

made redundant

null beginning

Nothing is happening, but you are not where you are. You are emptied and filled, tied down and thrown overboard. You go to move closer to where you are, but where you are moves as you do. Is it a kite in the wind strung to your waist, is it straining to elude you or indifferent to your straining. You are continually 'acting', in both senses of the word, you have to, yet you are also a kind of atmosphere or field through which broken scraps and threads of thought continually flow, and these needn't have any necessary link to any of your actions or acting. You go to seize them as they flow out of and across you, but you are not where you are and nor are they. You go to fix one, as a garment to a table for trimming, but it frays and the threads wriggle away to combine anew or miraculously multiply to become other flowing scraps of thought. They flow through your atmosphere, obscuring the massive, implacable rack-work of logic it is also home to. It seems like anything could be constructed with and upon this rack-work, even an upturned world. Yet in this atmosphere it moves through anything, the scraps flow right through it, it cannot net them, cannot be recruited for your project of pinning them down to tailor something. It is organization itself, but for its own sake: it is completely useless for the actual practice of organizing something in particular, least of all your own self. You dream, you *are* dream, you are so filled it seems a miracle, so filled it hurts too, it hurts to be this filled openness, and so exposed. You are filled and falling, you are far, far below a sentence, a proposition, you see it as a possibility as one sees a scene from underwater, blindingly bright yet impossibly contorted, unattainable even as inner vision. And you see it far, far below you too, like a stone glimpsed by a flying eagle, a stone in a pile of stones. And yet reams of language bottleneck inside you, you're awash with it, riddled with it, with both its ethereal flow and the pitiless density of its arms, arms that sometimes reveal they have the power to split (and fuse) anything. This power, does it come from the scraps, does the rack-work secrete it, does it make the scraps and the rack-work. Do they have anything in common at all. Would you maybe

know the answer to these questions if you were where you are, or can that power maybe help you get there. Is it the way or the goal. Has anyone ever known anything of all this in a way other than you are straining to now, which is to say, other than this not-knowing-shit-about-the-lot-of-it, the lot of it that you are and are also failing to be.

blocked future, objective hope

We live amidst industry without precedent and everyone knows there is no way forward for us, any of us. Even for those who appear to ‘move forward’. We are in the perpetual unfolding that is the miracle of mineral-conscious and plant-conscious and animal-conscious and human-conscious and viral-conscious and alien- or spirit-conscious life, always, but the perpetual unfolding we are in is also the perpetual unfolding of what ought not to be unfolding, and the perpetual damage it is doing to us, the perpetual poisoning and deforming of people and worlds so that what should not be unfolding can keep on unfolding. Vaguely middle class people spend more or less two decades of their lives ‘preparing’ or rather being prepared for the future trials of life: they are cared for, educated and injected with all kinds of ludicrous expectations and aspirations, other people’s lives are literally expended for the sake of their development, but all of this (social) ‘investment’ only terminates in either service to the valorization of the abstract principle by which human power is measured and natural organization devastated in order to increase that measure, or in an absolute roadblock, which is likewise abstraction. Bloch calls this *verhinderte Zukunft*, blocked future, although he didn’t have the pleasure of writing after the fall of official communism, so his referent was different. But even if we try to renounce all hope in things changing, even if we ‘elect’ resignation, the nature of this perpetual unfolding still means we have to suffer disappointment, as the unfolding is itself objective hope. We live on the hinge of the present, and regardless of our personal inclination to hope or despair, we have to endure the objective hope of the perpetual unfolding and then the perpetual roadblocking of it, or objective disappointment. There is no deliverance from this, it is unfolding whether we are where we are or not, whether we are worried about where we are or not.

the artifice of detachment (saturation)

