THE LONG 1980s

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THE LONG 1980s

CONSTELLATIONS OF ART, POLITICS AND IDENTITIES

A Collection of Microhistories

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THE LONG 1980s

CONSTELLATIONS OF ART, POLITICS AND IDENTITIES

An Introduction

Friends, citizens, subjects, travellers: we welcome you to our book. With the title *The Long 1980s: Constellations of Art, Politics and Identities*, we would like to offer you a multitude of perspectives and histories from, and on, the period of the eighties.

The core question: why the eighties? It is primarily because in analyzing the eighties, we identify many of the genealogies of our present moment. We look retrospectively here to a period of profound change in the world. A period that is still fresh within the living memory of many people, and that has had a lasting influence on our civil society, culture, politics, ecology and economics. If we consider just a few of the central events and narratives of that period — we might take, for example, the redrafting of the socio-economic rulebook defined by the neoliberal ideology of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, the end of the Cold War following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the beginnings of the institutionalization of multiculturalism, not to mention the invention of the World Wide Web — we identify the catalysts of seismic shifts on a global scale. These are but a few of the better-known manifestations, amongst many others that took place at a more local or regional level, that still determine many of the practices, counter-practices and ideological partialities of today. Many of the facets that comprise the crisis of the Western world order that we are currently experiencing can be directly traced to things that occurred in the eighties. For this reason, we decided to make a book about it.

What else was happening as these paradigmatic shifts were taking place? We zoom further into the territories of Europe, the broad geo-political focus within which this book situates itself, and we see seismic changes during this period. To the south, dictatorships in Portugal and Spain transitioned to capitalist democracies, resulting in a consensus-based politics that was often blind to the recent past. In Turkey, the decade began with a military coup and the subsequent reformulation of the constitution, which would have a profound effect on all aspects of governance and everyday life. In former Yugoslavia, the death of Tito and the demise of socialism precipitated the nation's eventual disintegration into war, genocide, and the emergence of new geo-political frontiers. To the west, the formation and rapid proliferation of neoliberalism would have a profound effect on how governments and their publics came to

view one another, heightened by the situation of deep economic recession. Within and against these contexts the voices, bodies, and ideas of new subjectivities emerged. Subjectivities that were articulating their position through the constituent identities of gender, sexuality, and race. The appearance of feminist, post-dictatorship, postcolonial and queer politics in the eighties, for example, and their manifestations within the spheres of art and culture bear testament to many of the constellations — of art, politics, and identities — that we describe as the sub-title of the book.

As you will get to see, it is, in fact, many of these latent or counter-narratives that we felt were significant to foreground, understanding that historical consciousness varies greatly across time and space. Over half the contents of this book is given over to case studies — 70 in total — that as a collective body of case studies might be seen to comprise an atlas of alternative practices, sitting in parallel to the dominant arc of history, whether challenging, mirroring, or deflecting it. It has been important to see that alternatives existed, particularly in that era when Thatcher resolutely told those forced to listen in the Western and Anglo spheres, not only that there wasn't an alternative, but that society didn't even exist at all. Yet the reality was that both alternatives and societies did exist, and still do in fact, bringing us to the heart of the many struggles and contradictions that define the early part of the twenty-first century. The supposedly definitive worldview that we remember has been unravelling. This book is about many of those that either did not want to accept it or saw it coming, and who used the situation to create spaces of solidarity, imagination, and invention. The eighties was a long decade, so much so that we decided to define it as being more like 20 years — roughly speaking from 1975 to 1995 — in recognition of the fact that a definitive decade is too blunt a method for defining the many faces of a complicated and pivotal era. It has helped us in our attempt to form a more complex portrait of this long decade.

The case studies presented comprise a collection of stories, facsimiles, and images from various spheres of creativity, such as arts, activism, or social movements — and they often have a local or national character. These inspiring, ground-breaking stories have often never been translated in any other language or are little known outside the frame of contemporary art history or beyond national borders. How to

produce new narratives by weaving these stories together, was the question we faced when structuring the book. We have organized the case studies in four units, larger chapters whose titles are the result of numerous editorial musings and internal debates about ethics and humour, and draw aspirations from various cultural references and from specific case studies mentioned in the publication. Within each of them we identified keywords that relate to the material presented, and from those we arranged two subchapters. The first chapter 'No Alternative?' appropriates Margaret Thatcher's infamous maxim and explores the numerous ways cultural practitioners were offering alternative spaces and formats to the emergent neoliberal order. This section is divided into the sub-sections 'Autonomous Zones' and 'Broadcast Yourself'. The second chapter, 'Know Your Rights', looks at the cultural and activist practices that were responding to the wave of forms of cultural and political oppression in the eighties. As such, it is composed of the sub-chapters 'Ecologies and Anti-Militarism' and 'Civil Liberties'. The third chapter, 'Processes of Identification', is framed around the sections 'Hybridity and Anti-Imperialism' and 'Bodies Put Up a Fight', looking at the manifold ways subjectivities and identities were articulating themselves through culture and at the intersections of emergent forms of racial and sexual politics. The last chapter, 'New Order', closes the publication with 'Capital and Its Crises' and '1989'. It addresses the decade's new regime — in terms of the rapid accession of neoliberal politics as the perceived only game in town, but also as a new conception of, or blindness to, the concept of history itself. The book ends with a series of case studies from the decade's final year.

The opening tone for the book is set by two acclaimed writers and theorists, Rosi Braidotti and Diedrich Diederichsen, whose contributions speak from their own positions and lived experience of the long eighties and what the era represented for their own theoretical endeavours. In her essay, titled '"It will have been the best of times: thinking back to the 1980s"', Braidotti examines the significant moments and places in the epochal analysis that this selection of essays, documents, and case studies seeks to put forward, revealing certain strands of her philosophical studies in a first-person contribution. She reflects on the critiques of orthodox Marxism and the subsequent appearance of new forms of leftist positions, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the

upsurge in conservative ideology, as well as the consolidation of the neoliberal economy. This is interlaced with a consideration of how different discourses were migrating across fields forming new philosophical currents and creating a setting where historical acceleration appears as all but inescapable. Similarly for Braidotti, the issue of representation — both political and aesthetic — and its limits appear as the central problematic marking the time period. What exactly can be said and by whom?

The second opening essay, titled 'From Anti-Social-Liberal Punk to Intersectional AIDS Activism: (Sub-)Culture and Politics in Eighties Europe', sees Diedrich Diederichsen sketch a pathway combining political, social, and aesthetic aspects from the eighties. Diederichsen draws on historical sources that not only refer to spheres of discourse and theory, but also stem from the music culture of that period, particularly the punk movement. He analyzes and interrelates fields of experience that belong to diverse categories creating a polyphonic approach to the decade's political struggles, the transformations at the heart of critical theory and their relationship to artistic practices and youth culture. By tracing the minutiae of a generation characterized by disenchantment and nihilism, the theorist parses a complex, multifocal map, creating a global lens through which to view the decade.

This book is the result of a long period of research and programming across museums and universities in Europe. Over the course of the five-year programme 'The Uses of Art', partners within the L'Internationale confederation [01] presented a number of exhibitions that examined the eighties from different social, political, and cultural contexts, exploring the many different counter-narratives that we felt might offer an alternative reading of our recent past. These varied from looking at specific groups or movements to new tendencies in artistic practice, as well as the emergence of different forms of activism within the context of states in processes of radical transition.[02] In the majority of these exhibitions, the

01   L'Internationale is a confederation of six modern and contemporary art institutions. L'Internationale proposes a space for art within a non-hierarchical and decentralized internationalism, based on the values of difference and horizontal exchange among a constellation of cultural agents, locally rooted and globally connected. It brings together six major European art institutions: Moderna galerija, Ljubljana; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona; Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen, Antwerp; SALT, Istanbul and Ankara, and Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven. L'Internationale works with complementary partners such as Middlesbrough Institute of Art (MIMA), Liverpool John Moores University, Stiftung Universität Hildesheim and KASK/University College Ghent School of Arts, along with associate organizations from the academic and artistic fields.

02   Details of all the activities focused on the eighties as part of the 'Uses of Art' programmes can be found in the colophon of the book.

various curators and institutions were addressing the eighties from localized perspectives, deliberately using the investigation into microhistories to point to wider societal changes. Indeed, interestingly for many of us involved in working on the eighties, we arrived at this time period independently from our L'Internationale colleagues in other parts of Europe. Each of us had identified the eighties as a moment of significance in understanding our respective recent histories as well as the genealogy of our current moment. Yet, many of these exhibitions and investigations remained — and drew their strength from — their specific locality.

      In this respect, the opportunity to place the different microhistories from our respective research on the eighties in dialogue has been one of the main motivations behind the book. Significantly, it has also allowed us to consider many ideas and stories that were not part of our respective exhibitions. It is an opportunity for us as editors — and you as readers — to start to forge connections and affinities between the extraordinary collection of case studies, ideas and events that took place. Many of these connections are addressed in the collection of twelve larger essays that form a major component of the grouping. However, we hope many more constellations will emerge as readers visit and revisit the pages of the book. Our intention here is not to draw equivalences between the contexts. Rather, by placing these case studies in dialogue, we hope they may start to offer an alternative means of navigating Europe's recent history that foregrounds the individuals and localities involved but connects them to similar struggles and desires which they might have hitherto been unaware of. By bringing these stories into convergence within a book, rather than presented through our respective typical bourgeois institutions, we might begin to forge a sense of a complexified collective history that extends across the streets, cities, and organizations of Europe. This collective history, in which a plurality of narratives and identities are implicated, might offer us some help in understanding our present moment and how we arrived where we are, as well as the necessity of forging a future together, no matter how hard and distant that might sometimes feel.

The long journey in making this book would not have been possible without the vision and trust of many people. You, readers, will not necessarily be familiar with all these names, but these are several colleagues

and friends that we would very much like to thank for their collaboration and support. We would like to thank Merve Elveren at SALT and the independent researcher Erman Ata Uncu, both from Istanbul, and Adela Železnik at Moderna galerija, Ljubljana, for their invaluable contribution in bringing together much of the content of this book. Steven ten Thije is a colleague that we must thank most graciously for being the tireless water-carrier of the L'Internationale confederation. Thank you Steven. We thank all of the many contributors to this book for sharing so eloquently your knowledge through the many texts and images that comprise your essays and case studies. Two gatherings are also important to acknowledge: 'When Were the 1980s?', a symposium organized by Ana Bigotte Vieira, Luís Trindade and Giulia Bonalli in Lisbon in 2015, where the editors of this book presented their research and with it the idea of this shared project was born. Secondly, the seminar '1980s — The Multiple Origins of Contemporary Art in Europe Today', organized by Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez and Steven ten Thije at KASK / School of Arts of University College Ghent in 2016, where a number of authors of this publication were brought together. Lastly, we would like to thank our many colleagues in our respective institutions and across the confederation. This book is the outcome of the many conversations we have shared. We recognize that the possibility to work together and exchange ideas over a sustained period of time and across cultural contexts is precious and something not be taken for granted. We hope it may continue long into the future.

So, with that, dear readers we introduce this book *The Long 1980s*. We hope you will discover stories, histories and herstories that enrich your understanding of the entangled relationship between art, politics, and identities from the eighties, and that we all are living with today.

The editors
Nick Aikens, Teresa Grandas, Nav Haq,
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'IT WILL HAVE BEEN THE BEST OF TIMES: THINKING BACK TO THE 1980s'

Rosi Braidotti

I come home in the morning light
My mother says: 'When you gonna live your life?'
Oh momma dear, we're not the fortunate ones
And girls—they wanna have fun,
Oh girls just wanna have fun!

Cindy Lauper, *Girls Just Want to Have Fun*, 1983

NOT JUST *ANY* AGE OF TRANSITION

Looking back to the eighties from the context of 2017 is like staring at a golden era from the edge of the abyss. So much has happened since, not all of it positive, and although the eighties paved the way for the violent world we inhabit today, they felt very different. Consider the context of the eighties: the elections of Margaret Thatcher in the UK in 1979 and of Ronald Reagan in 1980 in the USA set the stage for a conservative ideological onslaught, which brought neo-liberal economics and the Christian-driven American Right to the core of Anglo-American politics. A massive reaction against Marxism as the platform for activism, theory and political organizing was set in motion. The long-term implications of the historical defeat of Communism, heralded by the conservative ideologue Fukuyama as nothing less than 'the end of history'[01] were and still are momentous, both in Europe and elsewhere. For instance, the 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan enabled the build-up of Islamist opposition that consolidated both the Taliban and Bin Laden's power base in the region. 'Post-communism' bred neo-colonial relations, in a global era of perpetual warfare, both in the Balkans and in the Gulf area.

