, we are talking about *kairos* solely.

In the time bygone, there was only a sense that we refer to as *kairos*. Nowadays, it is becoming increasingly difficult to detect it because it is precluded by the dominance of *chronos*. Digital at that. Or, so cultural realities would want one to believe. *Kairos* hides in the interstices of the rigidity of discrete digital units: “Digital time ignores nearly every feature of *kairos*, but in doing so may offer us the opportunity to recognize *kairos* by its very absence” (Rushkoff 2013, 112). Clearly, the word absence is intriguing. Ironical reading illuminates the tricky trope, detects a misnomer. Rushkoff highlights the perception of what is obscured by the shadow of digital time. It may also be the way of elucidating some opaque corners of vertiginous perplexities of the world in the aftermath of the linguistic turn:

“Likewise, we started with this amorphous experience of rhythms that we called time. We created the analog clock to represent the aspects of time we could represent with a technology. Then, with digital readouts, we created a way of representing what was happening on that clock face. It is twice removed from the original” (ibid., 113).

Digital time usurps the flow and renders the world mechanistic: “Digital time does not flow; it flicks. Like any binary, discrete decisions, it is either here or there. In contrast to our experience of the passing of time, digital time is always in the now, or in no time. It is still. Poised” (ibid., 83). Bewildering and obscure as it may seem, the specificities and, indeed, imperfection of digital time can be rendered instrumental in rediscovering *kairos*. We enter the concealed realm where the deceitful discontinuity is dissolved, the intersection between discourse and the extralinguistic becomes less puzzling, more sensible, and where even *kairos* can be rediscovered, as Rushkoff inspires one to think:

“Thanks to stories, books, and our symbol systems, we can learn from people we have never met. We create symbols, or what Korzybski calls abstractions, in order to represent things to one another and our descendants more efficiently. They can be icons, brands, religious symbols, familiar tropes, or anything that compresses information bigger than itself” (ibid., 138).

This remark about abstraction reveals a knot created through unlikely ramifications of the insights into contingency and discursively fashioned cultural realities, counteracting the paralyzing confinement of biological and other forms of determinism. The dynamism within such a knot can be disentangled tangentially, so to speak. Rushkoff complicates the point by addressing the potential for abstraction, simultaneously presenting an invaluable rhetorical device that can cast light on the conundrum in question. It laterally tackles one of its most paradoxical aspects – the liberating and oppressive potentials informative of/informed by the contradictions arising from the contingency-determinism tension:

“And unlike animals, who can’t really abstract at all, the number of abstractions we humans can make is essentially limitless. We can speak words, come up with letters to spell them and numbers to represent them digitally. We can barter objects of value with one another. We can trade for gold, which represents value. We can trade using gold certificates, which represents the value of gold. We can even trade with modern currency, which represents value itself. Then, of course, we can buy futures on the value of currency, derivatives on the value of those futures, or still other derivatives on the volatility of those” (ibid., 138).

Coupled with the dictum of now-ness, this results in a proliferation of abstraction and, essentially, hypostatization: “Instead of buying actual stocks and bonds, investors buy the right to buy or sell these instruments at some point in the future” (ibid., 176). Is the word future in this sentence not another rhetorical knot that invites a critical approach to hypostatized worlds? Is such a rhetorical device not a call to the awareness of the (self) dissolving dissemination of their proliferated semantics? Is the insight into a beehive maze thus conjured up not an inspiration to think in terms of choice? Does it not open up the avenue for reimagining the mode in which we deliver to each other those symbolic information packages? Can communication between and among humans be freed from the age-long tyranny of efficiency? Can one not choose to create words that outsilence noise? Can we not re-establish the flow in the communication channel? Can one not re-hack the abstraction? One would like to know.

“Find me, help me, retrieve me. Stop me” (Noon 2000 [1998], 240).