Far from generating opportunity or delivering people from undesirable kinds of labour, capitalist plenty actually goes hand in hand with the roadblock; the two phenomena tend to coincide. Commodity production’s existential need is to destroy the possible futures in which it is destroyed, and one of the primary ways it does this is plenty and especially the temporal priority

of plenty.¹ Mass serial production dumps so much shit onto the perpetual unfolding that both it and the dumping are almost no longer perceptible and they have always already happened before we know what is going on. This is the market's more immediate contribution to the destruction of the future (less immediate, though certainly just as if not more powerful contributions, issue from financial markets, which is a topic for another day). We live in mass serial markets, mass serial politics, mass serial communities with mass serial cultures, values, and moralities, and (whether synchronized or not) we die mass serial deaths. The most basic object needed for your everyday life exists in 1000000 copies that are all only a purchase away, they are heaped up in mountains around you, all of them quietly yet desperately chasing the limited assent required for you to purchase them and so vindicate the arrangement in which they are heaped up in mountains around you. They are all already there, waiting, they always arrive at T minus 1, such that it feels as though it would almost be wasteful for you to duplicate the expenditure of social effort and resources by preparing the same thing yourself. So you 'consent' to your serial expropriation, which has by now assumed the force of common sense, and in doing so you also vindicate the serial expropriation of whoever made your thing. We experience this as an idle decision, even vaguely as deliverance from the imagined drudgery required to produce the thing we bought, but it is the result of a form of socially-sanctioned economic aggression. Commodity production penetrates the social body just like the cop's weapon penetrates the body of the 'undesirable', and the idea is to hold the wound open, ideally until the body has all but been replaced by what penetrated it. At that point it can present itself as the very being and movement of the social, its breathing, its independent fulfilment of its own desires, such that to interrupt it would be a kind of tyrant's crime.

Deliverance from the manual labour required to reproduce your life, and so from 'nature', has historically been understood (by European thinkers) as both the condition and movement of freedom, and it is true that it was a requirement for the entrepreneurs to be 'free' enough to invent new and ever more refined forms of profitable enslavement, but for the rest of us this movement has only been realized as a cruel parody in the form of our separation from, rather than liberation of, our own nature, our 'freedom' *from* it. Our selfhood is in a kind of solitary confinement, an enforced isolation from our own sensuous existence and the possibilities of a common sensuous existence. (Foucault had the cool insight that the soul is the prison of the body, and he was right, but there is also a sense in which the body is

¹If you think it's want not plenty that destroys the future, then call it exclusive plenty, but it is still addressed and distributed 'globally', that's an essential part of its violence; if you think it's the police not the market that destroys the future, sure, but in addition to press-ganging people in state-sanctioned indentured labour, the police also exist for the express purpose of preserving the production of exclusive plenty across time, and this production is also what funds the cops.

not inside the cell(f) but expelled from it, banished as much as administered, left to rot as much as subjected to abstract regimes of treatment, deprecated, distantiated from us, replaced by objects of capital, which don't smell and are undying in comparison.)

The telos projected by plenty is not a free commonwealth but the death of the future, for the sake of which goal the present is turned into a dump. Plenty blocks the future in different ways; it occupies social space and human space. It serves to suspend if not completely derealize the life abilities and desires of everyone, substituting them for other abilities and desires, and so to sever everyone from their own violence, from real action and the stakes real action necessarily entails. The only spaces you're supposed to experience are those of work, transit and commerce. The only skills required are those that will ensure you are able to make the purchase (of the wine, the house, the slave; the ritalin, the pay-day loan, the uniform), which were also the ones forced upon you in school: reliability (to function in situations of serial repetition), cleanliness (your exploitation must appear 'presentable'), and either self-assertion or submission to the self-assertion of another as the situation requires. Ideally, all of your other life skills are expropriated or never even allowed to develop in the first place, because they would tend to be used in place of waged work and consumption rather than for the sake of them, and would both necessitate and secrete qualitatively different forms of time that might then lead to qualitatively different futures. In their place you are supposed to cultivate the distinguishing enjoyment of the wonders of serial commodity production; you learn to savour some product line (now with 17% less poison! oh hang on, it's actually 0.17% less), which is also a learning to savour mass commodity production itself and cultivating the desire to position yourself as its final cause, to occupy the ideal subject position imputed and projected by the general process: the Self, winner of all, recipient of all, god to which all is sacrificed.

