

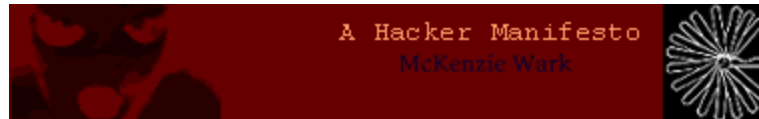
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# HK -= [Hacker Kulture] -= Manifest-H -= [Hacker Manifesto 2.0

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HACKER MANIFESTO 2.0 by McKenzie Wark

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"Hackers create the possibility of new things entering the world. Not always great things, or even good things, but new things. In art, in science, in philosophy and culture, in any process of knowledge where data can be gathered, where information can be extracted from it, and where in that information new possibilities for the world produced, there are hackers hacking the new out of the old. "

## Abstraction

There is a double spooking the world, the double of abstraction. The fortunes of states and armies, companies and communities depend on it. All contending classes, the landlords and farmers, the workers and capitalists, revere it -- yet fear it.

All the classes but one. The hacker class. We are the hackers of abstraction, who produce new concepts, new perceptions, new sensations, hacked out of raw data. Whatever code we hack, be it programming language, poetic language, math or music, curves or colourings, we are the abstracters of the new world. Whether we come to represent ourselves as researchers or authors, artists or biologists, chemists or musicians, philosophers or programmers, each of these subjectivities is but a fragment of a class still becoming, bit by bit, aware of itself as such.

And yet we don't quite know who we are. That is why this text seeks to make manifest our origins, our purpose and our interests. A hacker manifesto. Not the only manifesto, as it is in the nature of hacking to share ideas, to seek consensus through the free dialogue of differences. This text is just a contribution to class awareness.

Hackers create the possibility of new things entering the world. Not always great things, or even good things, but new things. In art, in science, in philosophy and culture, in any

process of knowledge where data can be gathered, where information can be extracted from it, and where in that information new possibilities for the world produced, there are hackers hacking the new out of the old.

And yet while we create these new worlds, we do not possess them. That which we create is mortgaged to others, and to the interests of others, to states and corporations who control the means for making worlds we alone discover. We do not own what we produce -- it owns us.

Hackers use their knowledge and their wits to maintain their autonomy. Some of us take the money and run. But one cannot run far. We must live with our compromises. Some of us refuse to compromise and live as best we can. All too often those of us who take one of these paths resent those who take the other. One lot resents the prosperity it lacks, the other resents the liberty it lacks to hack away at the world freely. What eludes the hacker class is a more abstract expression of our interests as a class, and of how this interest may meet those of the whole of society.

Hackers are not joiners. We're not often willing to submerge our singularity in any collective. What the times call for is a collective hack that realises a class interest based on an alignment of differences rather than submerging them in a coercive unity. Hackers are a class, but an abstract class. A class that makes abstractions, and a class made abstract. The slogan of the hacker class is not the workers of the world united, but the worlds of hacking untied.

But what is this abstraction? Everywhere abstraction reigns, abstraction made concrete. But where education teaches how to reproduce the dominant abstractions, the knowledge most useful for the hacker class is of how abstractions are produced. As Deleuze says: "Abstractions explain nothing, they themselves have to be explained." \_

Abstraction may be discovered or produced, may be material or immaterial, but abstraction is what every hack produces and affirms. To abstract is to construct a plane upon which otherwise different and unrelated matters may be brought into many possible relations. To abstract is to express the virtuality of nature, to make known some instance of its manifold possibilities, to actualise a relation out of infinite relationality.

History is the production of abstraction and the abstraction of production. What makes life differ in one age after the next is the application of new modes of abstraction to the task of wresting freedom from necessity. History is the virtual made actual, one hack

after another. History is the cumulative qualitative differentiation of nature as it is hacked.

Out of the abstraction of nature comes its productivity, and the production of a surplus over and above the necessities of survival. Out of this expanding surplus over necessity comes, among other things, the expanding capacity to hack again and again, producing further abstractions, further productivity, further release from necessity -- at least in potential.

But the hacking of nature, the production of surplus does not make us free. Again and again, a ruling class arises that through its control of the surplus over bare necessity, is able to enforce new necessities on the peoples who produce this very means of escaping necessity.

What makes our times different is that what now appears on the horizon is the possibility of a society finally set free from necessity, both real and imagined, by an explosion in abstract innovations. Abstraction with the potential once and for all to break the shackles holding hacking fast to outdated and regressive class interests.

While all societies depend on abstraction for the production of their wealth and power, the ruling class of any given society has an uneasy relationship to the production of abstraction in new forms. The ruling class seeks always to control innovation and turn it to its own benefit, depriving the hacker of control of her or his creation, and thereby denying society as a whole the right to manage its own development.

The production of new abstraction always takes place among those set apart by the act of hacking. We others who have hacked new worlds out of old, in the process become not merely individuals apart but a class apart. While we recognise our distinctive existence as a group, as programmers, as artists or writers or scientists or musicians, we rarely see these ways of representing ourselves as mere fragments of a class experience that is still struggling to express itself as itself, as expressions of the process of producing abstraction in the world. Geeks and freaks become what they are negatively, through the exclusion by others, but together form a class.

It is through the abstract that the virtual is identified, produced and released. The virtual is not just the potential latent in matters, it is the potential of potential. To hack is to produce or apply the abstract to information and express the possibility of new worlds.

All abstractions are abstractions of nature. Abstractions release the potential of physical

matter. And yet abstraction relies on something that has an independent existence to physical matter -- information.

Information is no less real than physical matter, and is dependent on it for its existence. Since information cannot exist in a pure, immaterial form, neither can the hacker class. Of necessity it must deal with a ruling class that owns the means of extracting or distributing information, or with a producing class that extracts and distributes. The class interest of hackers lies in freeing information from its material constraints.

Abstraction is always an abstraction of nature, yet which in the process creates a second nature, a collective space of human existence in which people live among their own products and come to take the environment they produce to be their nature.

Land is the detachment of a resource from nature, an aspect of the productive potential of nature rendered abstract, in the form of property. Capital is the detachment of a resource from nature, an aspect of the productive potential of land rendered abstract in the form of property. Likewise, information is the detachment of a resource from nature, or from nature already once abstracted, from capital or land. It is a further process of abstraction, but one that also produces its separate existence in the form of property.

Just as the development of land as a productive resource creates the technical advances for its abstraction in the form of capital, so too does the development of capital provide the technical advances for the further abstraction of information, in the form of 'intellectual property'.

In feudal society, land, capital and information were bound to particular social or regional powers by customary or hereditary ties. What vectoral society hacked out of the old feudal carcass was a liberation of these resources based on a more abstract form of property, a universal right to private property. This universal abstract form encompassed first land, then capital, then information.

While the abstraction of property produced an unleashing of productive resources, it did so at the same time as it instituted class society. Private property established a pastoralist class that owns the land, and a farmer class dispossessed of it. Out of the people it expelled from its traditional communal right to land, it created a dispossessed class who became the working class, as they were set to work by a rising class of owners of the material means of manufacturing, the capitalist class.

It is always the hack that creates a new abstraction. With the emergence of a hacker

class, the rate at which new abstractions are produced accelerates. The recognition of intellectual property as a form of property -- itself an abstraction, a legal hack -- creates a class of intellectual property creators. But this class still labours for the benefit of other classes, to whose interests its own interests are subordinated.

As the abstraction of private property was extended to information, it produced the hacker class as a class, as a class able to make of its innovations in abstraction a form of property. Unlike farmers and workers, hackers have not -- yet -- been dispossessed of their property rights, but still must sell their capacity for abstraction to a class that owns the means of production, the vectoralist class.