FRACTAL MAZE

Hypostatized worlds, proliferated words echoing them, and multifaceted notions bouncing through the tunnels of an eerie dialogue between and amongst them add up to the situation in which humans find themselves: stunned by the generic playfulness being to a high degree transformed into a distorted image of itself. Poised. Where playfulness should abound, bewilderment reigns. The distracting effect is partly a casualty, partly an aspect of a Babylonian cacophony in cultural realities used as oppressive control mechanisms. Its ramifications are manifested in the realms of: (1) the authenticity of experience and (2) the sense of individuality, communality, and the connection between the two. The former is being rendered symbolic, as Rushkoff notes: “The amount of time between purchase (or even earning) and gratification has shrunk to nothing – so much so that the purchase itself is more rewarding than consuming whatever it is that has been bought” (Rushkoff 2013, 167). The latter reverberates with the former.

Does the observation that Rushkoff makes create a picture that addresses a distorted version of the legacy of art for art’s sake where neither art nor its sake is what matters? What does matter remains incorrigibly elusive, and not necessarily in a good way. Within those ill-conceived maps of pace, rhythm, and the related categories, speed, and acceleration seem to figure prominently partly as physical phenomena, partly as components of inner chemistry – natural and/or otherwise. That they are being imposed as a cultural paradigm is quite likely. So is the fact that it severely collides with the way humans are.

It is not unreasonable to suspect that part of the dynamics owes its pattern to the misconception about the equation between mechanized, automated systems on the one hand and human body and mind, on the other. Nor is it unworthy of noting that chemically enhanced mechanization of human behavior – under the dictum of efficiency, which no one even knows how to understand anymore – is possibly integral to coercion as the widely adopted dominant *modus operandi*. That such an aggressive currency of exchange mutes the vibrancy of the flow in the communication channel is undoubted. That it is closely related to the second ramification mentioned previously and that both communality and individuality fall in the category

of afflicted powers attenuated further through the murky digital realm is fairly evident, as well:

“We get so much better and faster at consuming all the time that there’s no point in actually *having* anything at all. In a certain light, it sounds almost communal. Except we are not building a new commons together where everything is shared; we are turning life into a set of monetizable experiences where the meter is always on” (ibid., 169).

If this state of affairs produces a sense of communality, it is certainly false. So is the mask of individuality disguising extreme individualism manifested as radical self-absorption, isolation, detachment, uninterestedness, and catatonic vapidty. In such a scenario, hyperconnectivity is a means of distraction from the distinction between individualism and individuality, between uniformity and unity: “It’s as if we are slowly connecting everyone to everyone else and everything else. Of course, once everyone is connected to everyone and everything else, nothing matters any more” (ibid., 199). In Jeff Noon’s “Crawl Town,” it spells out as follows:

“Opening the door, it was like going back twenty years, but the sight that greeted me was altogether a shock. The whole amusement arcade had been taken over by the machines. I couldn’t say there was a definite number of them any more, because Tom had joined them all together, over time, into one giant apparatus. It was a game beyond all rules, and I could only wonder at the controlling loneliness that had produced this monster” (Noon 2000 [1998], 306).

Neither stigmatizing virtuality *per se*, nor glorifying it; neither romanticizing the concept of objective knowledge, nor idolizing its relationship with subjective experiences; neither demonizing the digital realm nor mythologizing its powers, the critique of noise in the communication channel is anchored in the belief in technology as a means in the service of humanity.

Not only does its inverted image spike the perception of both the individual and communal spheres with a dosage of distraction, but it also obfuscates the relationship between them. In more general terms, it con-

cerns a banalized conception of the relationship between constituent components and the whole. Certain aspects of the issue can be found in Plato's revolutionary (may this anachronism be forgiven) meditations, objecting to arbitrarily attributable descriptions or indistinguishable uniformity, and, instead, seeking wholeness within which the components preserve both integrity and distinctiveness: "It is clear that the same thing will never do or undergo opposite things in the same part of it and towards the same thing at the same time; so if we find this happening, we shall know it was not one thing but more than one" (Plato 2015, 436b6–436c1).