  As I argued elsewhere,[02] the eighties were an age of philosophical transition as well. In 1979, the high priest of the radical libertarians Herbert Marcuse died, followed in 1980 by the towering figure of Jean-Paul Sartre, and by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan in 1981. Other thinkers who were closer to us as teachers also died prematurely: Nicos Poulantzas committed suicide in 1979 and Roland Barthes died in an accident in 1980. Also in that year, Louis Althusser, who had been mentally ill for some time already, strangled his wife and was locked away in a criminal asylum. With the death of General Tito, also in 1980, the crisis of Western European Marxism became officially, while a greater portion of the world's youth was far more upset about the assassination of John Lennon, in New York, which took place the same year. 'Lennon, not Lenin!' had been a rallying cry for the revolutionary youth throughout the previous decade and it became even more poignant as the effects of that radicalism came into sharper focus.

01

Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

02

Rosi Braidotti: 'Introduction', in *After Poststructuralism: Transitions and Transformations*, vol. 7, *The History of Continental Philosophy* (Durham: Acumen, 2010).

In this context, France, which will offer the framing of this text, continued to strike a different political and intellectual note, with the election of the socialist François Mitterrand to the presidency in 1981. Throughout the eighties, Paris provided the world forum for progressive and left-wing critiques of Soviet Communism and for the elaboration of alternative forms of political radicalism. France functioned as an avant-garde observatory that focused on the world-changing events taking shape all around. For instance, as early as 1980, the French writer Marguerite Duras, who, as a member of the communist anti-Nazi resistance in her youth was a close friend of Mitterand's, foresaw the fall of the Berlin Wall. She wrote enthusiastically about the Polish trade-union Solidarity's strikes in the Gdansk shipyard, led by future Nobel Peace Prize winner Lech Walesa. In the period between 1973 and 1978, another future Nobel Peace Prize winner, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, published the *Gulag Archipelago*, which he had written in secrecy in the USSR, in three volumes in Paris. It provided the definitive account of Stalin's death camps and the final statement about the failure of Soviet Communism and became a point of reference for poststructuralist philosophers' critiques of Marxist philosophy. Last but not least: Ayatollah Khomeini, the political leader of the Iranian Islamist revolution of 1979, lived in exile in Paris in the years preceding the fall of the Shah. The progressive politics as well as intellectual life of the eighties were dominated by the multiple energies emanating from Paris.

The speed and intensity of these convulsive events could not fail to affect the idea and the place of Europe, the legacy of the colonial and fascist past, in a changing geo-political world order. As the former West developed a more acute awareness of its colonial and postcolonial legacy, the critiques of Eurocentrism became a central concern, which connected to the poststructuralist discussions about the legacy of Enlightenment humanism and new forms of cosmopolitanism. These developments also hand an impact on the political project of the European Union (EU), which embarked on an expansion process[03] in the midst of the post-communist/postcolonial conjunction. I will return to this.

Demonstration in solidarity with American women after the election of Ronald Reagan, Paris, 30 June 1982. Front row, holding a drum, from left to right: Rosi Braidotti, Oristelle Bonis. A few rows behind them: Danielle Haase-Dubosc

03
The Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992, the same year as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), while the World Trade Organization (WTO) is set up in 1995.

PARIS, JE T'ADORE

French philosophy, with its combination of theoretical exuberance and political passions, provided an embarrassment of intellectual riches that made it the key intellectual horizon for my generation. Paris at the time was, philosophically speaking, simply the most exciting place on Earth. While I enrolled for my postgraduate degree at the Sorbonne in what they called 'History of systems of

thought', which was related to Foucault's Chair at the Collège de France, I savoured everything the city had to offer intellectually. The radical university of Vincennes hosted some of the best minds of the day: Hélène Cixous, Jean-François Lyotard and Gilles Deleuze, to name but a few. The Collège de France starred Roland Barthes, Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault, whose magisterial courses on bio-power are forever engraved in my mind. Luce Irigaray held seminars in makeshift locations after Lacan expelled her from his 'École freudienne' for excessive independence of mind. It was not until I started attending Deleuze's seminars at the marginal university of Vincennes, however, that I discovered the complexities of listening to a genius: that was what great philosophy in the making was all about.

National Pro-Abortion Women's March, 6 October 1979. From left to right: Martine Storti, Sophie Chauveau, Luce Irigaray; Simone Iff, Huguette Bouchardeau, Maya Surduts. Behind Maya, in the second row: Christine Buci-Glucksman

Philosophically, I related mostly to the branch of poststructuralism known as the 'line of immanence', which runs through Spinoza, Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze, as opposed to the 'line of transcendence', which runs through Kant, Derrida, Levinas. This tradition of critical thought inspired my own attempts to rearticulate a radical sense of materialism, embodiment, and accountability. By bringing back the marginalized tradition of political Spinozism, moreover, the materialist branch of poststructuralist philosophy in the eighties also redefined the question of political praxis in terms of ethical agency.

Developments in feminist theory also played a formative role in my development, and that of the decade. The Lacanian psychoanalytic feminist movement was at the centre of the scene, notably the 'psychanalyse et politique' group of Antoinette Fouque — who set up the Éditions des femmes and edited the magazine *Des femmes hebdo* (1982). Luce Irigaray, being *persona non grata* to the Lacanians, ran her own independent seminars and collaborated with several feminist collectives of Paris, notably *Sorcières* and *Histoires d'Elles*. Simone de Beauvoir was still very active and her group gathered round the journal *Les Temps Modernes*, which from 1973 devoted a special section — 'Chroniques du sexisme ordinaire' — to feminist issues. Julia Kristeva, Michèle Montrelay and Marcelle Marini were teaching groundbreaking classes at Paris VII, as did historian Michelle Perrot. There was a strong group of feminist sociologists around Christine Delphy but they hardly taught. In 1981, they founded the interdisciplinary social sciences journal *Questions féministes* (later *Nouvelles questions féministes*), which included Monique Wittig for a while.

Press Conference on the Iranian Revolution, La Mutualité Hall, Paris, 1979. Feminists petitioning the new regime for women's rights. From left to right: Delphine Seyrig, Kate Millett

In Paris in 1981–1982, I also crossed paths with great American academic feminists like Kate Stimpson, Nancy Miller, Domna Stanton, Joan Scott and Naomi Schor, who came to Europe and were carefully following the new developments in France in that period and translating them into English. They were part of

a wave of American academics who were especially taken with the psychoanalytic and semiotic aspects of the new groups and translated and exported these to the USA. This was to produce the 'Franco-American disconnection' (Stanton 1980), which would make 'New French Feminism' (De Courtivron and Marks 1980) into a global phenomenon[04]. It could not fail to affect French women themselves. Some were turned into stars, notably Cixous, Kristeva and Irigaray, who, incidentally, are not at all native French, Cixous being a Jewish Algerian; Kristeva Bulgarian and Irigaray Belgian. Others however felt dispossessed and misrepresented; there was widespread concern about misleading interpretations of the concept and theories involved and the risk of depoliticizing them.

The orchestrated import of French ideas into the USA, which made 'traveling theories' (Said 1978) into an established practice and turned the task of translation into a new discursive political economy, also opened up a new academic market, mostly in literary theory, comparative literature, cultural and gender studies and film theory. The impact of French thought on international feminist theory and practice was nothing short of an epistemological revolution.[05] In the mid-eighties, as the notion and the politics of difference moved centre stage,[06] American feminism plunged into the 'sex wars' that would divide its radical wing.[07]

Philosophy departments however took a clear and explicit distance from these fashionable trends and closed ranks. From 1980 to 1995, the public debate around the critical legacy of the seventies grew more bitter and contested. The rise of Reaganomics and Thatcherite authoritarianism installed a climate of right-wing political backlash, which could not fail to attack the credibility of European and especially French poststructuralist theories. These were dismissed by the political Right as being both relativistic and a sign of wishy-washy liberalism. Their hostility continued to grow throughout the nineties as the 'theory wars'[08] (Sprinker 1995; Neilson 1995; Butler and Scott 1992) raged through American universities, fuelled also by the rise of the religious Christian Right. By 1995, the game was over and the counter-offensive against poststructuralism was well in place (Gallop 1997; Spivak 2003). Nonetheless, the inspirational power of French theories, feminist and other, remained high and affected the most critical and creative minds of that generation of academics.

Deleuze was one of the first to comment on this hasty and fallacious historical dismissal of critical radicalism in both politics and philosophy.[09] Targeting the fame-seeking narcissism of the *nouveaux philosophes*, Deleuze stressed the political conservatism of their practice, which reasserted the banality of individualistic self-interest, in keeping with the neoconservative political liberalism of that era. Deleuze stressed instead how his

04

Jane Weinstock and I published a critical review of this phenomenon in 1980.

05

See the Milan Women's Bookstore Collective (1990); Adriana Cavarero (1990); Herta Nagl-Docekal and Herlinde Pauer-Studer (1990), and Andrea Maíhofer (1995); Celia Amorós (1985); Maria Isabel Santa Cruz et al. (1994) and Henrietta Moore (1994).

06

Eisenstein and Jardine 1980; and Frye 1996.

07

Vance 1984.

08

See Jeffrey Williams, ed., *PC Wars: Politics and Theory in the Academy* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

09

Gilles Deleuze, 'On the New Philosophers (Plus a More General Problem)' and 'May '68 Didn't Happen', in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006).

own critical philosophy laboured to avoid and critique the arrogance of that universalizing posture. Other leading philosophers such as Lyotard, Dominique Lecourt, and the gay activist Guy Hocquenghem, also took a clear stand against the trivialization and self-serving dismissal of the spirit of radical philosophy by a new generation of opportunistic intellectual entrepreneurs.[10]

The Trans-Atlantic disconnection that dominated our philosophical horizons also shaped the academic careers of my generation. We — the graduate students of a field of feminist research that formally did not yet exist — witnessed the genesis of a new system of import-export of ideas that gave us a foretaste of cultural globalization. We could also see glaring disparities not only in the selection of which French thinkers were being translated into English, but also in the speed of publication of these translations.[11] We watched the meteoric rise of Derrida and Foucault in the USA and wondered why Deleuze was left behind.[12] As a consequence, today we know that it is historically but also theoretically impossible to speak of French feminist theory without implying the Trans-Atlantic nexus and that these theories essentially belong to the English-speaking world (Oliver 2000; Cavallaro 2003).

THE TIME-BOMB OF RADICAL PEDAGOGICS

The generation of feminists situated between 1980 and 1995 was the first to enjoy the institutional presence of supportive and talented women teachers and supervisors, many of whom were feminists themselves, such as Genevieve Lloyd, Seyla Benhabib, and Luce Irigaray. The effects of the actual, physical presence of women lecturers in philosophy departments beginning in the seventies throughout the eighties cannot be stressed enough. The influence of these progressive teachers on my generation of radicalized younger women philosophers engaged in feminism was to be everlasting. But, much as we enjoyed thinking back through our mothers, we were far from dutiful daughters.

The eighties generation sought to challenge the false universalism of philosophical thought as being a form of particularism: it protected male, white privileges and inflated them to transcendental proportions. I and my peer groups focused on highlighting the difference that feminist philosophers can make to the actual practice of the discipline. In the longer term, many of us actually left philosophy as an institutional site and contributed to the creation of new interdisciplinary fields.[13] Being pioneers in women's studies, we were given the chance to develop institutional, pedagogical, and methodological structures that operationalized the full potential of non-dialectical and anti-hierarchical

10

See Jean-François Lyotard and Jacob Rogozinski, 'La Police de la pensée', *L'Autre Journal 10* (1985); Dominique Lecourt, *Les Piètres penseurs* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999); published in English as *Mediocracy: French Philosophy Since the Mid-1970s*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2001); Guy Hocquenghem, *Lettre ouverte à ceux qui sont passés du col Mao au Rotary* (Marseille: Agone, 1986). *The nouveaux philosophes* will later strike a political alliance with the French right-wing politicians, like Sarkozy.

11

For instance, Julia Kristeva's work appeared fast in English: *About Chinese Women* (originally published in 1974) came out in 1977, *Desire in Language* (originally published in 1969) in 1980, the *Kristeva Reader* in 1986. Hélène Cixous was slightly behind, with the 1976 translation of 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (originally published in 1975) and the 1986 translation of *The Newly Born Woman* (co-written with Catherine Clément and originally published in 1975); *The Book of Promethea* (originally published in 1983) in 1991, and the *The Hélène Cixous Reader* in 1994. Luce Irigaray, however, lagged behind, with the double translation of both *Speculum of the Other Woman* (originally published in 1974) and *This Sex Which is Not One* (originally published in 1977) in 1985, *The Ethics of Sexual Difference* (originally published in 1984) in 1993, after which the speed picked up somehow.

12

The linguistically oriented movement, inspired by Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes, was centred at the Yale school of literary theory; see

difference. In so doing we ended up altering the very theoretical premises of emancipatory feminism from which we had started, innovating on content and concepts. We also started canonizing a firm corpus of feminist scholarship that institutionalized the idea of collective teamwork as a key collaborative method. As Joan Kelly argued,[14] feminism carried a double-edged vision that combined oppositional consciousness with deep empowering creativity. The affirmative element within the feminist recomposition of knowledge is one of my generation's lasting theoretical legacies.