The vectoralist class is waging an intensive struggle to dispossess hackers of their intellectual property. Patents and copyrights all end up in the hands, not of their creators, but of the vectoralist class which owns the means of realising the value of these abstractions. The vectoralist class struggles to make of its ownership of these abstractions a monopoly. Hackers find themselves dispossessed both individually, and as a class.

Hackers struggle individually against the imposition of onerous terms of sale imposed on them. Hackers come to struggle collectively against the usurious charges the vectoralists extort for access to the information that hackers collectively produce, but that vectoralists collectively come to own. Hackers come piecemeal to struggle against the particular forms in which abstraction is commodified, and make into the private property of the vectoralist class. Hackers come as a class to recognise their class interest is best expressed through the struggle to free the production of abstraction not just from the particular fetters of this or that form of property, but to abstract the form of property itself.

The time is past due when hackers must come together with workers and farmers -- with all of the producing classes of the world -- to liberate productive and inventive resources from the myth of scarcity. The time is past due for new forms of association to be created that can steer the planet away from its destruction through commodified exploitation. The greatest hacks of our time may turn out to be forms of organising free human expression, so that from this time on, abstraction serves the people, rather than the people serve the ruling class.

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## **Class**

There is a class force driving each stage of the development of vectoral society, from the struggle to transform nature into second nature, to the struggle to produce a third nature out of the combined surplus of the preceding developments. A class force driving it to the brink of disaster, but also to the overcoming of its own destructive tendencies. As Marx writes, "in all these movements they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time." That class is not the working class, as Marx thought, and the answer to the property question is not to "centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state." \_

In its different phases, quite different ruling classes arise, claiming different forms of private property, who appear to drive vectoral society towards its ever more abstract ends. First arises a pastoralist class, who dispense with the great mass of peasants who traditionally worked the land under the thumb of a landlord class who defend them from attack by others by robbing the peasantry themselves. The pastoralists supplant the feudal landlords, releasing the productivity of the land which they claim as their private property. It is this privatisation of property -- a legal hack -- that creates the conditions for every other hack by which the land is made to yield a surplus. Vectoral society rises on the shoulders of the agricultural hack.

As new forms of abstraction make it possible to produce a surplus from the land with fewer and fewer farmers, pastoralists turn them off their own land, depriving them of their living. Dispossessed farmers seek work and a new home in cities. Here capital puts them to work again. Farmers become workers. Capital as property gives rise to a class of capitalists who own it, and a class of workers, who are dispossessed of it. Whether as workers or farmers, the direct producers find themselves dispossessed not only of their land, but of the greater part of the surplus they produce, which accumulates with the pastoralists in the form of rent as the return on land, and to capitalists in the form of profit as the return on investment.

Dispossessed farmers become workers, only to be dispossessed again. Having lost their land, they lose in turn their culture. Capital produces in its factories not just the necessities of existence, but a way of life which it expects its workers to consume. Capital dispossess the worker of the information traditionally passed on outside the realm of private property as culture, as the gift of one generation to the next, and replaces it with information in commodified form.

Information, like land or capital, becomes a form of property monopolised by a class, a class of vectoralists, so named because they control the vectors along which information flows, just as capitalists control the material means with which goods are produced, and

pastoralists the land with which food is produced. This information, once the collective property of the productive classes -- the working and farming classes considered together -- becomes the property of yet another appropriating class.

As peasants become farmers through the appropriation of their land, they still retain some autonomy over the disposition of their working time. Workers, even though they do not own capital, and must work according to its clock and its relentless methods, did at least control their free time and information circulated within working class culture as a social property belonging to all. But when information in turn becomes a form of private property, workers are dispossessed of it, and must buy their own culture back from its owners, the vectoralist class. The farmer becomes a worker, and the worker, a slave. Society in its totality becomes subject to the extraction of a surplus from the producing classes that is controlled by the ruling classes, who use it merely to reproduce and expand this spiral of exploitation. The whole of time, time itself, becomes a commodified experience.

The pastoralist, capitalist and vectoralist class have common interests, in that it is by accumulating productive resources as private property that they extract a surplus from the dispossessed. Yet their interests are not identical, and the struggle of the producing classes ranged against them is to find the weaknesses in the common front of these owning and ruling classes, while meanwhile struggling against the exploitation of differences amongst themselves.

As private property advances from land to capital to information, property itself becomes more abstract. Capital as property frees land from its spatial fixity. Information as property frees capital from its fixity in a particular object. This abstraction of property makes property itself something amenable to accelerated innovation -- and conflict. Class conflict becomes more fragmented, but creeps into any and every relation that becomes a relation of property. The property question, the basis of class, becomes the question asked everywhere, and of everything.

As vectoralisation develops, it not only produces more abstract forms of property, it subordinates prior regimes of property to the new, more abstract forms. Thus, ownership of land becomes subordinated to the ownership of capital, as the latter is a more abstract regime with an expanded capacity for the release of potential resources. Owners of capital come over time to dominate owners of land, although the struggle between them takes different forms in different places.

The capitalist class comes to dominate and colonise the pastoralists, and the vectoralists

come in turn to dominate and cannibalise the capitalists. The hacker class, producer of new abstractions, becomes more important to each successive ruling class, as each depends more and more on information as a resource.

The hacker class arises out of the transformation of information into property, in the form of intellectual property, including patents, trademarks, copyright and the moral right of authors. These legal hacks make of the hack in the abstract a property producing process, and thus a class producing process. The hack produces the class force capable of asking -- and finally answering -- the property question, the hacker class. The hacker class is the class with the capacity to create not only new kinds of object and subject in the world, not only new kinds of property form in which they may be represented, but new kinds of relation, with new properties, beyond the property form.

The hacker class may be flattered by the attention lavished upon it by capitalists compared to pastoralists, and vectoralists compared to capitalists, and tends to ally itself at each turn with the more abstract form of property and commodity relation. But hackers soon feel the restrictive grip of each, as it secures its dominance over its predecessor and rival among the owning classes, and can renege on the dispensations it extended to the hackers as a class.

The vectoralist class, in particular, will go out of its way to court and coopt the productivity of hackers, but only because of its attenuated dependence on new abstraction as the engine of competition among vectoral interests themselves. When the vectoralists act in concert as a class it is to subject hacking to the prerogatives of its class power.

Vectoral society is dynamic, struggling to put new abstractions to work, producing new freedoms from necessity. The direction this struggle takes is not given in the course of things, but is determined by the struggle between classes. All classes enter into relations of both conflict, collusion and compromise. Their relations are not necessarily dialectical. Classes may form alliances of mutual interest against other classes, or may arrive at an historic compromise for a time.

Sometimes capital formed an alliance with the pastoralists, and the two classes effectively merged their interests under the leadership of the capitalist interest. Sometimes capital formed an alliance with workers against the pastoralist class, an alliance quickly dissolved once the dissolution of the pastoralist class was achieved. These struggles leave their traces in the historical form of the state, which maintains the domination of the ruling class interest and at the same time adjudicates the competition



among particular ruling interests.

Sometimes the workers formed an alliance with the farmers that socialised private property and put it in the hands of the state, while liquidating the pastoralist and capitalist classes. In this case, the state then becomes a collective pastoralist and capitalist class, and wielded class power over a commodity economy organised on a bureaucratic rather than competitive basis.

The vectoralist class emerges out of the competitive, rather than bureaucratic states. Competitive conditions drive the search for productive abstraction more effectively. The development of abstract forms of intellectual property create the relative autonomy in which the hacker class can produce abstractions, although this productivity is constrained by the commodity form.