The point is also illuminated from another angle, thereby enhancing immunity to confusion: "So such a saying will not dismay us, and it will never convince us that the same thing in the same place towards the same thing could sometimes be or do or suffer two opposites" (ibid., 436e9–437a1). Plato goes on to specify: "The same thing with the same part of itself would not do two opposite things at the same time about the same thing" (ibid., 439b3–5). Rushkoff's fascinatingly picturesque critique addressing the quandary provides a glimpse of blurred distinctions:

"On the one hand, this makes fractals terrifically orienting: as above, so below. Nature is patterned, which is part of what makes a walk in the woods reassuring. The shapes of the branches are reflected in the veins of the leaves and the patterns of the paths between the trunks. The repeating patterns in fractals also seem to convey a logic or at least a pattern underlying the chaos. On the other hand, once you zoom in to a fractal, you have no way of knowing which level you are on" (Rushkoff 2013, 200).

Noon captures part of the problem through the lens of the oneiric in his novel *Vurt* (1993), in which colors dance as the feathers are being swallowed, while the characters' search is initiated by a feather of a particular color/kind. There are feathers that enable soft porn simulacra. There are feathers devoid of dreams. There are also knowledge feathers, feathers of desire, feathers that confront one with emotions otherwise inaccessible, bootleg feathers. Six feathers for six types of experiences. Feathers come in different colors: pink, silver, black, blue, cream, and yellow. The protagonists swallow feathers and undertake journeys to the dreamworld *Vurt*:

“Awake, you know that dreams exist. Inside a dream you think the dream *is* reality. Inside a dream you have no knowledge of the waking world. It is the same with Vurt. In the real world we know that Vurt exists. Inside the Vurt we think that the Vurt *is* reality. You have no knowledge of the real world” (Noon 1993, 32).

The most challenging form of interaction between Vurt and the real world occurs when a person takes the most dangerous, yellow feather, thereby potentially taking a death trip. However, yellow is a ride unlike others: it is a death-for-life feather (ibid., 302). It requires the capacity to discern and sustain the distinctions.

THE BEGINNING OF NOVELTY

Being sensitized to the subtleties of metaphor, one is aware that only the vocabulary pertinent to the experiences of and in reality can be used to talk about dreams. There are no virtual words for “reality,” “know,” “dream,” or “awake.” Annoying as it may be, the restraint is also protective. Rushkoff’s portrayal of a macrocosmic maze in a microscopic kaleidoscopic labyrinth reiterates the significance of critical distance and a balanced view of the intersections between the world and words.

“Find me, help me, retrieve me. Stop me” (Noon 2000 [1998], 240).

Maintaining the relationship between objective knowledge, subjective perception, and interpretation by no means signals an uncritical overflow of arbitrary narratives claiming validity in their own right, as Thomas Kuhn warns juxtaposing the patterns of normal science with those of revolutionary science. The former is characterized by the cumulative mode of acquiring and storing knowledge aimed at and deployed in the service of solidifying and reconfirming the existing body of knowledge, acquiring new knowledge, the perception and prediction of phenomena and data. The latter demarcates the crux of the dynamic: the moments when new insights, challenging the antecedent theories and hypotheses, are obtained.

Such moments require and entail rather holistic reconfigurations of both information and access to it. Those moments are called paradigm shifts. That

is when normal science is rendered obsolete, inoperative, when the knowledge available is not sufficient to explain the world, and when the paradigm known as scientific knowledge is questioned, rethought, and redescribed. That is when it (the particular scientific pattern/paradigm, not science) is replaced by an alternative vocabulary, new theories, hypotheses, perception, and approaches to the subject matter. That is when revolutionary science occurs.

However, Kuhn's elaboration of the ideas inspires reconsidering the notion of a radical paradigm shift. While acknowledging the modifications in scientific explanations, Kuhn undoubtedly maintains the stance that heavily relies on the anchorage of scientific vocabulary (regardless of its being subject to redescription) in the objectivity of the world. Disputable as it may be, the distinction between the empirical and theoretical sheds light on the relationship between language and the extralinguistic: "In the metaphorical no less than in the literal use of 'seeing,' interpretation begins where perception ends" (Kuhn 1970 [1962], 198). This may infer posing a question about explanations that are not based on empirical data. It can be a reference to the meaning of the word seeing related to an altered perception of reality. Alternatively, this may be addressing interpretation pertaining to the sphere of abstraction solely. In any case, there is an implied distinction between the close-knit notions of perception and interpretation. That particular distinction reiterates the language-extralinguistic nexus.