The core of my philosophical interest, like for so many in my generation, coalesced around questions of identity, responsibility, becoming a subject of both knowledge and transformative politics or praxis. The main issues I engaged with were: how can we think with and on behalf of the excluded, the marginalized, the 'missing people'? What concepts and methods can help us do justice to the social and intellectual experiences and knowledge of those that have received no recognition in the language and institutional practice of conventional wisdom? What is the appropriate language in which to express silences and regenerate missing voices? The politics of discourse and the limits of representation became crucial concerns. So much of our collective embodied experience — as women, gays, pacifists, leftists — seemed somehow pitched against what was discursively acceptable or even sayable.

In 1988, I accepted an experimental new academic position at the university of Utrecht. So I left Paris to set up an interdisciplinary women's studies department and devise a new curriculum. Working in a feminist academic environment, in an interdisciplinary, intellectually cutting-edge and politically progressive — if not downright transgressive — context had its advantages. Radical pedagogics now became the basis for my institutional practice. The price to pay for such daring experiments, however, was to accept my distance from the institutional practice of philosophy. This new focus, though not without some pain, allowed me to liberate my own philosophical thought from a number of institutional habits. I became nomadic as a deep conceptual level as well as an existential condition.

EXTRA-MURAL PHILOSOPHY

In the same period, the French were also experimenting with new institutional structures. With the privilege of hindsight, it is clear that throughout the eighties, in response to both external prompts and internal dynamics, the practice of philosophy in Paris expanded towards activities that were outside the established institutions of the discipline. If the interdisciplinary university

Barbara Johnson (1980, 1998), Shoshana Felman (1993), Marjorie Garber (1997). The pioneers of French feminist theory in the US were Domna Stanton (1987); Nancy Miller (1986); Alice Jardine (1985); Naomi Schor (1987); Catharine Stimpson (1989) and Joan Scott (1999). Gayatri Spivak expanded it to postcolonial theory. Interest in Deleuze did not take off till the early two-thousands.

13
See my chapter with Judith Butler: 'Out of Bounds: Philosophy in an Age of Transition', in Braidotti, ed., *After Poststructuralism*, pp. 307–335.

14
See Joan Kelly: 'The Double-edged Vision of Feminist Theory', *Feminist Studies 5*, no. 1 (1979), pp. 216–227.

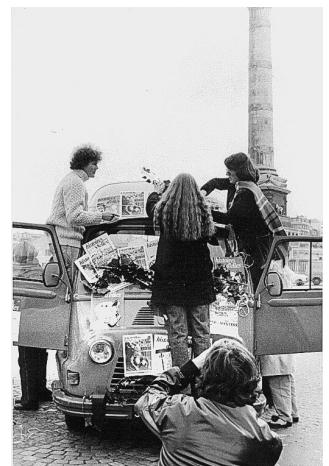The official badge of the National Women's Strike, 8 March 1980

National Women's Strike, 8 March 1980. Holding the 'Histoires d'Elles' banner from left to right: Wendy Spinks, Katy Hamilton-Baillie

of Vincennes had provided the politicized model for the radical knowledge and training institution of the seventies, the Collège international de philosophie, founded in 1983 by Châtelet, Derrida, Faye and Lecourt, with the support of President Mitterand, embodied the vision and inspiration of the eighties. These extramural trajectories brought philosophy closer to real life. This approach continued the activist dispositions of the sixties and seventies, but also reflected a new culture that was becoming more informed by the arts, media and popular culture.

Intellectual, even theoretical meetings took place in cafes, at conferences, in feminist collectives, at gay and lesbian political meetings, anti-war rallies and demonstrations, in editorial boards, bars, community radio stations, in music and film festivals. Often framed by transnational contexts, philosophical thinking moved beyond the specific 'sites' of legitimate institutionalization to produce the possibility of thinking critically and creatively, bringing philosophy in the world. Although it was formatted and framed by reason, thinking was an outward-bound, external, and often reactive activity, driven by forces and affects that acted independently of the rational will. This was important to us, both as philosophers and as feminists and gay and lesbian activists.

The collective character of philosophical thoughts in general and the trans-individual character of so many knowledge claims that I shared with others became central to my work. All the more so as I belong to an 'intermediary generation' that witnessed some key moments in the history of feminism: respectively the rise of the 'feminism of difference' in Paris, its re-implantation in the USA and the 'sex wars' in the USA. Having been the first generation of philosophers who studied with great feminist teachers, we also gained some first-hand experience of institutional gender politics. This also taught us bitter lessons from the start: feminist philosophers were not always well received in philosophy departments and were only occasionally supported by institutional means and funds. They often had to find other venues for seminar activity and collective discussions. And even today, academic philosophers tend to practice mono-disciplinary purity and to withdraw support from interdisciplinary approaches that would situate the task of thinking philosophically anywhere outside academic departments of philosophy. The objections to women's, feminist, queer, cultural and media studies are upheld. As these interdisciplinary programmes are more developed in the USA than in Europe, this leaves many European radical philosophers even more homeless.[15]

French philosophers have a long established tradition of intervention in social, cultural, and political life, as public intellectuals, social critics, and activists. The likes of Jean-Paul Sartre

National Women's Strike, 8 March 1980. The 'Histoires d'Elles' van at the Bastille. From left to right: Wendy Spinks, Jane Weinstock (with her back to camera), Rosi Braidotti

15
The positive side of this situation, however, is that it contributes to the diaspora of philosophical ideas, which is generative, spreading them across the spectrum of society. As a result, philosophical reflection is no longer confined to academic settings, but has a broader reach |into the world and hybrid cross-pollinations occur whether the institutions like them or not. Think, for instance, of the role that philosophical thinking plays in human rights struggles, in non-governmental organizations such as Médecins sans Frontières, in Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Greenpeace. Consider also how many philosophical thinkers have made significant contributions to critical legal theory in recent years.

and Simone de Beauvoir stand high in this tradition, lending their support to a variety of crucial causes such as decolonization, socialism, antiracism, feminism and pacifism. They also founded alternative journals and publication venues, such as *Les Temps modernes*, *Questions feminists* and the daily newspaper *Libération.* There was, however, a difference in the scale and mode of engagements of the philosophers who came after the existentialist generation. They intervened on questions of justice, human suffering, responsibility, economic and social sustainability, and global belonging, making use of visual culture and media and reflecting on its meaning, but they did so less in the name of an engagement with Marxist or any other ideology than as an end in itself. They prioritized the critical analysis of power relations at both the macro and the micro levels as the main task for philosophers and brought into focus issues of sexuality, identity and cultural subjectivity.

Simone de Beauvoir's Funeral, 19 April 1986. In the centre, waving (at her brother): Rosi Braidotti. Next to her: Marie-Jo Bonnet

Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze[16] both captured the post-Marxist spirit of the times when they posited the emergence of a new function for the philosopher as public intellectual. If the contrast with the received Hegelian model of the universalistic philosopher as rational guardian of the moral development of mankind (the gender is not a coincidence) is easily drawn, the difference from the engaged or 'organic' intellectual of the previous generation of Gramscian and existential thinkers requires more cautious phrasing. As Foucault and Deleuze put it:

[16]

See Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, 'Intellectuals and Power', in *Language, Counter- Memory and Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 205–207.

> At one time, practice was considered an application of theory, a consequence; at other times, it had an opposite sense and it was thought to inspire theory ... In any event, their relationship was understood in terms of a process of totalization. For us, however, the question is seen in a different light. The relationships between theory and practice are far more partial and fragmentary. ... the relationship which holds in the application of a theory is never one of resemblance. ... Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another and theory is a relay from one practice to another. ... A theorizing intellectual, for us, is no longer a subject, a representing or representative consciousness. ... Representation no longer exists; there's only action—theoretical action and practical action which serve as relays and form networks.

Coherent in their practice, the poststructuralists predicate philosophy in the plural and move it toward social, political, and ethical concerns. They see themselves as 'specific' intellectuals, providers of critical services, analysts of the conditions of possibility of discourse, working with ideas that are also programmes

for action rather than dogmatic stockpiles of beliefs. This style is 'problematizing' in its radical empiricism, or anti-universalism, and in the awareness of the partiality of all philosophical statements. As a result, the kind of philosophy that emerged in the late eighties was on the edge of institutionalization, embodying what Foucault called 'permanent critique'. Because of this radical commitment to philosophy and its outsides, training as philosophers while being activists at that point in time actually meant having to ask fundamental questions such as: Why think? How can we connect the practice of thinking to larger social and ethical concerns? How can we resist the negative and oppressive aspects of the present? What is philosophy all about and how can it help us lead politically useful, socially productive, and morally adequate lives? These questions resonated loudly with my feminist concerns and passions.

Simone de Beauvoir's Funeral, 19 April 1986

What attracted me to poststructuralism is that it was also one of the most effective answers to the decline of modernist utopias, mostly Marxism and various master narratives of politics. This kind of thinking made it not only possible but also necessary to connect the task of philosophy to the challenges coming from contemporary social movements—mostly those associated with feminists, gay and lesbian rights, environmentalists and peace activists, racial and ethnic minorities in the context of postcoloniality. I went on to develop the nomadic ethics of affirmation into a collective political practice that challenges the dominant representation of the subject of knowledge and develops the yet unrealized potential of multiple possible becoming.

WHAT IS EUROPEAN ABOUT CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY?

As I indicated earlier, the landmark date of 1989 also brought the question of Europe further onto the foreground. For one thing, it challenged the discursive equation of 'Europe' with 'French theory', which had been forged in the USA and caused a violent backlash in both countries. Secondly, it fostered the emergence of more Europe-wide perspectives. This changing historical context also played a part in rendering feminist philosophy especially complex in this period. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the expansion of the European Union, as well as the new wave of wars that emerge in the period (the first Gulf War, the Falklands War, and the Yugoslav and Balkans War), had a major impact on the development of continental and transnational feminism. The most immediate effect however, was the expansion of feminism both east and west of the former border, granting more visibility to feminist philosophers from former Eastern Europe. In the former East,

mainstream and feminist philosophical voices could finally get a wider audience, generating a philosophical renewal. I cannot stress enough the importance of original political thinkers, such as Belgrade-based Žarana Papić, whose work on nationalism and subjectivity remains fundamental. Daša Duhaček provides important analytical insights into Eastern European radical feminism as a critique of the patriarchal aspects of the Yugoslav communist state. The Croatian Rada Iveković, now based in Paris, challenges narratives that assume the centrality of a Western philosophical perspective by adopting a broadened, antinationalist and postcolonial perspective. But the phenomenon is so vast and rich that it deserves a fuller treatment than I can grant it here.

The late eighties in Europe were a period of political hope and of great expectations about the future of the European Union. As I stated explicitly in *Nomadic Subjects*, my awareness of what it means to be European — as opposed to holding an intellectual position on the issue — emerged from the experience of becoming a migrant in Australia. I was a European with Europe in exile, Europe in migration— the category 'European' became thinkable just as it lost its self-evidence. I think I became aware of my Europeanness in this moment of distance, of dis-identification, of loss, of taking my departure from that location. I carried that back with me when I returned to Europe via Paris.

And this was a very formative moment, when I became aware not only of the contingent nature of identity, but also of the extreme complexity of something that we could call European subject positions. Philosophically, as my work focused more on the project of decentring the subject and the practice of critical theory, race and postcolonial philosophical studies became more and more important. The critique of Eurocentrism evolved as the counterpart of the rejection of the universalizing powers of self-reflexive transcendental reason. The self-aggrandizing gesture that positions 'Europe' as a concept that mobilizes and enhances the higher human mental faculties has to be defeated, regrounded and held accountable.

More specifically it has to be read alongside the devastating historical phenomena that have been central to the alleged civilizing mission of the European 'mind': colonialism, racism, fascism. It was clear to me that recognizing this complex historical legacy meant to hold Eurocentric 'reason' accountable for its real-life effects in the world, while also acknowledging the great achievements of our culture. This was the beginning of wisdom and also of historical lucidity. As Glissant and Balibar argue, it is also the end of a self-replicating sense of ignorance about those 'others' who constitute such an integral part of European culture, including philosophy.

The early awareness that so many of my favourite philosophers were foreigners, migrants, exiles, grew into the project of returning European critical theory to its nomadic spirit. Another Europe is possible, one that rejects the imperial posture and its arrogant pretensions and accepts its new historical role as a significant peripheral. So, becoming accountable for my Europeanness coincided with my becoming aware of the impossibility of being one, in the unitary sense of the term. Becoming nomadic seemed the most appropriate option for an antinationalist, antiracist, non-Eurocentric and Europe-based feminist philosopher.

BEYOND

So hold me, Mom, in your long arms.
...
In your automatic arms. Your electronic arms.
In your arms.
So hold me, Mom, in your long arms.
Your petrochemical arms. Your military arms.
In your electronic arms.
Laurie Anderson, *Oh Superman*, 1981

Laurie Anderson was basking in the streets of the Latin Quarter when I was studying there — she is one of my intellectual heroines — both musically and politically. Her work proves that the posthuman sensibility was always already in the picture for my generation. As Donna Haraway published her paradigm-shifting text 'A Cyborg Manifesto' in 1985, a more creative but equally critical gaze fell upon the ongoing cybernetic revolution and its consequences for economic globalization in the era of the Anthropocene. The process of biogenetical recoding of reproduction, which began in 1978 with the birth of the first test-tube baby, Louise Brown, culminated with the cloning of Dolly the sheep in 1996, while the Human Genome Project was officially launched at the end of the eighties.