In liberal spaces (for liberal classes), it looks like no one is preventing anyone from learning or becoming something. Self-development is universally, aggressively fetishized, it's a compensation mechanism that supposedly 'disproves' the general roadblock ("look at us all unfolding our deepest potential!", "anything is possible if you put your mind (and someone else's body) to it!"), and a derivative ideological doubling, in the natural realm, of the virtual process of valorization, the miraculous independent 'growth' of surplus value or interest. But such skills, if they could possibly compete with those needed in production, must only be exercised as either complements to work life and work consciousness, i.e. a kind of surplus auto-valorization on the part of an employee, or hobbies. They mustn't be allowed to rival production, or even amount to an image of an alternative form of it. The latter is a particularly sensitive issue for the authorities and defenders of global capital, because they show up how redundant it is, how it is not

actually needed in the way it deeply, deeply wants to be needed. This is simply because people are quite capable of taking care of themselves, especially when they are not constantly subjected to direct or indirect violence. Even the desire to amount to something else must be culled from such skills in advance. Everyone is familiar with the distinction between the pleasure of doing something on your own, and buying a serial product or service to achieve the same end. (The time or quality disadvantage is supposed to be made up for by the authenticity of self-directed action.) And everyone is also familiar with the strange, heartened disappointment you get from persisting in the former: the context of your action is still determined by the latter, hobbies are necessarily *belated* relative to production, and your action, obviously, is far from having any kind of impact upon this, though it also necessarily posits such a possibility. When you give your (coerced) consent through making a purchase, you are objectively conceding that your needs are indeed the needs imputed and projected by the products dumped en masse before you, even if you don't actually do so subjectively.

Those engaging in the organization of mass serial production needn't necessarily set about expropriating people from their own life abilities or destroying the future, but it is an essential aspect of what they do, as it is what ensures that what they do continues to be socially 'needed'. Ideally people would all be so damaged and lacking in (inner as much as outer) alternatives that they would really need the stuff produced as if in order to 'make up for' their own selves. People quarantined from any other means of reproducing their lives concede to purchase things and so to the suspension of their life abilities, the firms profit from this dependence, compete between each other *for* this extremely lucrative dependence, chase it with saturated production, throw piles of money around and run at a loss in the pursuit of it, and in doing so they seek to develop, preserve and expand the environments in which selling their (unexceptional, monotonous) product is profitable, in which people (think it is normal to, have no other choice but to) buy their soylent.

The fact that this has all already happened in almost any aspect of life you can think of is the context for any one of our individual or collective actions, be they political, moral, religious, artistic, pragmatic, rationalistic, deluded, scientific, contemplative, transformational, aggressive, inspired by conspiracy theories, local, virtuous, etc. It conditions your life in that a given economic activity aspires to become an environment, but it also conditions your life in that your own relative proximity to or distance from production is simply the converse of that of the firms; their doing what they do sets up the basic parameters of what appears possible to you in the most banal sense. So you lie down in the grass and this (mass serial abattoir) is the context of your lying, you go for a walk and get a coffee and this (indentured-child-labourer-killing cobalt mining for batteries for top-of-the-line already-