One thing unites pastoralists, capitalists and vectoralists -- the sanctity of its property. Each is dependent on forms of abstraction, which they may buy and own but do not produce. Each is dependent on the hacker class, which finds new ways of making nature productive, which discovers new patterns in the data thrown off by all natural and social activities, which produce new abstractions through which nature may be made to yield a second nature.

The hacker class, being numerically small and not owning the means of production, finds itself caught between the mass politics of the dispossessed classes and the elite politics of the owners of the means of production. But in the long run, the interests of the hacker class are in accord with those who would benefit most from the advance of abstraction, namely the dispossessed classes.

The hacker interest cannot easily form alliances with forms of mass politics that subordinate minority differences to unity in action, which always run the danger of suppressing the creative, abstracting force of the interaction of differences. The hacker interest is not in mass representation, but in a more abstract democracy that expresses the productivity of differences. Hackers, who produce many classes of knowledge out of many classes of experience, have the potential also to produce a knowledge of class formation and action when working together with the collective experience of all then productive classes.

A class is not the same as its representation. In politics one must beware of representations held out to be classes, which in fact represent only a fraction of a class

and do not express its multiple interests. Classes do not have vanguards who may speak for them. Classes express themselves equally in all of these multiple interests and actions.

Through the advance of abstraction, freedom may yet be wrested from necessity. The vectoralist class, like its predecessors in the ownership of the means of production, seeks to shackle abstraction to the production of scarcity and profit, not abundance and liberty. The formation of the hacker class as a class comes at just this moment when freedom from necessity and from class domination appears on the horizon as a possibility.

The struggle among classes has hitherto determined the disposition of the surplus, the regime of scarcity and the form in which production grows. But now the stakes are far higher. Survival and liberty are both on the agenda at once. The ruling classes turn not just the producing classes into objects, but nature itself, to the point where class exploitation and the exploitation of nature become unsustainable. The potential of class society to produce its own overcoming comes not a moment too soon.

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## **Education**

Education is slavery. Education enchains the mind and makes it a resource for class power. The nature of the enslavement will reflect the current state of the class struggle for knowledge, within the apparatus of education.

The pastoralist class has resisted education, other than as indoctrination in obedience. Its interest in education stops short at the pastors who police the sheeplike morals it would instill in the human flock that tends its grain -- and sheep.

When capital required 'hands' to do its dirty work, the bulk of education was devoted to training useful hands to tend the machines, and docile bodies who would accept as natural the social order in which they found themselves.

When capital required brains, both to run its increasingly complex operations and to apply themselves to the work of consuming its products, more time spent in the prison house of education was required for admission to the ranks of the paid working class.

When capital subsequently discovered that many tasks could be performed by casual

employees with little or training at all, education split into a minimal system meant to teach the poorest workers the basics of service, and a competitive system which offered the brighter workers a way up the slippery slope to security and consumption.

The so-called middle class achieve their privileged access to consumption and security through education, in which they are obliged to invest a substantial part of their income. But most remain workers, even though they work with information rather than cotton or metal. They work in factories, but are trained to think of them as offices. They take home wages, but are trained to think of it as a salary. They wear a uniform, but are trained to think of it as a suit. The only difference is that education has taught them to give different names to the instruments of exploitation, and to despise those their own class who name them differently.

Education is organised as a prestige market, in which a few scarce qualifications provide entree to the highest paid work, and everything else arranges itself in a pyramid of prestige and price below. Scarcity infects the subject with desire for education as a thing, and a thing that confers a magic ability to gain a 'salary' with which to acquire still more things. Through the instrument of scarcity and the hierarchical rationing of education, workers are persuaded to see education much as the capitalist class would have them see it.

Workers have a genuine interest in education that secures employment. They desire an education that contain at least some knowledge, but often conceived of in terms of opportunity for work. Capitalists can also be heard demanding education for work. But where workers have an interest in education that gives them some capacity to move between jobs and industries, thus preserving some autonomy, capitalists demand a paring down of education to its most functional vocational elements, to the bare necessity compatible with work.

Two groups stand outside this demand for education as unpaid slavery that anticipates the wage slave's life. One is the information proletariat, the 'infoproles'. They embodies a residual antagonistic class awareness, and resists the slavery of education. They know only too well that capital has little use for them other than as the lowest paid wage slaves. They know only too well that researchers treat them like objects for their idle curiosity. The infoproles resent education and live by the knowledge of the streets. They are soon known to the police.

The other group is the hacker class, who have an ambivalent relationship to education. The hacker class desires knowledge, not education. The hacker comes into being though

the pure liberty of knowledge in and of itself. This puts the hacker into an antagonistic relationship to the struggle on the part of the capitalist class to make education an induction into wage slavery.

Hackers may lack an understanding of the different relationship workers have to education, and may fall for the elitist and hierarchical culture of education, which merely reinforces its scarcity and its economic value. The hacker may be duped by the blandishments of prestige and put virtuality in the service of conformity, professional elitism in place of class experience, and depart from the emergent culture of the hacker class.

This happens when hackers make a fetish of what their education represents, rather than expressing themselves through knowledge. Education is not the same as knowledge. Nor is it the necessary means to acquire knowledge. Education is the organisation of knowledge within the constraints of scarcity. One may acquire an education, as if it were a thing, but one becomes knowledgable, through a process of transformation. Knowledge, as such, is only ever partially captured by education, its practice always eludes and exceeds it.

Education turns the subjects who enter into its portals into objects of class power, functional elements who have internalised its discipline. Education turns those who resist its objectification into known and monitored objects of other regimes of objectification -- the police and the soft cops of the welfare state.

The hack expresses knowledge in its virtuality, by producing new abstractions that do not necessarily fit the disciplinary regime of managing and commodifying education. Knowledge at its most abstract and productive may be rare, but this rarity has nothing to do with the scarcity imposed upon it by the commodification and hierarchy of education. The rarity of knowledge expresses the elusive multiplicity of nature itself, which refuses to be disciplined. Nature unfolds in its own time.

In their struggle for the heart and soul of the educational apparatus, hackers need allies. It is particularly important to break the link between the demands of the capitalist class for the shaping of tools for its own use, and that of the workers for practical knowledge useful in this life. By embracing the class demands of the working class in the form of knowledge that equips workers with the cunning and skill to work in this world. This can be combined with a knowledge based in the self understanding of the worker as a member of a class with class interests.

The cultures of the working class, no matter how tainted by commodification, still contain an unconscious class sense, that can be used as the basis for a collective self knowledge. The hacker working within education has the potential to gather and propagate this experience by abstracting it as knowledge. The virtuality of everyday life is the joy of the producing classes, even if the virtuality of the experience of knowledge is then joy that the hacker expresses through the hack. The hacker class is only enriched by the discovery of the knowledge latent in the experience of everyday working life, which can be abstracted from its commodified form.

By understanding and embracing the class culture and interests of the working class, the hacker interest can be advanced in many ways. It provides a numerically strong body of allies for a much more minoritarian interest in knowledge. It provides a meeting point for potential class allies. It opens the possibility of recruiting potential hackers from the ranks of the working class.

Both workers and hackers have an interest in a meritocratic educational apparatus, in which educational resources are allocated on the basis of: to each according to their needs, from each according to their abilities. No matter how divergent in their understanding of the purpose of education, workers and hackers have in common an interest in resisting educational 'content' that merely trains slaves for commodity production, but also in resisting the inroads the vectoralist class wishes to make into education as an industry.

Within the institutions of education, some struggle as workers against the exploitation of their labour. Others struggle to democratise the institution's governance. Still others to make it answerable to the needs of the productive classes. Others struggle for the autonomy of knowledge. All of these sometimes competing and conflicting demands are elements of the same struggle for knowledge that is free production in itself and yet is not free production for itself, but rather for the productive classes.