These scientific and technological advances accelerated the theoretical process of questioning the very status of what counts as human. Reflections on humanism — Western and non-Western — on posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism increased not only within philosophy, contributing to the so-called 'ethical turn', but also in trans-disciplinary areas, or studies, like gender, queer, transnational, postcolonial and environmental studies. The convergence of these powerful reflections on humanism and anthropocentrism (Braidotti 2013) encouraged many to acknowledge that thinking is not the prerogative of humans only,

but that it actually takes place in the world. The relational ontology of the neo-materalist branch of poststructuralism, notably the creative neo-Spinozism of Deleuze, triggers and sustains the posthuman elements of our contemporary condition. Retrospectively, I would say that dealing critically with multiple 'supermen' of all kinds and denomination, in order to cut them down to size, has been one of the contributions of my generation. Because I know that Anderson is right when she sings: 'when love is gone, there's always justice. And when justice is gone, there's always force.'

And when there is force, there's always the collective pursuit of affirmative becoming.

FROM ANTI-SOCIAL-LIBERAL PUNK TO INTERSECTIONAL AIDS ACTIVISM

(SUB-)CULTURE AND POLITICS IN EIGHTIES EUROPE

Diedrich Diederichsen

For me, the eighties start with punk, in the broadest sense, above all in the intersection where something became conceivable that wasn't conceivable before. Punk historians enjoy arguing about which musical expression was the first to earn the title of punk: was it the Sex Pistols in 1977 London, the Ramones in 1976 New York, or even the proto-punk of The Stooges in 1968 Detroit? That's not significant for me. Punk, just like the international year 1968, was a cultural intersection that took place all over the world, and it wasn't the private property of the global north-west. But while it is striking that with the events of 1968 a type of youth revolt took place in the same year all over the world — even if the objectives in Prague, Mexico City, Tokyo and Paris would have been described differently — punk managed to take place completely variably, at any time between 1968 and 1989. I have a friend who explains how punk changed everything in Orange County in 1984 and another friend who insists on 1975 from the perspective of Ann Arbor, Michigan. If the eighties started with punk, they are not a long or a short decade, but one that — as opposed to '45 or '68 or even '89 — always started at a different time and frequently kept starting over and over again.

NOT A LEFTIST FUTURE

Punk stood the idealistic, optimistic, future-oriented, progressive perspective of the 1968 movement on its feet. But unlike the Marx quote alluded to here, these feet weren't necessarily materialistic ones. It could just as easily refer to a pessimistic, nihilistic, sceptical, regressive contact with the ground. Punk was almost always associated with intensification. The generation of the '68 movement was accused of being too soft and inconsequential, too willing to compromise and too pragmatic; the opposite of which was often being impatient, highly charged and often ready to use violence. With this allegation, all that remained to be seen was whether they shared the premises of the '68 movement: many varieties of punk were actually left-wing anarchistic, as official interpretations often described them. People turned against the established New Left that had arrived in institutions and had now become teachers, politicians and opinion makers, towards the RAF, the Red Brigades, the ETA, and squatting. But there were also many different varieties of punk that no longer wanted anything to do with any of the values. And it was more or less clear that Black Flag, who sang *No Values* and the Sex Pistols, who referred to *No Feelings*, still belonged to the leftist punks. Other types of

rejection were more fundamental, and therefore also more compatible with a new right-wing movement, which was slowly starting to form.

HYPER-ETHICS

Punk was much stricter than previous movements. People were no longer able to join a movement by simply adopting its ideas and the basics of body language. It was now about personal integrity, which is why a certain criticism quite rightly recognized an ethical fetishism, which the magazine *New Musical Express* dubbed 'rockism': an authenticism of self-invocation and self-overburdening that experienced its hyper-existentialist climax in punk rock, constantly seeking and condemning 'selling out', 'betrayal' and the 'poser'. The vast majority of those punks stayed loyal to the anarchistic scene during the seventies; a small number ended up becoming neo-Nazis and football hooligans, and some of those with bourgeois parents ended up in art school.

ANTI-SOCIAL-LIBERAL

Punk culture represented an anti-social-democratic revolt in every respect, of course against various types and forms of social democracy, but also against the alliance of '68 and trade unions in social democracy and, above all, the various social-liberal coalitions that reigned in many European countries during the seventies. Politicians such as Bruno Kreisky, Olof Palme, Willy Brandt, Harold Wilson, and later James Callaghan and Joop den Uyl not only represented the decade in which Europe was stronger under social-democratic influence than ever before or after. They were also socialist/social-democratic leaders of workers' parties who, albeit often hesitantly, made common cause with the culturally rebellious children of the bourgeoisie and their ideas of emancipation, which were often individualistic or hedonistic, as well as with the new social movements associated with them, such as feminism. The seventies were characterized by the combining of leftist class struggles with cultural revolution, or, to put it in the words of Boltanski and Chiapello, the short-term coalition of 'social critique' that had almost come to an end and was already doomed, but had not yet been neoliberally defeated, with the 'artistic critique' of the followers of the '68 movement, which had not yet become entirely individualistic. Punk responded to the symptoms of removing the plausibility of these constellations in a variety of ways, usually by sinking its teeth right into them. The

coming together of 'liberal' positions, as expressed in the disso-
lution of the ban on abortion and the criminality of homosexuality, for
example, with social democratic/socialist ones had something of
an echo of the May '68 constellation in the governments mention-
ed (student-based, anti-consumerist anarchistic, wanting to be-
come allies with the workers and their call for prosperity and par-
ticipation). It was an unusual historic combination that couldn't
be responded to with a single counter-movement and could, at
the same time, be seen as an adjustment for the survival of leftist
projects. Around the year 1980, it were the social democratic eta-
tists rather than the liberal parts of the alliance that were weak-
ened, but punk zeroed in on the state and spent the next decade
painting the encircled A over every hammer and sickle. More im-
portantly than the seriousness, passion, and the hyper-ethical
rigour and existentialism with which this unilateral hatred of the
state was practised, was the fact that punk virtually screamed out
to be immediately separated from other movements or opposing
interpretations. The flood gates had been opened. It is telling that
in Simon Reynolds' influential chronology of the stylistic diversity
phenomenon referred to as post-punk, which left punk rock far
behind artistically in terms of creativity, the first post-punk bands
come before historical punk rock, chronologically speaking: [01]
punk rock was like a black historical hole without any substance,
simply a massive blow, or shock, that made the decade explode in
every possible unforeseeable direction.

01

Simon Reynolds, *Rip It Up and
Star Again: Post-Punk 1978–1984*
(London: Faber & Faber, 2005).

THE CASE OF THE NEOLIBERAL DICE

One such explosion wasn't an explosion at all, but a curious stand-
still. With the decoupling of social democracy and a liberalism that
had stopped being anything other than an economic (neo-)liberal-
ism, with the end of Keynesian social democracy in the west and
a type of communism in Southern-Europe that had become 'more
pragmatic' — so-called Eurocommunism, which, besides Italy,
arose mainly in the post-fascist democracies of Spain and Portugal
—as an indicator for a disruption to a rigidly formed Eastern Bloc,
the die had been cast. The premises of the Cold War were called
into question and the economic momentum of an EU that was
slowly coming to an agreement about a common currency gener-
ated another gravitational force that would ultimately lead to the
events of 1989. Until then, no one had seen them coming: at least
no one where I lived and spent a lot of time during the eighties,
the old Federal Republic of Germany, New York, Madrid and Lon-
don, expected that the Iron Curtain would ever fall. We were also
strangely disinterested in it. As leftists, we didn't exactly stand in

solidarity with Solidarity, we thought of it — with punk columnist Julie Burchill in *The Face* — as an 'anachronistic' embodiment of an old workers' subjectivity.

BAUDRILLARD

Along with Jean Baudrillard, even back then, many believed themselves to be in a cold post-historical Western eternity, in which passions and depth could no longer exist, only merciless transparency:

> For something to have meaning, there must be a scene … a minimum of illusion … Without this strictly aesthetic, mythic and ludic dimension, there is not even any scene of the political, where something might cause a stir … the events of Biafra, Chile and Poland, of terrorism or inflation, or of nuclear war. We are given an over-representation of them by the media, but not the true picture. All this is simply obscene for us, since through the media it is made to be seen without being gazed at.[02]

In 1981, two years before these lines were published, Blixa Bargeld explained as a case in point in an interview with *Spex*, that contrary to the old classic leftists, he wasn't able to develop solidarity with the struggles in El Salvador and Nicaragua, because 'I don't even know if El Salvador really exists — perhaps it's an invention of the *Tagesschau*'.[03] Baudrillard didn't mean invention, but instead, precisely because we are so enlightened and the world so transparent, we're no longer able to perceive it as existent, as a different counterpart. While we shared Félix Guattari's[04] belief in the early eighties that the media were engaging in a type of 'semiotic poisoning' (while in the East they were still simply telling lies), for Baudrillard, this poisoning wasn't about twisting or masking the truth, but about the total visibility of the truth achieved by the media, which made its dramatization (also as a requirement of politics) impossible. This theory, which was in many regards problematic and anti-progressive, often nostalgic for traditional gender relations, once again became popular, but for less than it was worth, vulgarized to the mere complaint that we live in a world of intensely circulating signs that aren't connected to reality in any way: everything is a simulation of the media. It wasn't until 1987 that Group Material organized the 'Anti-Baudrillard' symposium, documented by the magazine *File*:[05] in the books published in the English-speaking world as *Simulations* and *The Political Economy of the Sign*, Baudrillard abandoned

02

Jean Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies* (Munich: Matthes & Seitz, 1991), p. 78.

03

Blixa Bargeld, interview in *Spex* no. 9, 1981.

04

Félix Guattari, 'Wunsch und Revolution: Ein Gespräch mit Franco Berardi (Bifo) und Paolo Bertetto', trans. by Alice Tetley-Paul (Heidelberg: Verlag Das Wunderhorn, 1978), p. 71.

05

Group Material, 'Anti-Baudrillard', *File* 28, part 1, 1987, pp. 109–119.

the idea that art could be a place for critical examination. There's certainly not a role for political art in Baudrillard's openly anti-socialist hyper-scepticism, but there's not a role for any form of political engagement either; the reason for declaring him, in particular, as an enemy was certainly related to the fact that in the generally anti-political artistic practices of the early eighties, he was one of the most influential theorists to be actually received in the artistic world.

NEO-SITUATIONISM

This theory boom, specific to art, also has equivalents in the humanities faculties of Europe, which paid with a vacuum of engagement for the disappearance of the leftists of the '68 movement and their absorption into green parties and the peace movement. However, in the course of the decade in which the self-abolition of the left was being masochistically pursued by means of projects like the anti-rationalist 'critique of reason' — an umbrella term for the convergence of interest in non-European cultures that had come about ethnologically/anti-imperialistically with an anti-leftist scepticism towards any type of enlightenment and modernism — at some point it emerges that besides the failed 'long march through the institutions' and the other orthodox forms that constituted the '68 movement (against which punk directed itself so vehemently), there were still developments waiting to be (re)discovered. During the Group Material symposium, one of the artists who normally referred to Baudrillard, the Neo-Geo painter Peter Halley, explained that he has rediscovered the 'Situationalists' through Baudrillard. The symposium agreed that the 'Situationalists' were important. In the same year, I was also involved, together with Albert Oehlen, in an edition of the journal *Durch*,[06] published in Graz, which was largely devoted to the Situationists. The expert Roberto Ohrt, whose vast monograph on the Situationists entitled *Phantom Avantgarde*[07] was published the following year, was extremely helpful. A short time later, SI exhibitions followed in Boston and Paris. Greil Marcus published *Lipstick Traces*,[08] in which Situationism is assigned a major role as the broader context of punk, and specifically European punk. By the end of the decade, the movement that had been mostly forgotten since the mid-seventies, was on its way to becoming what it is today: a canonical, key subject area in academies. As of 1990, Guy Debord's notion of the 'spectacle' once again represents everything that had, until 1980, been called the 'culture industry' and that hadn't existed or had disappeared in the fog of the notions of 'simulation' during the eighties.

06
Durch 3/4 guest editor Albert Oehlen (Graz: Kunstverein, 1987).

07
Roberto Ohrt, *Phantom Avantgarde: Eine Geschichte der Situationistischen Internationale und der modernen Kunst* (Hamburg: Nautilus, 1988).

08
Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces (on a Cigarette)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

In the eighties, three basic emotions prevailed instead: the feeling of unreality (for which the various theories of simulation, for example, as well as the continuation of Marxist cultural criticism later accounted), the sense of a standstill (the return of conservative politicians to power, the replacement of historical-political narratives and narratives related to class struggles with ecological, geo-philosophical and Gaian-esoteric narratives), and the looming apocalypse (people could sense the end of the Cold War, but could only imagine it as the end of the world and as a nuclear confrontation between the blocs, also inspired by ecological fantasies). All three sentiments can be traced back to the fact that the whistle had already been blown to mark the end of the Cold War in historical-philosophical spheres; its time was over. However, the decisive goal (Gorbachev) had not yet been scored. The match had gone into extra time.