Kuhn seems to be reluctant to credit new angles of looking at certain scientific questions with the status of a revolutionary shift. Part of the reason for the absence of an explicit explanation of that hesitance might be understood in the context of the relationship between normal science (paradigm) and revolutionary science (paradigm shift). Specifically, the basis of the conundrum could be the problem of radical newness and discontinuity. In other words, were those paradigms different to the extent of utter incommensurability, the shift would be altogether unthinkable. They might be incongruous with regard to the object level, but the communication between them on, as well as their correspondence to the metalevel is intact: the points of divergence are considered within the shared language called science. Hence, incommensurability is partial, conditional, particular. So is newness. So is "revolution." The problem is latently addressed as follows:

“Two men who perceive the same situation differently but nevertheless employ the same vocabulary in its discussion must be using words differently. They speak, that is, from what I have called incommensurable viewpoints. How can they even hope to talk together much less to be persuasive. Even a preliminary answer to that question demands further specification of the nature of the difficulty” (ibid., 200).

To say that revolution is partial is to highlight the context within which Kuhn considers scientific vocabularies. His cautious approach to the notion of revolutionary/paradigm shifts is anchored in the understanding that a new paradigm does not discredit the scientific status/character of the one it questions and, potentially, modifies. Does this sense of a continuum of scientific vocabularies indicate different answers to the same questions, rather than raising altogether different questions? Does it suggest that those are diverse descriptions constitutive of the same vocabulary called science? Kuhn’s theorizing inspires thoughts of continuity – the constancy of revolution – yet resists teleological or deterministic streaks that may accompany the idea of continuity.

The caution results from the fact that there are different approaches to the world and that some of them have been provided by humans called scientists. This may suggest ascribing to that knowledge of merely subjective nature mutually exclusive with objective knowledge. To say that absolutely objective knowledge is a philosophical impossibility by no means implies that the world can be molded by just any discursive intervention. Nor does it mean that any description is valid: “Practicing in different worlds, the two groups of scientists see different things when they look from the same point in the same direction. Again, that is not to say that they can see anything they please” (ibid., 150). The claim clears the path to clarification regarding both antirealist purism and uncritical randomizing. It features sensitivity to resilience, selectivity, and critical thinking, yet distances itself from rigid discrimination, as it is further advanced:

“I do not doubt, for example, that Newton’s mechanics improves on Aristotle’s and that Einstein’s improves on Newton’s as instruments for puzzle-solving. But I can see in their succession no coherent direction of

ontological development. On the contrary, in some important respects, though by no means in all, Einstein's general theory of relativity is closer to Aristotle's than either of them is to Newton's. Though the temptation to describe that position as relativistic is understandable, the description seems to me wrong. Conversely, if the position be relativism, I cannot see that the relativist loses anything needed to account for the nature and the development of the sciences" (ibid., 207).

Presumably, the claim is not relativistic because it is not uncritical connecting everything to everything. If it were, "relativism" would enter the debate. This affects neither relativism nor science since those occupy two different levels of the discussion. Necessity/contingency, determinism/relativism are some of the polarities around which the debate tacitly or otherwise revolves. Those dichotomies are subject to critique. However, Kuhn's remarks entail neither arbitrary adjustments in nor teleological assumptions about the relationship between theory and the world, which could be the reason why he is reluctant to assume traditionally perceived continuum of scientific vocabulary. It might imply the notion of truth and the privileged vocabulary which has access to it. Kuhn's reasonable reservations evidence an admirably humble and committed attitude toward the subject matter. At the same time, they are evocative of the awareness of both elusiveness and protectiveness of language, the awareness of the limit and the greatness of the human.