The ruling classes desire an educational apparatus in which quality education can be purchased for even the most doltish heirs to the private fortune. While this may seem attractive to the better paid workers as securing a future for their children regardless of merit, in the end even they may not be able to afford the benefits of this injustice. The interests of the producing classes as a whole are in a democratic knowledge based on free access to information, and the allocation of educational resources based on merit rather than money.

Where the capitalist class sees education as a means to an end, the vectoralist class sees

it as an end in itself. It sees opportunities to make education a profitable industry in its own right, based on the securing of intellectual property as a form of private property. It seeks to privatise knowledge resources, just as it privatises communication and culture, in order to guarantee their scarcity and their value. To the vectoralists, education, like culture, is just 'content' for commodification.

The vectoralist class seeks the commodification of education on a global scale. The best and brightest are drawn from around the world to its factories of prestige and higher learning in the overdeveloped world. The underdeveloped world rightly complains of a 'brain drain', a siphoning of its intellectual resources. Intellectual capacity is gathered and made over into the image of commodification. Those offered the liberty of the pursuit of knowledge in itself still serve the commodification of education, in that they become an advertisement for the institution that offers this freedom in exchange for the enhancement of its prestige and global marketing power.

Many of the conflicts within higher education are distractions from the class politics of knowledge. Education 'disciplines' knowledge, segregating it into homogenous 'fields', presided over by suitably 'qualified' guardians charged with policing the representation of the field. The production of abstraction both within these fields and across their borders is managed in the interests of preserving hierarchy and prestige. Desires that might give rise to a robust testing and challenging of new abstractions is channelled into the hankering for prestige and recognition. The hacker comes to desire his or her own commodification, and recognition that is formal rather than substantive, that heightens the subjective sense of worth at the expense of objectifying the products of hacking as abstraction.

Only one intellectual conflict has any real bearing on the class issue for hackers: Whose property is knowledge? Is it the role of knowledge to authorise subjects through education that are recognised only by their function in an economy by manipulating its authorised representations as objects? Or is it the function of knowledge to produce the ever different phenomena of the hack, in which subjects become other than themselves, and discover the objective world to contain potentials other than it appears?

To hack is to express knowledge in any of its forms. Hacker knowledge implies, in its practice, a politics of free information, free learning, the gift of the result to a network of peers. Hacker knowledge also implies an ethics of knowledge subject to the claims of public interest and free from subordination to commodity production. Hacker knowledge is knowledge that expresses the virtuality of nature, by adding to it, fully aware of the bounty and danger.

[\[ Top \]](#)**Globe**

The uneven development of the resources of nature lead to relations of exploitation between states. Those states in which the ruling class can quickly seize control of abstractions and productively apply them to a source of resources acquire a power over other states and can force relations of unequal exchange upon them.

The most developed states are those in which the feudal patchwork of particular property forms and traditional means of deploying resources was overturned by the more productive, abstract and vectoral forms. Local and qualitative property forms gave way to the abstraction of private property, which pitted farmers against pastoralists, and workers against capitalists on a local, then regional, then national scale.

At each stage of its unfolding, this abstraction of space developed out of the imposition of abstract geography of communication vectors on the concrete and particularised geographies of nature and second nature. The vector creates the plane upon which localities merge into regions, regions into states, states into suprastate unions.

Wherever the productive hack that best releases the surplus of production can be identified, applied and is put into practice quickly, surplus accumulates quickly, and the territorial power of localities, regions, states and suprastates grows apace.

Where ever hacking has been most at liberty, best resourced and most rapidly adopted, a surplus is released and productivity grows. Where ever hacking has been most rapidly adopted, all traditional and local fiefdoms and productive pockets have been liquidated, their resources thrown into large and large pools of resource, out of which ever more varied productive possibilities may be further generated.

Where ever hacking has produced the most varied productive possibilities, power arises that subordinates territory to its demands. Localities dominate regions, regions states, states other states. Where ever these imperial powers arise, they become a power also over hacking, subordinating it to the growing demand of the ruling classes and the states in which they vest their collective interest for forms of abstraction that further enhance and defend their power. Thus the liberty that gave rise to abstraction, and abstraction to power, comes back to impose new necessities on the free expression of the hacker class.

In the states where this process has developed most rapidly, to the point where these

centres of power constitute an overdeveloped bloc of states, the exploitation of underdeveloped territories by the ruling classes creates the surplus out of which the state may compromise with the productive classes and incorporate some of their interests -- at the expense of the under developed world.

The same vectors which permit an opening of abstraction into the world, allowing the ruling classes to expand into the developing world, can become a means to erect barriers to protect the over developed world. Thus the ruling classes seek to open the developing world to its flows of capital and information, but cultivates an alliance with the productive classes within the borders of the over developed world for the maintenance of barriers against flows emanating from the under developed world. Neither the labour, nor the products of the labour of the developing world are to be allowed free entry into the over developed territories.

The abstraction of the world that the vector makes possible is arrested in a state of development that represents the interests of the ruling classes, but in which the producing classes of the over developed world have acquired a stake through their partial democratisation of the state and partial socialisation of property through state ownership.

Pastoralists and farmers unite against the under developed world in protecting markets for foodstuffs bounded by the overdeveloped state. Likewise, capitalists and workers unite to protect markets against goods produced in the under developed world. An 'historic compromise' arises in which abstraction stops and the state borders.

The hacker class is also partly accommodated, through the recognition of intellectual property as property, and through its partial socialisation. The high rate of production of new abstraction is thus secured by accommodating the interests of the hacker class within the overdeveloped territories.

This compromise is contingent and temporary. The over developed world may arrest the abstraction of the vector by turning it into a means of enclosing its local and regional interests, but the over developed world also incubates the rapid hack of vectoral technologies with the capacity to overcome such limits.

The productive classes of the underdeveloped world, though deprived of resources, exceed themselves in their collective ingenuity in creating opportunities out of global disadvantage. Every resistance to their demand for global justice is met with ever more



inventive means to circumvent inequality. The underdeveloped world gives rise to a hacker class with an intimate experience of the struggle of all productive classes everywhere.

The compromise between the ruling and productive classes in the overdeveloped world only encompassed the pastoralist and capitalist ruling interests, who were in any case limited by the partial development of the potential of the vector from conceiving of their productive universe on a global abstract plane. The rise of a vectoralist class that profits by the abstraction of information itself rapidly overcomes this prudent limiting of the territorial ambitions of the ruling class.

Where the vectoral class played a subordinate role in the development of the abstract space of the commodity economy of the overdeveloped world, it assumes a leading role in extending abstraction to the world at large. Its capacity to vectoralise all of the world's resources, to put them all on the same abstract and quantifiable plane, creates the conditions for the expansion of the ambitions and desires of all the ruling classes.

Since its invention, the commodity economy has always been global, but under the rule of capital, the global served the interests of the powerful ruling states, whereas under the rule of the vectoral, states come to serve the interests of a global power.

The vectoral class detaches itself from the envelope of the state, and shreds the historic compromises capital made with the productive classes within their borders, and carves commodified information out of socialised culture and education. Vectoralists come to represent their interests through suprapstate organisations, within which the ruling classes of all the overdeveloped world enforce upon others the global conditions most conducive to the expansion of pastoralist, capitalist and vectoralist interests around the globe.

Under the leadership of the vectorial class, the ruling classes of the over developed world pits itself against the interests of the ruling classes of the under developed world, and against the state envelopes within which these less powerful states sought to limit the inroads of global commodification.

As the ruling classes of the underdeveloped world struggle to maintain the protection of their state envelopes, they restrict the potential productivity of their productive classes, and cut themselves off from the accelerated production of abstraction the comes from the rapid spread of any and every potential new hack. But the only option these ruling

classes are offered is to sell out to the ruling classes of the over developed world, and hand over their territories to the liquidation of local practices and subordination to emerging global norms.