INDUSTRIAL

How could a resistance against these poorly understood sentiments be organized on an aesthetic level? The aggression of punk and its aesthetic siblings in so-called *Wilde* or *Heftige Malerei* (Wild or Fierce Painting), as it was blossoming in various parts of Europe, from Spain to Germany, in horror films and aggressive performance art (from Minus Delta to La Fura dels Baus) was, above all, gestural. It took place in a limited cultural area and was aimed at a slightly older section of the public, which took part in the same culture. It was an exodus without an exact destination. The next steps were more permanent. The simultaneously armoured, equipped, and aggressive, but also artificial and invented, cyborgian body of industrial music on the one hand and synth-pop on the other, weren't gestural and weren't communicative; with them, or in them, you could live in a state of depression enjoyed with a great deal of pathos, as well in a state of apocalyptic seriousness. But they also unleashed something: sexuality freed itself from the liberation; in the electric beats, the clanging marches in minor keys, the tattooed, muscular bodies — initially mainly of men — it escaped from the rule that the sexual liberation should have been a liberation 'to nature', as was the heterosexual norm among hippies and members of the 1968 movement. Instead, what Félix Guattari told Franco 'Bifo' Berardi in 1978 became true: 'we'll establish a model of man and woman in a completely artificial manner'.[09] That was the industrial body, which before the realization that manifested itself in the nineties was often associated

[09]
Guattari, 'Wunsch und Revolution', p. 71.

with Judith Butler, that there's no such thing as natural bodies. Meanwhile, various ideas and ideals of artificiality were circulating. To break with the more or less essentialist idea of feminity conceived by differential-feminism was rare among feminists of the seventies, but this changed at the turn of the decade, when performance artists such as Karen Finley and Johanna Went, punk performers such as The Slits, X-Ray Spex, Lizzy Mercier Descloux, and authors such as Kathy Acker, as well as many others, did the groundwork on new 'artificial' bodies — to use the terminology of the time — including those of women. However, these were less geared towards a relatively uniform, very particular mixture of sound, material and atmosphere than the industrial scene.

WE'VE GOT A BIGGER PROBLEM NOW[10]

If punk was a gesture, then it was strongly determined by what it was directed against. As described, this was the social liberality of the seventies. The tragedy of punk was that its opponents were shot in the back from the other side of the battlefield. Were we guilty of the seizure of power by Helmut Kohl, Maggie Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and so on? How would the uprising look now, after having tried to develop a modernized form of symbolic counter-force that has now made way for a much more old-fashioned central power (and the failure to see the modernity of this new conservatism was of course another misjudgement: an old misunderstanding that the politically reactionary positions are, on the whole, regressive).

[10]
No one better articulated the political opposition towards the hippies and members of the '68 movement, which wasn't apolitical or right and didn't want to be, but instead made efforts to save leftist projects, than the Dead Kennedys with their song *California Über Alles*, which characterized the Green Governor Jerry Brown as a hippy fascist. When, a short time later, something much worse happened and Ronald Reagan became President of the USA, they give the song new lyrics and a new title: *We've Got a Bigger Problem Now*.

BRITISH BLACKNESS

Punk didn't come about on its own, at least not in Great Britain. In terms of organization as well as aesthetics, punk was associated with another youth revolt, namely that of young people of the Caribbean diaspora in the United Kingdom. The connection between these two youth cultures developed in a different way from earlier predecessors, which focused on negotiations, appropriations and projections. This had come about as the result of the slow loosening and blurring of racist segregation in the USA and later also had an impact in other parts of the world: for instance, when white British musicians, above all, were enthusing about rediscovering blues as blues rock around 1965, or when a West-German concert agency sent old, established African-American blues musicians such as Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee or Sam Lightnin' Hopkins on tour through Europe as the 'American Folk Blues Festival'.

The white punk generation, initially decidedly white, with their rebellion envy aimed at non-white people, seemed, on the surface, indifferent to the body politics of the African-American musical influence.[11] Industrial artists such as Genesis P-Orridge declared that it was important for them to stop defining themselves by means of the blues.[12] In some respects, punk rock was anti-blues, and not just in musical terms. In the daily idiom of the seventies, the expression 'blues dance' referred to a slow, intimate, erotic partner dance: the opposite of the aggressive pogo. But while punk, to a certain degree, wanted to be 'white',[13] non-white culture in the punk setting was much more visible than black musicians were in blues rock. In the music of the seventies, a few varieties of jazz aside, segregation largely prevailed: black musicians played soul, fusion and funk; white musicians played blues rock, singer/songwriter music and prog rock. Punk wanted to do away with black elements, but started a coalition with reggae music and, above all, musicians. It was rare that there were punks who actually played reggae — The Clash, The Ruts, Stiff Little Fingers — but as a sound and culture in the world of punk, reggae was both present and often essential. In the so-called post-punk culture (for example The Slits, The Pop Group, and chart acts such as Culture Club), reggae also had a powerful musical influence. But more importantly, blackness in and from Britain was perceived differently by the mainstream culture in the rest of the world than blackness from the USA during the sixties and seventies, as either hero and/or victim stories. It became associated with specific narratives (from the Caribbean leftism that arrived via Stuart Hall, Linton Kwesi Johnson and others to Rastafari religion, and so on) and not with an ahistorical, general state of being black; with history, instead of with skin colour. This had a huge influence on the perception of 'race' and differences in the rest of Europe too. The emergence of the extremely popular neo-ska bands The Specials, The Beat, The Selecter, and Madness around the year 1980 oscillated in an interesting way between an explicitly antiracist occurrence, which addressed the interplay and the joint visibility of black and white musicians, and an ambiguous reception tradition, as ska had often been the music of extreme right-wing skinheads in Britain in the seventies.

FEAR OF A BLACK PLANET

European hip hop reception developed in two waves: hip hop first came to Europe, doubly exotified, around 1983/1984. On the one hand it was black, and on the other hand it wasn't interpreted as a political statement and was more culturally associated with

[11] 'White Riot, I want a riot, white riot, a riot of my own', sang The Clash.

[12] At various points, e.g.: '… the roots of blues and slave music has been explored, and now we've done industrial music. We have to go beyond …': in S. Alexander Reed, *Assimilate: A Critical History of Industrial Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 141.

[13] Sometimes so much that a critic such as Lester Bangs saw manifest racism at work, cf. Lester Bangs, 'White Noise Supremacists' (1979), in *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, ed. Greil Marcus (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), pp. 272–282.

stories from the ghetto of the South Bronx: drugs, urban decay, violence. When politicized hip-hop emerged in the late eighties with Boogie Down Productions, Public Enemy and so on, followed by so-called 'conscious' rappers such as A Tribe Called Quest, as well as brilliantly aggressive nihilists such as Just-Ice or Schoolly D, this changed to a second wave of reception. Now the European fans started to apply a hermeneutic approach. White, French high school students started reading up on the history of the Black Panther Party and the Nation of Islam, Basque activists wanted to find out if Public Enemy were in solidarity with leftist Basque nationalism (answer: no, they're white too). At the same time, something much more important was going on: the huge influence of hip hop culture on the one hand, and the increasingly individualized, biographized, and significantly less stereotyped black presence in art and mainstream culture on the other hand, provided a template with which non-white youths in big cities all over continental Europe could identify during the eighties.

YOUTH MOVEMENTS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

It wasn't only European fans of African-American music who started diving into questions of interpretation, which hadn't been the case with the international exchange of stories of liberation from the sixties and seventies. Young people who wanted to become part of a movement or style that carried forward what previous subcultural orientations such as punk, hippie, mod, and so on, had achieved, also had to start interpreting themselves or, in words often used in connection with paradigmatic eighties superstars such as Madonna: *invent themselves*. Magazines such as *i-D* and *The Face* in Great Britain, so-called lifestyle magazines in German-speaking countries such as *Wiener* in Austria and, later, *Tempo* in Germany were based on the dialectics between readability and opacity of youth and street fashion. The idea shared by all of these magazines, as well as a critical way of thinking that extended far beyond them, was the notion that the connection between behaviour, appearance and political/cultural convictions, which underpinned hippies as well as punks, would remain a stable factor in the interpretation of cultural developments. In the new situation of the eighties, you just have to read a larger number of youth cultures, which only differ in the details, much more carefully. The counter-idea, namely that new romantics, psychobilly, neomods, crusties, and grebos weren't historical cultural movements, but merely pop music trends that often only related to three or four bands and should be read as artistic statements rather than social ones, didn't catch on. Too much semiotic effort had been

spent and implemented against an old sociology, which was deaf to the expressiveness of youth fashions, to study the socio-political themes and conflicts of the present on the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of the youth cultural habitus. During the eighties, this became a defining motive that pervaded everything from academia to the tabloids.

NON-SIMULTANEITY AND MOVIDA

While such feelings of unreality and a world in decline affected the most varied of art forms and schools of thought during the eighties in countries such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, and France, and events like the Chernobyl nuclear accident seemed to confirm the apocalyptic mood, completely different moods prevailed elsewhere. The fact that people in Madrid in the eighties didn't spend any time thinking about the doom and gloom affecting northern Europe, as disseminated by the likes of Joy Division and The Cure, Andrei Tarkovsky and Lars von Trier, had nothing to do with the cliché of *Völkerpsychologie* of north/south differences. The sense of an unlimited new beginning, a history that is to be completely scrapped, not a 1968 that needs to be half-defended and half-overcome, and the availability of technologies for self-invention that extended far beyond fashion and youth culture, especially in the politics of sexuality and drugs, resulted in the story of the endless hedonistic nights of the La Movida Madrileña in Madrid, often rumoured to be a cliché: the excess and ecstasy-filled precursor to the British rave stories from 1988 and the techno nights in Berlin after the fall of the Berlin Wall. At that time in Madrid, I came across many, often queer, reinventions of American, rather than British, models of counterculture: psychedelic and greaser punk from the sixties, reconstructed motorbike and proto-hippy sentiments, carefully restored electric organ sounds from the late sixties, gay and non-gay psychobilly creations, lots of sunglasses after dark, The Cramps: a strong likeness to the French enthusiasm for the US, in the same way that the New Rose label celebrated it in the eighties. At the same time and in the same neighbourhood was Latino disco, already so focused on endlessness like nothing else in the mid-eighties, Chicago House aside. Just like in the rest of Europe, bright graffiti sprung up everywhere in the city; the dry political slogans that had been painted on walls during the sixties and seventies were replaced quite aptly with bright slogans in the eighties, which often only alluded to the artist. That was the case all over Europe; in Madrid and Italy the designs weren't taken from the influential African-American graffiti artists from the hip-hop culture, but from

urban anarchism. The main symptom of this, derived from punk, was a historical non-simultaneity.

INDIE AND SELF-ORGANIZATION

One thing that was blossoming and thriving everywhere was the alternative and self-organized small-scale capitalism or para-socialism of the countercultures, encompassed emblematically in the term 'indie', which initially referred to new organizational forms in the record industry, but soon also came to include cinema, the off-spaces of visual arts, and alternative print products called fanzines. There had always been independent record labels and film companies, but the criterion for their specialization was either local culture or music for which it wasn't worth using bigger production and distribution methods, or a sensitive or illegal product, or one with a bad reputation, such as pornographic or horror films. However, an independent movement emerged in the eighties, which claimed a special status in political terms on the one hand, and in artistic terms on the other: more politically radical and more artistically uncompromising, to a certain extent as a response to the critique of a 'semiotic poisoning' of the mass media, for which the blunted language of ideology criticism had long since failed to suffice. There had to be places where 'we' could develop our own language. Paradoxically, this was highly successful. One reason why critique of ideology almost disappeared in the eighties as a discourse was that it became practical. The identification with these products combined political and ethical with aesthetic components in a non-trivial way: productive dilettantism, acoustic arte povera, aggressive humour. From Rough Trade in London to Recommended Records in Switzerland, Crammed in Italy and Zickzack in Germany to Plurex in the Netherlands, these organizations, eager to take responsibility in political and aesthetic terms, sprung up all over the place. The long-term problem wasn't the 'selling out' to the major companies, as the moralization and hyper-ethics of the punks would have it, but the inability paired with a structural impossibility of organizing sales and planning for a market. Rough Trade didn't fail due to a lack of interest, but as a result of too much interest. The Smiths were too successful, but the distribution network could not be built for only a few acts. The result was that the majors took over distribution again and that the indies were absorbed into the companies as small market development units and production departments. By the end of the eighties, 'indie' was a generic terms in the media department stores that emerged at that time and were expanding significantly (before the MP3 crisis and subsequent crises).