THE LANGUAGE OF(F) POWER

The poised approach to the way we understand the world, society, self, storytelling, and the relationship between them is based on the insights into the relationships between different levels of that what is constitutive of both the world and our experience of it. That said, one cannot but note that acknowledging the patterns is informative of the ways the world is being (re) mapped. It is also to perceive and partake in its structure.

However, to overinterpret these patterns within the macroscopic-microscopic nexus not only fails to reinforce the supposed structural cohesion but also makes it seem dissolved in numberless (unstructured) relations

between and among its alleged constituents. On the socio-political plane, this is reflected in the phenomena that acquire a character of overregulated anomie. Again, discerning and sustaining distinctions informs the issue, as Rushkoff acknowledges: “Where all these scientists and social programmers must tread carefully, however, is in their readiness to draw congruencies and equivalences between things that may resemble one another in some ways, but not others” (Rushkoff 2013, 228). Rushkoff points out the role of distinctions both in the public and private spheres:

“Yet the overriding urge to connect everything to everything pushes those who should know better to make such leaps of logic. To ignore the special peculiarities, idiosyncrasies, and paradoxes of activity occurring on the human and the cultural level is to ignore one’s own experience of the moment in order to connect with a computer simulation” (ibid., 230).

For selective sifting of vocabularies and descriptions of the world, resistance to robозomboid randomized proliferation of narratives and connections between them on the one hand and, on the other, the world is needed. Just as it may be appealing, so can hyperconnectivity be corrosive. In the previously quoted text, the word connect is among the challenges with which Rushkoff’s critique confronts one. The reader is urged to activate the irony detector and galvanize critical distance. The fact of the matter is that the chimerical connectivity is a far cry from interconnectivity within the genuine cyborg fellowship. Likewise, atomized experience of computer simulation induced numbness and isolation bear no resemblance to individuality. In order to filter noise those deceitful appearances cause, resistance is needed:

“Many companies tried to take part in this conversation, under the impression that consumers really wanted to speak with them. What they failed to recognize is that consumers don’t want to speak with companies through social media; we want to speak with one another. We don’t even think of ourselves as consumers anymore, but as *people*” (ibid., 211).

“Find me, help me, retrieve me. Stop me” (Noon 2000 [1998], 240).

Resistance to mechanistic and mechanized social relations and human relationships, as an echo of mechanized time, can be transformed into a mighty tool in the service of communication, very different from the flux saturated with noisy particulates. It can elucidate the most potent cohesive tissue, unshakably resilient antidote to noise: the power of weakness. How noisy, topsy-turvy trajectories act in cultural realities as we know them, how they may be detected and remixed can be approached via Rushkoff's glimpse of some of their discomfiting aspects:

"The anxiety of influence gives way to the acceptance of intimacy and shared credit. Many young people I encounter are already more than comfortable losing their privacy to social networks, preferring to see it as preparation for an even less private, almost telepathic future in which people know one another's thoughts, anyway. In a networked ideascap, the ownership of an idea becomes as quaint and indefensible a notion as copyright or patents. Since ideas are built on the logic of others, there is no way to trace their independent origins. It's all just access to the shared consciousness. Everything is everything. Acceptance of this premise feels communist or utopian; resistance feels like paranoia" (Rushkoff 2013, 204).

The contradiction stemming from coercive flows of discontinuity, the tyranny of now-ness, masks of discreteness, shades the vision of the time axes and threatens to impose a deviant image of their intersection: "It's a moment of absolute present shock, in which history and the future and present fold into one another, ending time altogether" (ibid., 252). It also provides an angle from which other times – the time of no time – are retrieved, reimagined, reanimated. This enables the re-discovery of *kairos* and the basis for disalienation and recuperation, since: "Technologies masked not just the labor, but also the time that went into an item's production" (ibid., 165).