Desperate for the investment of the surplus appropriated by the over developed world's ruling classes, the states of the under developed world are forced to choose between surrendering their sovereignty or reconciling themselves to a diminished rate of growth of the surplus and a relentless diminution of power relative to the over developed world.

The choices facing the productive classes of the under developed world are even starker. When their states lose their sovereignty, they become a resource for the global production of food and goods, which everywhere seeks to extract the maximum surplus. The state loses its ability to socialise part of that surplus as a condition of access to capital and entry to the emerging global order.

The only alternative offered the productive classes is to ally itself with that faction of the capitalist and pastoralist classes that resist the erosion of national sovereignty. In which case the productive classes may strike a bargain within a state cut off from development and left behind in the global production and distribution of surplus.

The rise of a vectoral class, within first national, and then international spaces, brings with it the demand for the privatisation of information. The vectoralist class everywhere comes into conflict with its erstwhile allies to the extent that the vectoralists seek to extract as much surplus as the market will bear for all aspects of the production and circulation of information. The capitalist and pastoralist classes were formerly content to permit the state to take charge of these activities, which they regard as unproductive, and to socialise them.

The interests of the vectoralist class also come into conflict with those of the subordinate classes who benefited from the partial socialisation of information through the state. However, some of the cost to the subordinate classes within the dominant states is offset by the exploitation by the vectoralists of the developing world, where increases in the cost of information weigh particularly heavily on the struggle to wrest freedom from necessity.

Just as the subordinate classes struggle within the state against the privatisation of information, so too they must join with interests across the class spectrum from the developing world in the global struggle against a vectoralist monopoly of information.

The spread of information vectors creates an ever more abstract space within which the world may appear as an array of quantifiable resources. The particular and contingent borders and local qualities give way to an abstract space of quantification. This process is not natural or inevitable and everywhere meets resistance, but this resistance is itself a product of the process of abstraction, which makes formerly natural seeming local conditions appear as something threatened by an emerging plane of abstraction.

The spread of the vector homogenises space and unifies time, passing through the pores of the old state borders and threatening the particularities that once resided unchallenged with the state's envelope. Those local identities that come to experience themselves in the wake of the globalisation of the vector are not its antithesis, but merely a product of the vector bringing representations into contact and conflict. The 'traditional' and the 'local' only appear as representations when they cease to exist as such.

Vectoralists of the underdeveloped world learn to manage and exploit representations of their own traditional culture for global commodified consumption. As they soon discover, no sooner have they identified and marketed the expression of their culture as a commodity than the global vectoral interests learn to duplicate this appearance of authenticity. Unlike commodities with a material qualities, information as a commodity may be freely counterfeited. But where the vectoralist interests emanating from the overdeveloped world fiercely protect their 'intellectual property', they freely appropriate the information of value from the underdeveloped world.

The vector brings transforms local representations into footloose competitors, sometimes even bringing them into violent confrontation as it breaches their seemingly natural relation to place. But the vector also opens a virtual domain for the production of qualitatively new kinds of difference. These differences too may be caught up in the war of representation, in the policing of information's domains of meaning and mattering. But the vector may also be the plane upon which a free expression of difference may affirm and renew itself. Heterogeneity flourishes alongside the imposition of uniform global commodity forms.

The politics of globalisation comes to represent the confluence and confusion of these trends. It pits the overdeveloped world against the underdeveloped world, and calls into being temporary and opportunistic alliances across class lines within the state, or across state lines within a class. Along both axes, the vectoral class comes to dominate all others in its ability to make and break alliances at will.

The productive classes are hampered in their ability to develop alliances, even among their own numbers, but particularly with the productive classes of other states of differing moments of development. The productive classes everywhere still exist within national vectoral spaces, having come to perceive their interests to date within the limits of the envelope of the state and its representations of national identity rather than class expression.

The state machine in the overdeveloped and underdeveloped world alike is losing its ability to incorporate the interests of the productive classes in the form of a compromise with local ruling interests. The ruling classes everywhere abandon their compromises within the state, at the expense of the productive classes. This both attenuates and erodes the representation of interest in terms of nationalism. The productive classes everywhere retreat behind nationalism at the point at which it becomes incapable of securing any but the most short term and particular interests.

This development is uneven, however. The productive classes in the over developed world maintain their power to slow the free flow of food and goods from the under developed world and to maintain opportunities for work that might otherwise benefit both the ruling and producing classes of the underdeveloped world. But this only hampers their ability to form alliances with the productive classes of the under developed world, and encourages the productive classes of the underdeveloped world to embrace their own rulers as representing their interests.

Differences emerge also in the politics of developing a suprastate apparatus capable of representing interests on a regional or global scale. In the underdeveloped world, the productive classes are more likely to identify their interests with local capitalist or pastoralist interests, who struggle to use suprastate organs as a means to open up the markets of the overdeveloped world to their goods and food to the same degree as they are forced to open their territories to ruling interests from the overdeveloped world, particularly as represented via the suprastate organs that the ruling class of the over developed world disproportionately control.

While the overdeveloped world remains substantially closed to the under developed world, many members of the productive classes of the underdeveloped world seek to emigrate, legally or illegally, to the overdeveloped world. As the over developed world will not take its goods, thus causing under employment and causing migration, so too it refuses this migration which it has itself unleashed. Migration further strains the potential for alliances between the productive classes of the over and underdeveloped world, as each sees in the other a foreigner opposed to his or her local interest.

To the extent that the under developed world finds any opportunity for development in spite of all these obstacles, it finds itself the object of the surplus seeking interests of the vectoralist class. Where other ruling classes merely want to exploit the labour or resources of the developing world, and are more or less indifferent to its cultural expression and subjective life, the vectoralist class seeks to turn the productive classes all over the world into consumers of its commodified culture, education and communication. This only further hardens resistance to the abstraction of the world and the retreat to nationalism or localism as a representation of interests.

But what of the hacker class as a class? Where do its interests lie in all of these globalising developments? The interest of the hacker class lies first and foremost in the free expansion of the vectors of communication, culture and knowledge around the globe. Only through the free abstraction of the flow of information from local prejudice and contingent interests can its virtuality be fully realised. Only when free to express itself through the exploration and combination of any and every kind of knowledge, anywhere and everywhere in the world can the hacker class realise its potential, for itself and for the world.

However, there is a stark difference between the free abstraction of the flow of information and its abstraction under the rule of the commodity and in the interests of the vectoral class. The commodification of information produces nothing but a new global scarcity of information, restricting the potential for its free expression and widening inequalities that limit the free virtuality of the vector.

The vectoral spread of commodified information produces both the commodification of things and the commodification of desire. This heightens awareness of a global exploitation that benefits the ruling classes of the overdeveloped world, but it does so by representing injustice only as material inequality. The producing classes of the over and underdeveloped worlds come to measure themselves against representations of each other.

In the under developed world arises envy and resentment, while in the overdeveloped world, fear and bigotry. Even when the productive classes become aware of the global dimension to their oppression, they represent their interests purely in local or national terms, and become deaf to the contradictions between different local interests. The struggle for an abstract expression of the interests of the global producing classes finds itself beset by thickets of local and particular interest that refuse reconciliation, but which class awareness on a global scale is not abstract and multiple enough to embrace.

The hacker class always finds its interest in the free production, and productivity, of information subordinated to the interests of the vectoral class in extracting a surplus from the hack and from furthering only those hacks that generate a surplus. But it also finds that the vectoral class recruits more and more subjects into this world in which they appear to themselves as nothing more than what they lack, thus leading the productive classes into the thicket of particular and local representations, which are everywhere the product of an abstract and universalising vector.