The new political model didn't come from Europe; it originally emerged from the USA. If people had still been aware in 1975 that gay and lesbian rights, class struggles, and antiracism, by whatever name, belonged together, they'd forgotten it again by 1985. People kept on doing something or depoliticized something else. At best, people perhaps still agreed that whatever it was they were doing went against the establishment, the system of power. To 'build a counter-power' was also a statement of the late RAF in the eighties. Michel Foucault, responsible for the notion of 'counter-power', became one of the first victims of AIDS. As the public started to agree that the victims of AIDS belonged to certain so-called risk groups, a new type of politics came about, a new notion of political action, which still doesn't have a proper name today, but which has taken the place of political engagement since the late eighties. The risk groups were: male homosexuals, Haitians (all), drug users who used and shared needles; somewhat less: heterosexual women (who have sex with someone from one of the aforementioned groups); less still: heterosexual men (who have sex with women, who have sex...—I don't think this ever happened). The obscenity of these group names and the anticipation or reconstruction of their epidemically relevant connections was so infamous that it became clear that the 'power' no longer worked the way it used to, *divide et impera*, but only across divides, but extremely exact divides. When, in his *Postscript on the Societies of Control*, a very important text in the nineties, Gilles Deleuze shows that control doesn't consist of police officers asking to see identity cards, but instead of sometimes being let in with an identity card and sometimes not, you then have the formula for being sorted into risk groups. It was a logical next step for the people stigmatized in that way to join forces. The politics of the future had to become intersectional. That term was first used by Kimberlé Crenshaw in an essay in 1989,[14] and she developed the theory behind it for the first time in 1990.[15] While she didn't refer specifically to AIDS, the unrelated arbitrariness of the categories at play in AIDS and their influence on decisions relating to life and death constitute a forward-looking model for intersectional politics, which must not be restricted to obvious coalitions, but that on the other hand has to prevent people from falling in love with their identity, supposedly embodied in a homogeneous way, too much. It wasn't by chance that the involuntary intersectionality of anti-AIDS activism also brought about artistic formats that still determine debates about political art to this day.

14
Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', *University of Chicago Legal Forum* I (1989), article 8, pp. 139–167 (1989).

15
Kimberlé Crenshaw, 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color', *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (July 1991), pp. 1241–1299. Women of Color at the Center: Selections from the Third National Conference on Women of Color and the Law.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTEST IN EUROPE IN THE EIGHTIES

Lisa Godson

This essay seeks to provide an overview of aspects of environmental protest in the eighties, with case studies of particular groups, actions, and areas. It involves elements of radical action, institutionalization, state-sponsored violence, global environmental problems and a concern with local pollution issues that often connected with distant corporate or political power-bases. While certain issues that had been central to the environmental movement for over a century remained significant, in the first half of the decade the nuclear arms race was the backdrop against which some of the most profound protests took place. In particular regions, including Central and Eastern Europe and the Basque Country, environmental action also worked as a vehicle for claims to greater political autonomy and nationalism. The end of the decade saw the further institutionalization of environmentalism, not least through the stimulus of the European Union, but also a high point for environmental activism, not least in the Eastern bloc.[01]

Although difficult to describe in unitary terms, environmentalism (in some European countries 'ecologism') is typically considered to have its roots in the mid-nineteenth century. This mainly relates to conservation movements founded during the classical phase of modernity in response to the impact of industrialization and urbanization on the environment. More overtly political elements also responded to the effects of Inclosure legislation, such as the Commons Preservation Society (CPS), founded in England in 1865, and one of the first environmental organizations in Europe.[02] The concerns of the CPS were often expressed in anti-enclosure protest activities in its early days. By the eighties it mainly functioned as an advisory or advocacy body that informed more radical actions such as squatting and occupations, for example by publishing the definitive *Rights of Way: A Guide to Law and Practice* (1983) and through its involvement with the Common Land Forum (1986) which endorsed greater public access rights to commons.[03] Despite government commitment to implement the recommendations of the forum, this was stymied by the lobbying of powerful private land-owning interests, a response that was echoed in other European countries under economically right-wing governance: in Britain, legislation was not implemented until the 2000 Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Other regions of Europe in the eighties saw the continuation of traditional rights of access or 'freedom to roam', in particular the Nordic countries of Iceland, Sweden, Finland and Norway.[04]

In the eighties, the CPS and other long-established European bodies promoted rights of access to the environment as a shared amenity (for example for recreational walking), but the broader concept of 'the commons' and 'commoning' involving activities antithetical to capital was more fulsomely taken up by others,

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For a series of case studies on environmental protest in individual countries in the European Union see Christopher Rootes, ed., *Environmental Protest in Western Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

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See Ben Cowell, 'The Commons Preservation Society and the Campaign for Berkhamsted Common, 1866–70', *Rural History* 13, no. 2 (2002), pp. 145–161.

03

See Christopher P. Rodgers et al., *Contested Common Land: Environmental Governance Past and Present* (London: Routledge, 2012).

04

See Thomas H. Beery, 'Nordic in Nature: Friluftsliv and Environmental Connectedness', *Environmental Education Research* 19, no. 1 (2013), pp. 94–117; Hans Gelter, 'Friluftsliv: The Scandinavian Philosophy of Outdoor Life', *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* 5, no. 1 (2000), pp. 77–92.

including intellectuals on the left, for example the influential Marxist historian Peter Linebaugh. With groundwork made towards this concept and a reclamation of its historic roots in the eighties, the discourse of 'the commons' became more widely spread following the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the decade when 'it became possible to think of communism without the totalitarian state'.[05]

A more overt aspect of environmental campaigns and protests in the eighties connects to the deleterious effects of noxious substances spawned by intense industrial, agricultural and fishing methods. In some ways, this was a continuation of concerns first fully articulated in the sixties, for example through the ground-breaking work of Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring* (1962).[06] While unevenly expressed in the preceding decades, by the eighties protests tended to figure environmental concerns as an aspect of human rights, expressed variously in terms of access to ethically managed natural resources, land rights, political autonomy and freedom from the nefarious impact of political and corporate greed.

GREENPEACE

The non-governmental Greenpeace (founded 1971) was one of the most significant environmental protest groups of the eighties. It generated a number of linked organizations of the same name in the seventies that were brought together as 'Greenpeace International' in 1979. During the eighties, the organization expanded greatly; branches were established throughout Europe and the world. Greenpeace undertook key actions focused on the transport and dumping of toxic waste and the protection of sea-life, most prominently through their opposition to commercial whaling. Their tactics included direct confrontation and 'ecotage', a concept popularized by Edward Abbey's novel *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975) and *Ecotage!* by Sam Love and David Obst (1971). Among their civil disobedience tactics was the piloting of their own fleet of vessels to carry out protests or directly intervene to protect the environment. For example, in the early eighties Greenpeace took a series of direct actions against Spanish whaling, and in 1982 the Greenpeace ship *Sirius* sailed into the port of Leningrad and released 2000 helium balloons protesting nuclear testing by the USSR. These actions could be perilous: in 1983, four Greenpeace divers were contaminated by radiation whilst attempting to block a discharge pipe at Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant in Cumbria in North-West England that was releasing more than 10 million litres of radioactive water into the sea every day. Greenpeace was fined £50,000 and the

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Peter Linebaugh, *Stop Thief! The Commons, Enclosures and Resistance* (Oakland: PM Press, 2014), p. 5.

06

See Mark Hamilton Lytle, *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Protest march to Barsebäck nuclear power station, Sweden, 1980. The banner to the front shows the Smiling Sun or 'solmærket', which was designed by the Danish student Anne Lund and became used as a symbol against nuclear energy. Photo: Søren Rud

government-owned British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) was granted a permanent injunction against the organization. BNFL was later found guilty on four criminal charges for the discharge.[07]

In 1985, activists sailed the Greenpeace vessel *Rainbow Warrior* to the Pacific Ocean to engage in actions related to nuclear testing, including the evacuation of islanders from Rongelap Atoll, which had been contaminated by radioactivity from historic American activity, and to lead a flotilla to protest against French testing in the area. While in Auckland harbour in July 1985 the ship was sunk by explosive devices attached to its hull by French intelligence agents from the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure, causing the drowning of the Dutch photographer Fernando Pereira. The resulting political fall-out in France, nicknamed 'Underwatergate' by some, obscured the broader significance of European exploitation of the Pacific region for nuclear-political ends.[08]

ANTI-NUCLEAR PROTESTS

In the eighties, protests against nuclear weapons were broadly cast as part of an international peace movement for which environmental rights were foundational, with protest against the nuclear energy industry more specifically focused on ecological threat. In general, anti-nuclear protests were often coloured by assumptions about the role of humans as stewards of nature. For example, the activist Angie Zelter described the abolition of nuclear weapons as one element in the struggle to solve 'the pressing social and environmental crises that threaten the whole web of life on our fragile planet'.[09]

The seventies had seen a détente in the Cold War, with a number of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and subsequent treaties aimed at arms control, particularly SALT I (1972) and SALT II (1979). However, following the invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR in December 1979, the USA did not ratify SALT II. Indeed, the Soviet-Afghan War (December 1979–February 1989) was a significant factor in elevating Cold War tensions particularly in the first part of the eighties, including the resumption of the nuclear arms race involving the development and stock-piling of weapons. In late 1979, members of NATO had approved the deployment of US GLCM cruise missiles and Pershing II nuclear weapons in Europe, galvanizing protest in the following years.

The most intense and sustained European protest of the eighties was around the Royal Air Force (RAF) base at Greenham Common in Berkshire, England, a storage site for cruise missiles. As detailed by Annie Fletcher (see 'Greenham Common' elsewhere

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See Luther J. Carter, *Nuclear Imperatives and Public Trust: Dealing with Radioactive Waste* (London: Routledge, 2017, originally published 1987).

Greenpeace *Rainbow Warrior* ship after being attacked by French secret agents in Aukland Harbour, 10 July 1983

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For a contemporary analysis, see Steve Sawyer, 'Rainbow Warrior: Nuclear War in the Pacific', *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (1986), pp. 1325–1336.

09

Angie Zelter, 'Trident Ploughshares Support for Decommissioners', in *If I had a Hammer ... Decommissioning the War Machine*, ed. EDO Decommissioners (WordPress, 2009).

in this volume), the first iteration of the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp was in September 1981 when the group Women for Life on Earth marched to the base and a small number of women chained themselves to the perimeter fence; in the months following, a series of woman-only camps were built around the base and other camps were established around other European bases. Vestigial camps were still at Greenham Common up to two decades later, but the time of most concentrated activism and occupation was in the eighties, as the last missiles were removed in 1991. The Greenham activists carried out a series of well-documented actions including the encircling of the facility by tens of thousands protestors on two successive occasions in 1983 and breaking into the base numerous times, powerfully represented by imagery of women dancing on the missile silos on New Year's Eve, 1982. As one commentator noted, this frequent breaching of the base amounted to 'rather more than a symbolic point about the supposed impressive security conferred by the weapons'.[10] Alongside that evental history of the protest was the importance of daily endurance by such a 'great range of diverse but mostly ordinary and representative women'[11] in the often harsh conditions of camp life over long periods of time (see Fletcher, 'Greenham Common' in this volume).

The International Relations scholar Catherine Eschle has identified six interlocking, often overlapping, discourses used to describe anti-nuclear activist women, labelling them as maternalist, anti-violence, culturalist, materialist, cosmopolitan, and cosmological in character.[12] Of this schema, the cosmological offered the most elaborated environmental discourse, and 'mobilized gendered imagery as part of its holistic conception of the universe and the role of humans within it', drawing on a self-conscious ecofeminism 'in critiques of a dualistic masculine worldview involving separation from and mastery over nature'.[13] Despite charges of promoting a biologically determinist gendered reading of the environment, more recent scholarship has revisited ecofeminism and its key texts as sensitive to contingencies and contexts.[14]

The force of the peace mobilization of the early eighties was evident in October 1982 when nearly 3 million people protested in cities throughout Europe including Rome, Vienna, Stockholm, Paris, and Dublin 'to protest nuclear missile deployments and to demand an end to the arms race'[15] with the largest single protest in the Dutch city of the Hague. This was the biggest mobilization of peace protests in European (and human) history until the protests against the war in Iraq in February 2003.

Greenham Common protest, dancing on the silos at dawn, New Year's day, USAF air base, Berkshire, 1 January 1983. Photo: Raissa Page

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Mary Midgley, 'Shouting Across the Gulf', *London Review of Books* 6, no. 19 (1984), pp. 7–11, p. 8.

11
Ibid., p. 8.

12
Catherine Eschle, 'Gender and the Subject of (Anti)Nuclear Politics: Revisiting Women's Campaigning against the Bomb', *International Studies Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2013), pp. 713–724.

13
Eschle, 'Gender and the Subject of (Anti)Nuclear Politics', p. 717.

14
See for example Joan Cadden, 'Focus: Getting back to the Death of Nature: Rereading Carolyn Marchant', *Isis 97*, no. 3 (2006), pp. 485–486.

15
David Cortright, Peace: *A History of Movements and Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 148.

In communist Central and Eastern Europe (henceforth Eastern bloc), both anti-nuclear campaigns and protest about local environmental issues were significant in the eighties, and ultimately played an important role in the political transitions of 1989/1991.