half-obsolete portable prestige-surveillance devices) is the context of your walk and coffee, in the emptiness of your time you have a few too many and this (sprawling network of racist mass serial prison-factories and armies of legislators competing to write reams of racist laws designed to fill them as rapidly as inmates are murdered inside) is the context of your few too many, you work in a frenzy and this (class-staggered access to essential health services, murderous border regimes and citizenship legislation) is the context of your frenzy, you run away and this presence everywhere, this penetration of everywhere is the context of your running away, you try to 'do better' and 'change your life(-style)' and this (criminalization of resisting catastrophic environmental destruction and genocide, of the mere survival of alterity) is the context of your trying and your new life(-style), you give up (time and again you give up, because what we are in should be given up on) and this is the context of your giving up, you get angry, frustrated, depressed, exhausted, hurt, lonely, desperate, hysterical, and the monotony of the mass serial production-destruction of everything is the monotonous context of all your dramatic moods and inner upheavals, you go and learn about how the mode of destruction we live in leads to all these mood disorders that are named and diagnosed by a mass serial mental health epistemology, and this is the context of your neurotic attempts to learn and self-diagnose. It is the destruction of lived time, of the time of bodies and their densities and movements, it empties out and substitutes itself *for* time: the immemorial of mass serial production, an open, unending network of externalized and organized death. To this you must swear allegiance if you want to live, and in destroying time it aims to destroy the still hypothetical future in which you sense and grasp your own inalienable power and develop a taste for exercising it to autonomously deliver yourself from such an oath; it aims to derealize that power, to reduce it to a perpetually-deferred fantasy. If that is assured, mass serial production can gaze over all your efforts and convulsions with a serene indifference.

So production doesn't intervene in order to come to the aid of those who lack certain abilities, it intervenes to actively *manufacture* a maximum want of abilities, to prevent their exercise, to replace them with ersatz pseudo-abilities, and to make this want and prevention and replacement seem self-evident. It is only once that semblance is achieved that the expropriated or dispossessed are free to go look for ways to reproduce their existence, by securing employment from those in the business of relieving them of their life skills, desires, sensuous and generative realities, forms of time. And it is only once *that* is done that they are finally allowed to get around to a hobby, or a culture, or a mutual aid, or a thinking about how to be, or a dreaming or reflecting.²

²I'd be happy to hear enraged refutations of this point, they deserve to be made, not all these things are that belated, and in reality abstraction never fully achieves its absolute

There is nowhere for us to go because the process that separates from our own life abilities needs to expand everywhere and occupy all social space in order to achieve this semblance of self-evidence. If it didn't people could simply desert. It is a blanket spreading over our inextinguishable fire, and most of us are striving in such crooked ways that we are barely aware of what this actually is. The quantity of objects produced is not proportionate to our or anybody's needs, it is proportionate to the saturation required to stultify and gaslight us, to cut us off from our own power and its inherent possibility, make us doubt its reality and believe in the reality of the saturation, believe that the saturation is 'ours', because that configuration is what ensures that the commodity will continue to circulate and so the firm remain viable, and so the state receive its dues, and so the imperial army remain funded, and so the territory occupied, and so revolution, or let's just say 'mutation', anywhere on the planet stifled.³ It is in this sense too that we should understand the saturation of our planet with plastics, poisons and waste not as a kind of accident or index of something going 'wrong' in production and/or circulation; it is just as much the physical manifesting of this blanket saturating the worlds beyond those that have already been directly occupied. The army can't yet have garrisons in every forest and field, but we can ruin them to the point that it would be extremely difficult to live off them. And production can very much afford this 'extra' waste. The petroleum corporation can remain profitable even after paying the multi-billion-dollar fine for spilling 5 billion barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico and spending 65 billion dollars cleaning up; it clearly doesn't need to sell all it produces in order to stay afloat. And the mass destruction of natural systems, like oceans, beaches, wetlands, and estuaries, makes us more dependent on market ones; by destroying the elsewhere, it forces us to stay inside.

Overproduction is not an unfortunate irrationality that arises in the course of firms competing for limited surplus value opportunities and so duplicating production, it is an active *strategy* of impoverishment: it reproduces the context in which it is possible for commodity production to appear to make sense, to usurp the position of social meaning as such, not because it is the best way of organizing things but simply because it's already in place, has already usurped, has already responded to an imputed need, created a space for transit and the expectation of an exchange that will 'realize' or redeem prior investment. It impoverishes people and withers their life skills and

primacy. Yet in the logic of the programme of state and capital, these other things really are inherently derivative, and it is only the degree of success they have in implementing this logic that varies.