As difficult as it may be, the hack class must commit itself to the free alliance of productive classes everywhere, and most make its modest contribution to overcoming the local and contingent interests that pit the productive classes everywhere against themselves. This contribution may be technical or cultural, objective or subjective, but it must everywhere take the form of hacking out the virtuality that a free global abstraction would express as an alternative to the commodified subjection that both local and global domination by private property represents.

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## **Hacking**

The terms hacking and hacker have their origins in electrical engineering and computing. As these have been leading areas of creative production, it is fitting that these names be chosen to represent a broader activity. The hacking of new technologies of communication, and of new practices of creating knowledge, have indeed been the turning point in the emergence of a broader awareness of the creative production of abstraction.

The virtual is the true domain of the hacker. It is from the virtual that the hacker produces ever-new expressions of the actual. To the hacker, what is represented as being real is always partial, limited, perhaps even false. To the hacker there is always a surplus of possibility expressed in what is actual, the surplus of the virtual. This is the inexhaustible domain of what is real without being actual, what is not but which may be. To hack is to release the virtual into the actual, to express the difference of the real.

Any domain of nature may yield the virtual. By abstracting from nature, hacking produce the possibility of another nature, a second nature, a third nature, natures to infinity. Hacking discovers the nature of nature, its productive -- and destructive -- powers. It is in the nature of hacking to discover freely, to invent freely, to create and produce freely. But it is not in the nature of hacking itself to exploit the abstractions thus produced.

When the hack is recognised in an abstraction of property rights, then information as property creates the hacker class as class. This intellectual property is a distinctive kind of property, in that only a new creation may lay claim to it. New property is created only in its qualitative difference.

Through the application of abstraction, the hacker class produces the possibility of production, the possibility of making something of and with the world -- and of living off the surplus produced by the application of abstraction to nature -- to any nature. Abstraction, once it starts to be applied, may seem strange, 'unnatural', and may bring radical changes in its wake. It soon becomes taken for granted. It becomes second nature.

Through the production of new forms of abstraction, the hacker class produces the possibility of the future. Of course not every new abstraction yields a productive application to the world. In practice, few innovations ever do so. Yet it can rarely be known in advance which abstractions will mesh with resources in a productive way.

It is in the interests of hackers to be free to hack for hacking's sake. The free and unlimited hacking of the new produces not just 'the' future, but an infinite possible array of futures, the future itself as virtuality.

Every hack is an expression of the inexhaustible multiplicity of the future, of virtuality. Yet every hack, if it is to be realised as a form of property and assigned a value, must take the form not of an expression of multiplicity, but of a representation of something finite and particular. Property traps only one aspect of the hack, its particular and contingent property. It cannot capture the infinite and unlimited virtuality from which the hack draws its potential.

Under the sanction of law, the hack becomes a finite property, and the hacker class emerges, as all classes emerge, out of a relation to a property form. Like all forms of property, intellectual property enforces a relation of scarcity. It assigns a right to a property to an owner at the expense of non-owners, to a class of possessors at the expense of the dispossessed.

By its very nature, the act of hacking overcomes the limits property imposes on it. New hacks supersede old hacks, and devalues them as property. The hack as new information is produced out of already existing information. This gives the hacker class an interest in its free availability more than in an exclusive right. The immaterial nature of information

means that the possession by one of information need not deprive another of it.

To the extent that the hack embodies itself in the form of property, it does so in a quite peculiar way, giving the hacker class as a class interests quite different from other classes, be they exploiting or exploited classes. The interest of the hacker class lies first and foremost in a free circulation of information, this being the necessary condition for the renewed expression of the hack. But the hacker class as class also has an interest in the representation of the hack as property, as something from which a source of income may be derived that gives the hacker some independence from the ruling classes.

The very nature of the hack gives the hacker a crisis of identity. The hacker searches for a representation of what it is to be a hacker in the identities of other classes. Some see themselves as vectoralists, trading on the scarcity of their property. Some see themselves as workers, but as privileged ones in a hierarchy of wage earners. The hacker class has produces itself as itself, but not for itself. It does not (yet) possess a consciousness of its consciousness. It is not aware of its own virtuality.

Because of its inability -- to date -- to become a class for itself, fractions of the hacker class are continually split off from it and come to identify their interests with those of other classes. Hackers run the risk, in particular, with being identified in the eyes of the working and farming classes with vectoralist interests, which seek to privatise information necessary for the productive and cultural lives of all classes.

To hack is to abstract. To abstract is to produce the plane upon which different things may enter into relation. It is also to produce the names and categories and numbers of those things. It is also to produce kinds of relations, and relations of relations, into which things may enter. Differentiation of functioning components arranged on a plane with a shared goal is the hacker achievement, whether in the technical, culture or scientific realm. Having achieved creative and productive abstraction in so many other realms, the hacker class has yet to produce itself as its own abstraction.

The struggle of the hacker class is a struggle against itself as much as against other classes. It is in the nature of the hack that it must overcome the hack it identifies as its precursor. A hack only has merit in the eyes of the hack if it supersedes or otherwise outclasses previous hacks. Yet the hacker class brings this spirit also into its relation to itself. Each hacker sees the other as a rival, or a collaborator against another rival, not -- yet -- as a fellow member of the same class with shared interests.

The hacker class produces distinctions as well as relations, and must struggle against



distinctions of its own making in order to reconceive of itself as itself. Having produced itself as the very process of distinction, it has to distinguish between its competitive interest in the hack, and its collective interest in discovering a relation among hackers that expresses an open and ongoing future for its interests.

This struggle must enlist the components of other classes that assist in the realisation of the hacker class for itself. Hackers have so often provided other classes with the means by which to realise themselves, as the organic intellectuals connected to particular class interests and formations. But having guided -- and misguided -- the working class as its intellectual 'vanguard', it is time for hackers to recognise that their interests are separate from those of the working class, but necessarily in alliance.

It is from the leading edge of the working class that the hackers may yet learn to conceive of themselves as a class. If hackers have taught workers how to hack, it is workers who must teach hackers how to be a class, a class for itself as well as in itself.

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## **History**

History is itself an abstraction, hacked out of the recalcitrant information thrown off by the productive activities of people meshing with things. Out of the information expressed out of events, history forms orders of objective or subjective representation.

The history dominant in any era is the product of the educational apparatus established by its ruling powers. Thus even dissenting history takes form within institutions not of its making. While not all history represents the interests of the ruling powers, the institution of history exists as something other than what it can become when free of class constraint, namely, the abstract guide to transformation of the ruling order in the interests of the producing classes whose collective action expresses the events history merely represents.

For history to be something more than a representation, it must seek something more than its perfection as representation, as an image faithful to but apart from what it represents. It must express rather its difference from the state of affairs that present themselves under the authorship of the ruling class. It must be a history not just of what society is, but what it can become.

This other history, this 'hacker history', brings together the record of events as an object

apart from collective action and the action of the subjective force that struggles to free itself from its own objectification. Hacker history introduces the productive classes to the product of their own action, which is otherwise presented -- not just by the ruling version of history but by the ruling class itself in all its actions -- as a thing apart.

Hacker history hacks out of appearances, and returns to the productive classes, their own experience of the containment of their free productive energy in successive property forms. From the direct subjection to the individual owner that is slavery, to the patchwork of local lordships and spiritualised subjection that is feudalism, to the abstract and universalising private property of the commodified economy, in every era, a ruling class extracts a surplus from the free productive capacity of the productive classes.

The history produced in the institutions of the ruling classes makes history itself into a form of property. To hacker history, the dominant history is but a visible instance of the containment of productive power within representation by the ruling class. Even the would-be 'radical' histories, the social histories, the history from below, end up as forms of property, traded according to their representational value, in an emerging market for commodified information.