The European Nuclear Disarmament Campaign (END, founded 1982) was largely based in western Europe and became important in backing unilateral initiatives and supporting the work of dissidents in the Soviet Union and its east-central European satellite states. Their strategy in fostering a 'détente from below' meant the building of close relationships with the Hungarian Dialogue Group, Charter 77, the Moscow Trust Group, and other intrepid anti-nuclear forces in the East.[16] The aspiration of the END to work in pan-European solidarity was sometimes seen as naïve by those living under oppressive regimes. This was not least because of suspicion of utopian sloganeering to a population inured to aspirational exhortations by repressive regimes. END's idealistic focus on 'peace' at the expense of recognizing everyday suffering and regional difference was viewed as naïve, particularly in the area of environmental destruction. This was forcefully expressed by Czech dissident and writer Václav Havel in his 'Anatomy of a Reticence' (1985), written, according to a note by the author, to be delivered at a peace conference in Amsterdam in his absence. Havel contrasted the Western peace activist to a citizen of his own country who

> can have absolutely nothing to say about the possible conversion of a large tract of his homeland into a desert for the sake of a bit of inferior coal ... since he cannot protect even his children's teeth from deteriorating due to environmental pollution, since he cannot even obtain a permit to move for the sake of his children's teeth and souls from northern to southern Bohemia, how could he influence something on the order of some sort of 'Star Wars' between two superpowers? All that appears so terribly distant to him, as far beyond his influence as the stars above.[17]

The importance of environmental activism as a mobilizing agent for populist protest against Eastern bloc regimes is widely recognized. Prior to the mid-eighties, individual governments paid little heed to the environmental consequences of enforced industrialization, with production quotas taking precedence over health and environmental considerations, often in service to centralized power. The resulting life-threatening pollution and disastrous environmental conditions have been characterized thus:

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Lawrence Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 165.

17

Václav Havel, 'Anatomy of a Reticence' (1985) available at http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=eseje&val=4_aj_eseje.html&typ=HTML (accessed 23 July 2017).

Villages in Czechoslovakia were black and barren because of acid rain, smoke, and coal dust from nearby factories. Drinking water from Estonia to Bulgaria was tainted with toxic chemicals and untreated sewage. Polish garden vegetables were inedible because of high lead and cadmium levels in the soil. Chronic health problems were endemic to much of the region.[18]

Many of the ecological movements that emerged across the Eastern bloc in the eighties were connected with the political drive for democracy, with unsatisfied demands for an improved environmental situation leading to insistence on widespread political change. Examples include the 'phosphorite war' in Estonia involving a campaign in the late eighties against the opening of new phosphorite mines in Virumaa, figured as the catalyst for Estonian independence; intensive campaigns by Hungarian activists against the construction of the proposed Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam on the Danube River, which ignited more general political opposition; the activities of Bulgaria's Ecoglasnost group; the Slovak Union of Landscape and Nature Protection, perhaps the only important current of opposition before 1989;[19] the Latvian Popular Front's exposés of petrochemical poisoning on the Daugava River; the actions of the Polish Ecological Club (PKE), 'widely recognized as being the first legally established independent, non-profit, environmental non-governmental organization in the former socialist block countries of Central and Eastern Europe'.[20]

The single most important, and catastrophic, environmental catalyst towards political action was the Chernobyl disaster. Shortly after midnight on 26 April 1986, a badly designed reactor at the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl in the then Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic of the Soviet Union exploded, leading to highly radioactive fallout across an extensive region including the western USSR and Europe. In the aftermath of the explosion, a news blackout was imposed, with 'Soviet paranoia and secretiveness about anything to do with industrial accidents, military matters and nuclear power' making the confusion worse.[21] The disaster eventually necessitated widespread evacuation and projections of tens of thousands of excess deaths from radioactive contamination, and is seen as both a key factor in the eventual demise of the Soviet Union and as galvanizing environmental protest in the broader region. Again, in the wake of Chernobyl there was a conflation of independence and environmental movements, for example in Lithuanian protests against the Ignalina nuclear power station, which played an important role in the struggle against centralized authority in Moscow,[22] and protests in Armenia against the Medzamor nuclear power plant and the Nairit

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Mary Ann Cunningham, 'Eastern European Pollution', in *Environmental Encyclopedia*, ed. Marci Bortman and Peter Brimblecombe et al. (Michigan: Thomson Gale, 2003, 3rd edition), pp. 407–409, p. 407.

19

Petr Jehlička and Tomas Kostelecky, 'The Development of the Czechoslovak Green Party since the 1990 Election', *Environmental Politics* 1, no. 1 (1992), pp. 72–94.

20

Polish Ecological Club, http://zb.eco.pl/gb/18/pke.htm (accessed 1 September 2017).

21

Zhores Medvedev, 'Chernobyl: A Catalyst for Change', in *Milestones in Glasnost and Perestroyka: Politics and People, Volume 2,* ed. Hewett and Victor Hansen (Washington DC: Brookings Institute, 1991), pp. 19–30, p. 23.

22

Jürgen Salay, 'Environment and Energy in the Baltic Countries', in *Economic Policies for Sustainable Development*, ed. by Thomas Sterner (Dordrecht: Springer Science and Business Media, 1994), pp. 113–131.

Chemical Factory.[23] But more than anything, the effects of the Chernobyl disaster emphasized the transnational, even global, characteristics of ecology.

LOCALIZED PROTEST IN THE FACE OF HASTENED GLOBALIZATION

Of course, concerns about the ill effects of industrialization were not confined to the Eastern bloc, and the eighties saw numerous protests throughout Europe against local environmental threats. This was often in regions that were undergoing hastened processes of modernization and globalization, for example through the encouragement of multi-national corporations to set up manufacturing or processing facilities in previously 'under-industrialized' areas. One such example was in Spain, where fishermen protested against the establishment of a plant on the northwest Atlantic coast by the Canadian mining and manufacturing company Alcan Aluminium Limited over fears of ground-water pollution, and another in Ireland where local groups became adept at stalling and protesting planning decisions from the mid-seventies into the eighties.[24]

The attitude of the Irish government in this period has been characterized as 'jobs versus environment'[25] and in areas of high unemployment and 'under-development' there was often a heavy social penalty for protestors. This meant dissenting voices were often lone individuals drawing attention to personal suffering rather than as members of an established environmental group, as in the disturbing case of the Hanrahan family which received worldwide coverage.[26] They were dairy farmers in County Tipperary whose family, neighbours, and livestock suffered inexplicable health problems following the opening of a chemical plant by the American pharmaceutical company Merck Sharp & Dohme one mile up-wind from the Hanrahan farm. In one of the longest civil cases in Irish history during which the Hanrahans lost the land they had farmed for seven generations due to their legal costs, they were finally awarded compensation. The Hanrahan case doubtlessly mobilized opposition to other major corporations building chemical plants in Ireland, for example through protests against Merrell Dow and Sandoz, and tensions between a government keen to encourage foreign direct investment and local populaces fearful of the ill effects of weakly regulated industry persisted.

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See Magnus Andersson, 'Environment and Transition in Eastern Europe', in *Change and Continuity in Poland's Environmental Policy* (New York: Springer, 1999), pp. 3–19.

Aftermath of the explosion in the nuclear reactor, Chernobyl, April 1986

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For a contemporary perspective, see H. Jeffrey Leonard, *Pollution and the Struggle for the World Product: Multinational Corporations, Environment, and International Comparative Advantage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

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Seán MacConnell, 'A Decade Fighting a multinational', *Irish Times*, 16 March 2006.

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See for example Doug Payne, 'A Long Toxic Way to Tipperary', *New Scientist* 5 January 1991, available at www.newscientist.com/article/mg12917501-100-a-long-toxic-way-to-tipperary/ (accessed 30 August 2017); Jerry O'Callaghan, *The Red Book: the Hanrahan Case against Merck, Sharp and Dohme* (Dublin: Poolbeg, 1992).

The course of environmental issues in Turkey was marked by the policies ushered in following the military coup and subsequent junta of 1980–1983. Environmental activism and politics were affected by the interaction of globalization processes and domestic issues and the start of a move away from the state-centric modernity that had dominated post-Ottoman Turkey.[27] While the 1982 Constitution recognized the environmental rights and duties of all Turkish citizens and the State (Article 56), this was rarely operationalized in practice and the eighties saw the planting of a number of environmental problems seeded by a developmentalist imperative. Turkey was subject to a hastened phase of neo-liberal modernization by a government keen to embrace a free market model including large-scale infrastructural projects, often to the detriment of the local environment.

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Gabriel Ignatow, 'Globalizations and the Transformation of Environmental Activism: Turkey since the eighties', *Globalizations* 5, no. 3 (2008), pp. 433–447, p. 437.

Sign on Iztuzo 'Turtle' Beach, South West Turkey, one of the main breeding grounds for Loggerhead Sea Turtles and site of conflict between environmentalists and developers at various times since the eighties

In general, the approach to the environment was a techno-managerial one that engendered later problems, for example in terms of fishing where the government subsidized a fleet that could compete with other Mediterranean countries; with poor regulation this led to problems of over-fishing and pollution in subsequent years. While environmentalism was in the hands of state actors in the early years, the eighties saw the development of civil society and the rise of new social movements, including environmentalist groups.[28] As with Central and Eastern Europe in the same period, environmentalism was tolerated by the government, as it was perceived as apolitical and unthreatening

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See Aimilia Voulvouli, *From Environmentalism to Transenvironmentalism: The Ethnography of an Urban Protest in Modern Istanbul* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), in particular Chapter 5.

to the established political order. Most activism focused on issues of locally-unwanted-land-use (LULUs) especially regarding energy, tourism and urban planning projects that threatened green areas,[29] such as the campaign against the development of Iztuzu beach, a nesting site for loggerhead turtles in the South-West. The late eighties saw the burgeoning Bergama movement against gold mining in Western Turkey that politicized environmentalism in the country into the nineties and beyond.[30]

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Baran Alp Uncu, *Within Borders, Beyond Borders: The Bergama Movement at the Junction of Local, National and Transnational Practices*, PhD thesis (London School of Economics, 2012), p. 102. Available at http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/498/1/Uncu%20 Within%20borders%2C%20 beyond%20borders.pdf (accessed 12 August 2017).

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See Çiğdem Adem, 'Non-State Actors and Environmentalism', in *Environmentalism in Turkey: Between Democracy and Development?*, ed. Fikret Adaman and Murat Arsel (Hants: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 71–86.

WHEN HISTORY WAS GONE

Boris Buden

Neoliberalism in the eighties? That was not an issue at the time. 'Democracy' was the word on everybody's lips. One was either living it out or craving it more than anything else. Indeed, there was no alternative in the eighties — no alternative to democracy. Even then, already collapsing communism saw its future—its survival, an afterlife — in its democratic transformation. In the eighties, it seemed that nothing could stand in the way of democracy except the brute force of those who were left behind by history. Even neoliberalism, back then, looked like democracy. Hardly anyone was aware that it already had its own agenda.

A historical periodization that measures time, like here, merely by calendar — a 'decade' — only makes sense within a broader historical framework. In the eighties, this framework was clearly defined by democracy, not by neoliberalism. In fact, the eighties were the last decade of history. At the end of that period, in the summer of 1989 — the year that also stands for the fall of East European communism — Francis Fukuyama announced the end of history exactly by declaring democracy, or more precisely a Western-style democracy, as its final stage. In fact, he meant an ideological end of history: democracy as the ultimate form of human government and the finally reached *telos* of all ideological development. At the moment of the post-historical turn neoliberalism, again, is not an issue. It turned to post-history in the shadow of democracy as a final form of humanity's economic development. While it was loudly proclaimed that no political regime or system would ever again claim ideological superiority to liberal democracy, it was tacitly asserting that no alternative economic model would ever challenge neoliberal economics. This is what, at the end of the eighties, created our post-historical horizon and still determines the contours of the global order in which we live — a seemingly self-evident assumption that one cannot have democracy without its alter ego, neoliberalism, and that both are the final outcome of human history.