³I mean that's the plan anyway. How much things diverge from the model, despite the expenditure of levels of energy that dwarf anything ever seen in history is another matter, and plain to see. And yet, the army remains funded, revolution, ultimately, for the moment, defeated.

sensuous potential such that these appear to them as ‘inferior’ to something else, or even as worthless and a source of shame. The same process executed serially can produce a unit for a fraction of the cost and time; that’s the (indifferent) power of abstraction; aggressive serial production forces people to compare themselves, humans, unfavourably with this inherently a-human mode, which... gives them sugar, as much as you want. Who of anyone knows how to make sugar?! But also, who actually *needs* it?

Separated from the power, precision, and action usurped by production, we then ‘reunite’ with (an alienated version of) them when we buy the wondrous commodity, the new miraculous high-tech thing, which we express our love for by emphasizing how we never could have made such a thing ourselves. It’s trivially true, we are certainly no production chain, but it is also true that what we make ourselves expresses qualitatively different needs and fulfils different desires to those projected by the commodity. The power contained in the latter is a separating and individualizing one: it is a compensatory power, but it is that of making an abstracted and interested intervention into the social field, getting in, getting what ‘you’ ‘want’, and getting out, faster than anyone else. In this sense it resembles a weapon or army, even if it’s a plasma-screen: you are supposed to perpetuate the penetration perpetrated by the firm, treat your social surrounds like a market or war zone.

And this arrangement of separation and serial saturation, which has dehumanized millions of people, and poisoned the entirety of the planet, from the depths of its oceans to the hearts of its remaining forests to its stratosphere to the very cells of all its inhabitants, is what is protected at all costs against the very social and natural devastation it causes. Production, circulation, and consumption must at all costs be allowed to continue apace amidst the catastrophe; those whose material interests coincide with them will not hesitate to even dematerialize them in order to do so. And if natural systems are so damaged that their destruction no longer facilitates sufficient accumulation, then human social life can serve as a new kind of raw material for value extraction (in this sense, mass data mining has exploded at just at the right moment). The existence of our beloved banks, and tanks, depends on it. And you only get something to eat, or somewhere to stay, because it is first integrated into this process.

no ‘where’ (redundancy)

There is nowhere for us to go because all of the ‘wheres’ have already been filled with wares, made into dumps for commodities, whether commodities all lined up to be sold, commodities sold and protected with the very life of their owners, commodities in the form of waste (i.e. decommodified, deprivatized), and commodities in human form. All the ‘wheres’ have already been made into dumps for commodities *so that* there would be nowhere for us to

go. Other spaces must be obliterated, and huge efforts expended on making sure that they *keep on* being obliterated despite the perpetual unfolding, *so that* there is no room for other forms of life, for autonomous existence, so that people can be channelled over into the dead-end jobs that keep ‘things’ (i.e. their own expropriation) moving, into the blocked and deferred lives standing at the ready to redeem the next new commodity with their finality as soon it is delivered to market, rather than fulfilling their own needs in their own ways and in their inherent difference.

Liberal tolerance only exists in the aftermath of this occupation and obliteration, only once it has been assured over time. It is grounded in the socially-enforced loss of stakes of the lives of whole populations, their being stripped of the power to have an impact in and on the world in any way other than as consumers and workers, that is, as abstracted agents. It is only once this pacification is achieved that tolerance is extended to them. You are allowed to ‘do’ whatever you like, so long as it ‘does’ nothing. So, do what you like: be an entrepreneur, a salafist, junkie, officer, bureaucrat, technocrat, stay-at-home, youtube guru, back-to-the-lander, drop-out, army general, space conqueror, global marginal advantage strategist, poisons inventor, poisons lobbyist, revolutionary, megalomaniac, lawyer for megalomaniacs, head of a paedophile ring, head case, provider of technical assistance to people who want to siphon off billions in public funds, the artistic redeemer of the life of every upstanding middle-class citizen, a mix of any of these. All neuroses welcome. It’s up to the individual, as it were, to ‘choose’ their relative antagonism to disembodied power.