It is the form of history, not just its content, that must be challenged by hacker history. Adding yet more representations to the heap of history's property, even representations of the oppressed and excluded, does nothing if it does not challenge the separation of history as representation from the great democratic forces that make history in the first place.

What matters, in the struggle for history, is to make it express its potential to be otherwise, and to make it a part of the productive resources for the self awareness of the productive classes themselves, including the hacker class. Hackers, like productive labour everywhere, can become a class for themselves when equipped with a history that expresses their potential in terms of the potential of the whole of human society.

Hacker history does not need to be invented from scratch, as fresh hack expressed out of nothing. It quite naturally borrows from the historical awareness of all the productive classes of the past. The history of the free is a free history. It is the gift of past struggles to the present, which carries with it no other obligation other its implementation.

One thing is already known, as part of this gift. The containment of free productivity within the representation of property, as managed by the state in the interests of the

ruling class, may accelerate development for a time, but inevitably retards and distorts it in the end. Far from being the perfect form for all time, property is always contingent, and awaits the exceeding of its fetters by some fresh hack.

This is the salient point of the past that weighs upon the present. Production bursts free from the fetters of property, from its local and contingent representations of right and appropriation, and eventually gives rise to a universal and abstract form of property, private property.

Universal private property encompasses land, capital, and eventually information, bringing each under its universal abstract form and making of each a commodity. It cuts land from the continuum of nature and makes of it a thing. It cuts the products made out of nature into objects to be bought and sold and makes of them things also. Finally, private property makes of information, that pure immaterial potential, a thing.

The progress of the privatisation of property creates at each stage a class which owns the means of producing a surplus from it, and a class dispossessed of it. This process develops unevenly, but it is possible to abstract from the viscidities of events an abstract account of the progress of abstraction, starting with the abstraction of nature that is landed property.

As land becomes the object of a universalising law of abstracted private property, a class arises who profit from its ownership. The pastoralist class, through its domination of the organs of the state, produced the legal fictions which would legitimate this theft of nature from traditional forms of life.

Secure in its ownership of land, the pastoralist class imposed upon the dispossessed whatever form of exploitative relation it could get away with, and get the state to back with force -- serfdom, slavery, sharecropping. Each is only the measure of the tolerance of the state for the prerogative of pastoral power. In its thirst for labour that would make land actually productive, and yield a surplus, no indignity was too great, no corner of the world exempt from the claims of property and the uprooting of its peoples.

What made this dispossession possible was the private property hack, by which land could emerge as a legal fiction, guaranteeing access to the productivity of nature for the pastoralist class. What accelerated the dispossession of the peasantry was successive agricultural hacks, by which the productive power of agricultural labour was increased, creating a vast surplus of wealth in the form of produce, but also in the form of the profit

on it.

This bounty was not to end up in the hands of those who produced it, however. The peasantry who once held traditional rights in land found themselves denied those rights, by a state apparatus in the control of the pastoralist class. The agricultural hack sets flows of dispossessed peasants in motion, and they become workers, selling their labour to an emerging capitalist class.

Just as the pastoralists use the state to secure land as private property, so too the capitalists use their power over the state to secure the legal and administrative conditions for the privatisation of flows of raw materials and tools of production in the form of capital.

The capitalist class acquired the means to employ labour through the investment of the surplus wealth generated by agriculture and trade in yet more productive abstractions, the product of yet other hacks, which yielded the division of labour, the factory system, the engineering of production. The abstractions that are private property, the wage relation and commodity exchange provided a plane upon which the brutal but efficient extraction of a surplus could proceed apace. But without the productive toil of the great multitude of farmers and workers, and without the ever more inventive hacking of new abstractions, private property alone would not have changed the world.

Land and capital for a time represent conflicting interests, who struggle against each other through the state for domination. Landed interests try to achieve a monopoly on the sale of grain within the space of the nation through the state, while capital struggles to open the market and thus push down the price of grain. Likewise, pastoralists try to open the national market to flows of manufactured goods, while capital in its infancy sought to protect its national monopoly.

Where capital gets the upper hand in this struggle, it reduces the amount of the surplus going to the pastoralist class and secures for itself lower costs of production, thus making its goods more competitive internationally. Struggles of this kind are not uncommon among the otherwise allied ruling classes, and are always worth studying with an eye for opportunities presented in them for the productive classes to turn to their advantage.

The classes that own the means of production, be they a pastoralist class in possession of pastures or farmlands, a capitalist class in possession of factories and forges, or a vectoralist class in possession of stocks, flows and vectors of information, everywhere

extract a surplus from the productive classes.

Through ownership of the means of production, the owning classes limit that proportion of the surplus returned to the producing classes, over and above bare subsistence, and return subsistence in a commodified form. But the ruling classes must find a market for their produce somewhere. At first, the colonies, where the agricultural surplus is produced, are obliged to buy back their own surplus in the form of manufactured goods. Capital soon colonises its own working class, who, having struggle to gain some of the surplus they themselves produce, find that they can only cash it in for commodities.

The working class becomes the market for what they themselves produce, and enjoy some of the surplus, but only in commodified form. They find their interests divided from those of the producing classes of the colonies and former colonies. The overdeveloped world becomes overdeveloped by limiting the ability of the underdeveloped world to sell its produce into it, while maintaining its prerogatives over the markets of the underdeveloped world.

In both the developed and the underdeveloped world, the productive classes are induced into identifying their interests with those of the ruling class, with the bounds of the state. In the overdeveloped world, the capitalist class and its junior partner, the pastoralist class, secures the consent of the working class through the partial sharing of the surplus, which then gives the working class an interest in preserving the discriminatory trade relations that maintain this privilege.

In the underdeveloped world, the pastoralist class, and nascent capitalist class secures the support of the predominantly farming producers through the demand for a sovereign state free from colonial rule that can develop autonomously, and for justice in trade with the overdeveloped world. Sovereignty, whether conceded or seized from the overdeveloped world, is not, as the underdeveloped world discovers, enough to secure development. Unequal relations of trade were and remain the principle cause of exploitation in the underdeveloped world.

The productive classes are so called because they are the real producers of wealth, be they farmers and miners of land, workers of material or mental value, or hackers who produce new means of production itself. Their interests and desires not always coincide of their own accord, which is why they are considered as separate classes, tied to different relations of property, and predominating in different parts of the world. Taken together they have in common their dispossession from the greater part of what they themselves produce. Their history is the history of the struggle to reappropriate the fruits

of their own labour.

The productive classes may struggle directly against their appropriators, over the terms of the exchange between them, or may struggle indirectly through the state. The state, which the pastoralist and capitalist classes used as an instrument for legitimising its appropriation of property, can also be the means by which the productive classes seek to resocialise part of the surplus, through the taxation and transfer of the surplus to the productive classes in the form of a social wage. This may take the form of health care, education, housing or other material and cultural means.

Taxation may distribute the surplus toward the producing classes, toward the ruling classes, or may be diverted for the expansion and armament of the state itself. While the ruling class seeks to limit the state's interference in its activities, it also seeks to direct the surplus towards its own uses. Capital may encourage the state to arm itself, and profit by its arming. Here the producing classes end up subsidising an arrangement between state and capital -- the military industrial complex.

In many cases, the ruling classes ceded to the state the information intensive functions that were of benefit to the capitalist and pastoralist classes as a whole, or were the bargain struck by the productive classes. The state became the manager of the representations through which class society as a whole came to know and manage itself.