Of course, another narrative is also possible. It is, for instance, provided by David Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.[01] The breaking point that defines the broader historical framework within which we can situate the eighties as a period took place at the turn of the decade, not the end. This was the time when the first government with a clearly neoliberal agenda was installed — with Margaret Thatcher elected as Prime Minister of Great Britain in May 1979. Paul Volcker, who became the Chairman of the Federal Reserve in the summer of the same year, started the implementation of neoliberal monetary politics in the United States. The major objective was to abandon the old principles

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David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

of the New Deal, actually a Keynesian fiscal and monetary policy aiming at full employment and in favour of quelling inflation regardless of social consequences.[02] A year later, when Ronald Reagan entered the White House, neoliberal economic policy won full support from mainstream federal politics. Yet the turn to neoliberalism didn't take place only within the most advanced Western democracies. The first neoliberal inspired economic policy was introduced in Latin America under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet who, in a 1973 military putsch, overthrew the democratically elected President of Chile Salvador Allende. After the labour market was violently 'freed' from regulatory or institutional constraints such as, for instance, trade union power, the infamous 'Chicago boys' — a group of economists trained in the neoliberal theories of Milton Freedman at the University of Chicago — were called in to reverse the nationalizations and privatize public assets, open up natural resources to private exploitation, privatize social security, facilitate foreign investment and cooperate with the International Monetary Fund, for instance: take new loans, et cetera.[03] At that time a neoliberal turn also took place in one of the most closed totalitarian states of the world. With Deng Xiaoping taking power in 1979, the economic liberalization of communist China began. The famous 'four modernizations' — in agriculture, industry, education, and science and defense — which brought market forces into the Chinese economy, opened up the country to foreign trade and foreign investment, in short, enabled China's entry into the world market, which coincided with the neoliberal transformation of international trade in the eighties.[04]

According to David Harvey, the emergence of neoliberalism at the beginning of the eighties represents a revolutionary turning point in the world's social and economic history.[05] In this sense, it radically reframes the historical meaning of the eighties. Now they are not the last decade of history, which will end with the global — and eternal — rule of liberal democracy, but the first decade of the global rule of neoliberalism, whose claim to eternity is no less intrusive.

These two historical narratives are incompatible. While democracy fully subsumes neoliberalism, letting it appear as its legitimate corollary, neoliberalism itself doesn't have to pledge allegiance to the rules of democratic politics. On the contrary, it feels comfortable and sometimes thrives best where autocracy and dictatorship exert full power over individuals and where human rights are ignored or openly trampled upon. The eighties were the time when the disproportional relationship between democracy and neoliberalism was established: since then we have accepted as normal the fact that democracy is often the first to facilitate the implementation of neoliberal policies but the last to come to

[02]
Ibid., pp. 23–25.

[03]
Ibid., p. 8.

[04]
'The spectacular emergence of China as a global economic power after 1980 was in part an unintended consequence of the neoliberal turn in the advanced capitalist world.' Ibid., p. 121.

[05]
Ibid., p. 1.

people's defence when these policies result in destroying their lives. The incompatibility of the two historical narratives — the one in which democracy concludes the entire development of human history and another, which makes the neoliberal turn central to our historical experience — renders any attempt to clearly grasp the historical meaning of the eighties impossible. This is not only due to the ideological disparity of these narratives: while the first, which celebrates the happy, democratic end of history, apologetically affirms the actual historical reality, the latter, which sees neoliberalism as a cause / symptom of a historical crisis, by contrast, calls for its radical critique. In fact, the absence of a common historical ground on which these two narratives might reconcile is not what makes us unable to define the eighties. Rather, the opposite is the case: it is our inability to articulate these two narratives in a radical political opposition to each other, or more precisely, our inability or shall we say fear — to create, politically, a historical ground on which democracy and neoliberalism appear in their irreducible antagonism; a ground on which they clash with one another as open adversaries. At stake is an inability at the level of historical experience. It is an inability of socio-political subjects to totalize historical experience in terms of a mutually exclusive, binary opposition between democracy and neoliberalism.

The problem is that a historical experience, which would allow for such a radical antagonism, cannot take democracy as its ultimate horizon. In other words, for the struggle between democracy and neoliberalism to make historical sense, neither of the adversaries can take the position of history itself — not even democracy. If anything were historical about such a struggle then this would be its open outcome, one that will decide history, not the one that is decided by this history in advance. Or, to put it more clearly, a democratic struggle against neoliberalism becomes truly historical only if and when it faces the possibility that there might be no democratic exit from neoliberalism. To democratically challenge neoliberalism one must allow for the possibility that there might never be a democratic solution to its drawbacks.

MORE THAN A THEFT OF HISTORY

Now we might understand why it is so difficult to grasp the true historical meaning of the eighties. In terms of history this temporal designation is a sort of borderline case. It marks the moment at which the unity of historical time began to dissolve, making any attempt of social subjects to orient themselves within the emerging time-space dynamic of global contemporaneity illusory. In this sense we might say that there is an element of truth in

defining the eighties as the last decade of history. The democratic revolutionaries of 1989 were the first to bitterly experience this in the beginning of the nineties. At the moment they toppled communist regimes in Eastern Europe, they saw themselves — and were at the same time seen by the world — as the very protagonists of history. One might say, history itself cast them into the role of history makers. This means that they were not only able to radically cut into an allegedly linear flow of historical time, dividing it into the old destined to be destroyed and the new they represented — a fundamentally modernist operation — but also to create a new historical temporality, which was, in fact, the very essence of a modern revolution. They were, at least for a moment, the embodiment of history itself.

This illusion, however, didn't last long. Soon they found themselves in a time different from the one they just created. Contrary to a naïve, common sense understanding of recent history, the democratic revolutions of 1989–1990 in Eastern Europe haven't immediately delivered what they promised — a democratic society. They didn't result, as expected, in democracy, but rather in the so-called transition to democracy, an ambiguous process of social transformation whose temporal extension was not only indefinitely open to a vague end point, but, moreover, completely out of the control of those who brought about historical change. What followed after the collapse of historical communism was not democracy proper but 'post-communism', a condition for which was claimed, from the very beginning, that it hasn't brought anything new and which was, precisely in terms of historical temporality, declared 'belated'[06] — of course, in relation to the West as the time-space of actually existing democracy. So, instead of fully consuming the hard-fought democratic freedoms, societies of the post-communist East had first to embark on an endless process of catch-up with the West. The old Cold-War divide, once pathetically epitomized in the picture of the Berlin Wall, has been replacedby a new wall composed solely of an alienated historical time.[07] The West was now more than historically ahead of the post-communist East; it was the place where history had reached its closure and where the flow of historical time had come to a standstill.

The concept through which the post-historical condition found its ideological expression was 'identity'. With the collapse of its Cold War counterpart at the end of the eighties, the West emerged as a compact identity block that claimed normative supremacy over the rest of the world. It didn't simply dislodge itself from history. Rather, it has become the very measure of historical temporality. The same applies, by and large, to democracy. Now it was no longer a historically contingent social condition, a matter

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See for instance Jürgen Habermas, 'Nachholende Revolution und linker Revisionsbedarf. Was heißt Sozialismus heute?', in *Die nachholende Revolution* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 179–203.

07

The turn of the eighties saw a historical revival of the temporal difference, once an effective instrument of colonial oppression deployed to project the colonized peoples in a time different from the one of the colonial powers, concretely in a non-historical time. Now, in the form of a fluid temporal border, it is used by the forces of neoliberal globalization to regulate and control the movements of capital and labour force across the world. (See Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, The Multiplication of Labor* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), especially Chapter 5: 'In the Space of Temporal Border'). Today, as much as in the time of classical colonialism, it serves the interests of domination. This also applies to the nowadays much discussed idea of a 'multi-speed Europe'.

or cause of political struggle that forces within society could win or lose, but rather a 'property' of an identity — the identity of the West. In the normative guise of 'Western values' democracy has ascended from the social space of history to the sphere of its angelic sublimity, thoroughly purified from the dirt of real history, emphatically universal, despite its cultural (Western) particularity, and above all, timeless. It is from the higher ground of its abstract normativity that Western democracy could judge historical reality, which was now always somewhere else, not only in another non-Western place but also in another time. From the standpoint of actually existing Western democracy, real history is still taking place, yet only in the past as the temporal modus of its non-Western contemporaries. For the West, any non-Western democracy is necessarily a 'belated' one, which is why it cannot share one and the same time with it.

What the West has accomplished at the turn of the nineties was more than the theft of global history. We can describe it as a form of primitive accumulation of historical temporality, totally in parallel with the new — neoliberal — wave of primitive accumulation of capital launched after 1989 in the former communist countries. As we know, it was made possible by a radical transformation of property relations that involved the mostly criminal privatization of the state or socially owned means of production and other assets. But something similar happened in the sphere of ideology. Those who were separated from their land and factories also lost what they just created — history. The very means of their historical reproduction, a self-created historical temporality by which they alone were able to cast themselves as the subjects of history, was taken away from them. The euphoria of the democratic revolutions of 1989–1990 was short-lived and so was the historical role of their heroes. Just as they, as economically liberated individuals, were immediately surrendered to the whims of the globalized markets, so too they found themselves, as members of their transitional societies and as political subjects, running after history in a desperate attempt to catch up with its actual time. But they were always running late. History was already in foreign hands.

What we usually call post-history has nothing to do with a world in which history, having done its job, has abandoned, evaporating into another temporality that eludes historical meaning. Rather, it is a divided world, a world in which history has been expropriated — by means of an identitarian (Western) enclosure — from those who created it. What is now imposed on them as a post-historical temporality is in fact their own alienated history.[08] In the hands of its new owners, the sole rulers of the global world, it has turned into an instrument of domination and a perfect protective mechanism for the existing order. The temporal logic of

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We could understand this transformation in terms of an identity fetishism: a relation between men and women, of which history is but temporal expression, has taken shape of a relation between identity values irreducibly separated by an objectively given temporal difference. History can happen only when human beings who enter into relationship with each other share one and the same time. This is not necessary for the relation between identities.

post-history gives the regime of the actually existing Western democracy a kind of strategic depth, a temporal buffer zone in which none of its crises can ever acquire historical meaning. However destructive or irresolvable, it will never be perceived as the terminal crisis of the system itself. Post-history is an ideological arrangement in which democracy always gets a second chance.

THE TRIPLE TURN OF THE EIGHTIES: HISTORY TO MEMORY; FUTURE TO PAST; SOCIETY TO CULTURE

In the years that followed the historical changes of 1989, history gradually abandoned the hearts and minds of the masses, which it had occupied for almost two centuries. But these hearts and minds, much like the factories of industrial modernity, from which living labour had just disappeared, were not, in fact, empty. History had left at least one of its temporal dimensions: the past.

French historian Pierre Nora argues that we live in an age of commemoration.[09] Nora has diagnosed the extraordinary rise, already in the seventies, in interest for the past. In France and elsewhere in the West, it coincided with the first serious economic crises after World War II, triggered by the huge rise in oil prices in 1974, a crisis that shattered the hitherto stable belief in progress: industrialization, urbanization and a constant growth in welfare. Secondly, the political atmosphere radically shifted following the death of General de Gaulle in 1970. The French began questioning official history, disclosing the dark side of the heroic narrative of anti-fascist resistance, the collaboration of Vichy France. But they also turned their attention to a more distant and deeper past, the history of pre-revolutionary France. 'The French Revolution is over', wrote François Furet at the end of the seventies.[10] The idea of historical time symbolically condensed around the experience of revolutionary rupture lost the prestige it had enjoyed for almost two centuries. It ceded its place to the concept of tradition. The seventies ended with what Nora describes as a 'meteoric rise of the cult of national heritage'.[11] At the same time, the French Communist party, at that point still a significant political force, started to lose its influence on both national politics and French intellectuals. The intellectual collapse of traditional Marxism was underway.

It was the historical decline of the idea of revolution that brought about radical change in the perception of history. The unity of historical time fell apart. It was kept together by the con-cept — a reflected historical experience as well as a prospective expectation — of a radical revolutionary rupture, which not only regulated the economy of historical loss and gain, clearly differen-tiating the old — consigning it to the dustbin of history — from the

09
See Pierre Nora, 'Reasons for the Current Upsurge in Memory', *Eurozine*, 19 April 2002, www.eurozine.com/articles/2002-04-19-nora-en.html (last accessed on 13 March 2017).

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In *Penser la Révolution française (Interpreting the French Revolution)* from 1978.

11
In 1980, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, at that time the President of the Republic, proposed to dedicate himself to the national heritage.

new that was yet to be created, but which also directed an entire historical timeline toward the future. The great beneficiary of this transformation was the past. It was, as Nora explicitly states, liberated by the disappearance of historical time oriented by the concept of revolution. In the eighties, the world was turning back to the past. Not only in France. Nora speaks of an 'ardent, embattled, almost fetishistic 'memorialism' that spread all over the world, especially after the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and military dictatorships in Latin America. The key feature of this 'tidal wave of memorial concerns that has broken over the world' was the close ties between a new adoration for the past and an idea that was rapidly taking hold in intellectual and political circles: identity.

The eighties was a time when memory began to replace history both in terms of the knowledge of the past and in terms of a particular sense of temporality. It has chosen culture and not history's preference, society, as the medium of its articulation. In fact, culture established itself as the only sphere in which something like the totalization of historical experience[12] still made sense, for instance under the name of postmodernity — a cultural epoch that was first diagnosed and conceptualized at the beginning of the eighties. Then, culturally experienced time was seen as closely connected to the condition of contemporary capitalism, already affected by neoliberal policies: in 1984 *The New Left Review* published Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Only a few years earlier, 1981, the same author called for us to 'always historicize!'.[13] But there was no serious answer to his call in the eighties and later it would be forgotten. It has seemed impossible to historicize in the post-historical world of neoliberal capitalism. But isn't this a reason to remember the eighties, when the trouble with history began; and a good reason to try again?

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On the problem of cultural totalization of historical time, see Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (London and New York: Verso, 1995).

13

The famous first sentence of Fredric Jameson's, T*he Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Social Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981).