Production and logistics haven’t just accidentally gone off the charts as a result of uncontrolled or unregulated competition, they have consciously and deliberately gone off the charts *so that* it doesn’t matter what you do, and so that everything is already done (for ‘you’, for a ‘you’). What you are is in the wake of it, in the rubble-filled backwash. Production is the production of redundant people, and this doesn’t only apply to surplus populations, it applies very much to the well-off, the economically protected, and to those in positions of state or market power. They are also expropriated, they expropriate and wither themselves in order to be able to expropriate others (their willingness to do this is their *sole* distinguishing feature; their ‘discovery’ of this move fills with with an abject pride), and they are upset about not mattering, you can see it in the strained expressions on their faces as they strain to ‘do’ something by siding with the imperial expansion of abstraction, with whatever future is not blocked. They tolerate and will always tolerate this arrangement, because they’re still its overall beneficiaries and unlike the others *they know no other possible form* of self-preservation. They make a big show and dance of their power to compensate for the damage done to substance by abstraction, that’s why they fetishize the earthy qualities of the wine they buy, the fine threads of the expensive

clothes they buy, the non-mass serial nature of basically all their crap, how singular and particular it all is. Distinction is distance from the abstraction you live off and universally impose, which grinds everyone else into the ground. But when things really get hot, they quickly fess up that they're just empty, feckless adjuncts for the uncontrollable processes that enrich them, and that they know no other form of life than groundless parasitism. They are empty balloons that place themselves over a volcano and then, having expanded, pretend to possess all the telluric powers and wonders in the hidden depths of the earth. They are the ones who have made their hearts, as Hegel says, into the graves of their hearts. Having done so, they think they have won the exclusive contract to rewire all reality, replacing all sinews of being with their imported cords. And these gravehearts are protected as if they were fountains of eternal life, they are the weapons by which their owners terrorize and lord it over everyone else, the means by which they profit from imperial dehumanization, while also seeming to not really do all that much more than babysit a few spreadsheets. That's why the deal is worthwhile for them, they are proud of having 'discovered' the secret of profiting from socially-organized hostility, and of not giving up until they have realized its value in the pseudo-concretion of accounts. They 'get' it, why doesn't anyone else? No matter, the others are stupid, whereas they know the score. Make your heart into a grave, wield grave as weapon to rewire world into spreadsheet with magically increasing numbers and everyone will rush to bring you all its riches on a platter.

idling, not mattering

Not that we want for activity. We spend our lives in these bizarre kinds of blasé frenzies. And not that we 'have nothing to do', and not that 'it doesn't matter' is a complaint or a point of having-abandoned that people need to be harangued into taking up ("oh nothing *matters* any more! can't you *see*?!"). Not mattering is objective, it is not a mood, it is indifferent to all of them. Production to saturation aims precisely to preventatively sap all power out of whatever complaint and affect that might encounter and resist it, just as it labours to suck the degree of heaviness inherent in all meaning (present participle) and mattering out of our bodies before pimping it out and selling it back to us. But still, here we are, heavy with this new, strange and manufactured emptiness, which feels like the complete opposite: same-old as hell. Maybe it's like official merchandise: always the same no matter your team's colours. Nothing is happening. And in our idle moments, we idle, in this new emptiness, one invented by people penetrating the social body with computational weapons, getting in, extracting, harvesting, and stockpiling data, and getting out as quickly as possible. Stripping the inner walls of the organs, and holding the wound open in order to keep on extracting indefinitely. They just expropriated our rumour, gossip, rest, and idleness.

They don't even believe emptiness exists, whereas we can sense it is being overhauled by every advance of their unbridled extractivism.

Nothing is happening, the factory is doing it, somewhere else, over a horizon that is an inscrutable fissure in your reality. One that blinds us. A crevasse with the bizarre quality of preventing people from seeing beyond it, rather than into it.

It doesn't matter. You are just the coalface, not the subject. The factory is the subject, its electric organizational web, its administrative mesh, is the subject. You are its object, you don't need to see.

tbc.