In the vein of Eagleton's idea of the revolt of the reader from the essay of the same title, the critique can be thought of, on the one hand, in terms of the question of the misconception about the totality of discourse and (socially engineered)/biological determinism on the other. From that perspective, it accentuates resistance to the deceitful idea of human omnipotence. The rebellious reading practice, in order to "to take over the means of pro-

duction” (Eagleton 1986, 184), ensures the possibility to perceive cultural realities in the key of peaceful/peaceable resistance and to unburden social relations of the hindrances set by distraction, atomization, and appearances. It may disclose the aspect of technology that, instead of alienating, invigorates communality. It may devise reconstituted interconnectivity and reenergize solidarity within online and offline contexts alike, thus revealing the potential of social networking for rendering confusion soluble through the regenerated unity of human beings.

Simultaneously, the disentanglement of the knots of noise in the communication channel is a way of re-hacking that what Alexie puts ever so lyrically: “A great mix tape was a three-chord parade” (Alexie 2009, 183 line 18). The call to retrieving the labor pivotal to making those mix tapes, “one song / [a]t a time” (ibid., lines 10–11), is also an inspiration for critical/creative responses as the currency of exchange – communication between and among human beings – in the same light of playful idiosyncrasies through the communication between experimentation and tradition, between change and preservation.

Poisonous poetics, discerning and sustaining the distinction between individualism and individuality, between uniformity and unity, seeks and reconsolidates the intersection of the time axes. The mutually nourishing, protective, and restorative relationship between them is based on a balanced approach to the issues in question. Unshakably resilient in the midst of vacillations between the awareness of contingent nature of rules and of humble gratitude for resistance to the orgiastic proliferation of descriptions and discursively conditioned cultural realities, for both the restrictive and protective potential of language: by virtue of the limits to omnipotence, anchored in the remix.

The defiantly subversive potential of the three-chord philosophy invokes the legacy of the punk rock attitude: NO enslavement in/by the past; NO amnesiac, “no future” surrender to the tyranny of now-ness; NO somnambulist projection into the future. NO to “no future.” Rather, refacement in the intersection of the time axes: redeeming the past, reimagining the future, and resurrecting the present. As the hybrid rebellion-reverence nexus, it is a vibrant anchor of resistance to noise, and in the service of the remix.

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Koliko skoro je uskoro: N-e-d-i-s-t-o-p-i-j-s-k-i

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Nezavisna istraživačica

Sažetak: Komunikacioni kanal u ljudskoj zajednici može biti krepkosno društveno tkivo koje omogućava autentičnu razmenu među učesnicima u njoj, ali može biti i zagađen bukom – raznim vrstama represije. Sfera napredne tehnologije, i međusobno uslovljavajući odnos između jezika i diskurzivno zasnovanih kulturnih stvarnosti, čini vidljivom ovu dvostruku dinamiku. Ovaj rad prati pojedinosti iz kratke proze Džefa Nuna iz zbirke *Pixel Juice* u dijalogu sa kritikom iz knjige *Present Shock: When Everything Happens Now* Dagleša Raškofa. Senzitivisan je za tekstove koje posmatra. Oni rezoniraju sa ključem u kojem se čitanje-pisanje generiše u kontaktu sa njima. Predstavljajući i demonstrirajući karakteristike koje čine *remix* – zasnovan na ideji i praksi potencijala organske ljudske komunikacije – rad akcentuje neposrednost, ali se protivi trenutačnosti. Prizivajući revolucionarne ideje iz prošlosti, naročito Platona i Tomasa Kuna, potvrđuje važnost tradicije, ali i njenu prirodu podložnu redeskrpcijama kakve može da iznedri *remix*. Oslanjajući se na postojeće semplove, generiše idiosinkratske sadržaje. Igra se materijalom iz izvora koje istražuje, ali čuva njihov integritet. Slaveći eksperiment, razume vezu sa nasleđem. Traži neinficirane društvene glasove o individualnosti i zajednici. Razmišljajući, govoreći i pojavljujući se u preseku vremenskih osa, učvršćuje značaj propitivanja i iscelivanja prošlosti, zamišljanja budućnosti iznova i regeneracije sadašnjosti. Manifestacija je vitalnosti koja karakteriše *remix*.

Ključne reči: jezik, komunikacija, diskurs, zajednica, individualnost, tehnologija, represija, šum, *remix*