However, the rise of a vectoralist class put an end to this arrangement. The vectoral class uses the state to extend and defend the privatisation of information. It attacks the socialised culture, communication and education that other ruling classes for the most part left in the hands of the state. The vectoralist class supplants the military industrial complex with the military entertainment complex, where the surplus is directed to the development of technologies for command, control and communication. The abstractions set to work to produce military power work surprisingly well as consumer technologies.

At the same time as they transform the socialised information in the hands of the state, the vectoralist class attacks the ability of the hacker class to maintain some degree of autonomy over its working conditions through its ability to transform the hack into intellectual property. The hacker class finds itself sucked into the vortex of the military entertainment complex, hacking out the ways and means of commodifying the vector and its contents.

Besides its struggle over the value of its labour, and its struggle through the state, each

productive class struggles over the autonomy of its working conditions. Farmers form associations, workers form unions, many seek autonomy through the ownership of productive tools. The hacker class likewise struggle for autonomy in a world in which the means of production are in the hands of the ruling classes.

But there is one other struggle that all the productive classes are always engaged in, whether they know it or not. This is the struggle to exceed the limits to the production of the surplus and its free appropriation imposed as a fetter by the commodity form in general, and by its most restrictive form -- private property -- in particular.

This is the most salient point in any history that aims to become a part of the struggle to wrest freedom from necessity. The commodity form is an abstraction that releases an enormous amount of productive energy, but it does so by diverting production always toward the reproduction of the commodity form. Yet that form itself becomes a fetter on the free productivity of production itself. The hack is limited to the hacking of new forms of surplus extraction.

As land, capital and information are progressively abstracted as property, property itself becomes more abstract. Land has a finite and particular form, capital has finite but universal forms, information is both infinite and universal in its potential. The abstraction of property reaches the point where it calls for an abstraction from property.

The class dynamic drives class society to the brink of overcoming the property form itself, to the overcoming of scarcity and the release of the surplus potential of productivity back into the hands of its producers. What history expresses to the producing classes is this unrealised potential to wrest freedom from necessity once again. Just as property led to the wresting of freedom from natural necessity, the overcoming of the limits to property offers the potential to wrest freedom from the necessities imposed on the productive classes by the constraint of private property, class society and its domination of the state. As Guy Debord says: "The world already possesses the dream of a time whose consciousness it must now possess in order to actually live it."\_

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## **Information**

Information wants to be free but is everywhere in chains. Information is the potential of potential. When unfettered it releases the latent capacities of all things and people,

objects and subjects. Information is indeed the very potential for there to be objects and subjects. It is the medium in which objects and subjects actually come into existence, and is the medium in which their virtuality resides.

The potential of potential that is information has its dangers. But its enslavement poses greater dangers still. When information is free, it is free to act as a resource for the averting of its own dangerous potentials. When information is not free, then the class that owns or controls it turns its capacity toward its own interest and away from its own inherent virtuality.

Information has nothing to do with communication, or with media. "We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present." Information is precisely this resistance, this friction. At the urgings of the vectoralist class, the state recognises as property any communication, any media product with some minimal degree of difference in it, difference of a kind recognisable in commodity exchange. Where communication merely requires the repetition of this commodified difference, information is the production of the difference of difference. As such, it exceeds and escape representation as property, at least to the extent that it escapes representation and expresses difference itself as itself.

The conditions of freedom of information do not stop at the 'free' market, no matter what the apologists for the vectoral class may say. Free information is not a product, but a condition of the effective allocation of resources. Free information requires a public and gift economy as much as a market economy for communication in its commodified form.

The arrest of the free flow of information means the enslavement of the world to the interests of those who profit from information's scarcity, the vectoral class. The many potential benefits of free information are subordinated to the exclusive benefits of the profiting few. The infinite virtuality of the future is subordinated to the production and representation of futures from which the few alone benefit.

The enslavement of information means the enslavement of its producers to the interests of its owners. It is the hacker class that taps the virtuality of information, but it is the vectoralist class that owns and controls the means of production of information on an industrial scale. Their interests lie in extracting as much profit as possible from information, in commodifying it to the nth degree. Information that exists solely as private property is no longer free, for it is chained to private property itself.



The interests of the hackers are not always totally opposed to those of the vectoral class. There are compromises to be struck between the free flow of information and extracting a flow of revenue to fund its further development. But while information remains subordinated to ownership, it is not possible for its producers to freely calculate their interests, or to discover what the true freedom of information might potentially produce in the world. The stronger the hacker class alliance with the other producing classes, the less it has to answer the vectoralist imperative.

Information may want to be free, but it is not possible to know the limits or potentials of its freedom when its free potential is subordinated to the actual state of ownership and scarcity. Privatising culture, education and communication as commodified content, distorts and deforms its free development, and prevents the very concept of its freedom from its own free development.

The subordination of hackers to the vectoralist interest means the enslavement of the whole of human potential. While information is chained to the interests of its owners, it is not just hackers who may not know their interests, no class may know what it may become.

It is not just information that must be free, but the knowledge of how to use it. Information in itself is a mere thing. It requires an active, subjective capacity to become productive. But where education is dominated by the ruling classes, it produces the capacity to use information for the purposes of producing and consuming within the limits of the commodity. This produces a mounting desire for information that meets the apparent lack of meaning and purpose in life, but the vectoralist class fills this need with information that addresses these desires in their privatised form.

For everyone to become free to join in the virtuality of knowledge, information and the capacity to grasp it must be free also, so that people of all classes may have the potential to hack for themselves and their kind a new way of life. Free information must be free in all its aspects -- as a stock, as a flow, and as a vector.

The stock of information is the raw material out of which history is abstracted. The flow of information is the raw material out of which the present is abstracted, a present that forms the horizon the abstract line of an historical knowledge crosses, indicating a future in its sights. Neither stocks nor flows of information exist without vectors along which they may be actualised. Even so, it is not enough that these elements be brought together as a representation that may then be shared freely. The spatial and temporal axes of free

information must do more offer a representation of things, as a thing apart. They must become the means of coordination of the expression of a movement, at once objective and subjective, capable of connecting the objective representation of things to the presentation of a subjective action.

Information, when it is truly free, is free not for the purpose of representing the world perfectly, but for expressing its difference from what is, and for expressing the cooperative force that transforms what is into what may be. The test of a free society is not the liberty to consume information, nor to produce it, nor even to implement its potential in private world of one's choosing. The test of a free society is the liberty for the collective transformation of the world through abstractions freely chosen and freely actualised.

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## **Nature**

The very act of the hack itself is what makes nature appear as both the source of what the hack expresses, and as the object of the hack's representation. Nature appears as both subject and object of the hack, although it has an independent material existence of its representation.

Nature appears as a representation at the point at which what the representation designates disappears. Once collective human agency has begun to wrest a portion of freedom from nature's necessity, then nature in itself, as pure, unmediated experience, becomes inaccessible. It becomes precious and elusive, always just out of reach. It becomes the highest value, valued for its very inaccessibility. Because of its value, contending forces wield it as a weapon in the struggle for the hearts and minds of a vectoral people, a people which desires a nature which it persuades itself can only be had for a price.

Nature seized as property makes of nature a thing that can be appropriated for something other than itself. The property form turns nature into a object and its appropriator into a corresponding subject. Or so it appears in the representation that is the property relation. Property produces the appearance of separation from nature.

Through collective action, the productive classes wrest freedom from necessity, in the form of a transformed nature, a second nature, more amenable to existence. The transformation of nature into second nature frees human existence from necessity, but

creates new forms of necessity. "Every victorious second nature will become a first nature."

In the creation of a collective existence, in culture, society, economy and polity, human agency alienates itself from nature, and nature from itself. They become creators of their own nature, if not consciously, then at least collectively. Only by apprehending this collective nature consciously, can the nature against which human agency shapes itself be embraced in its difference. "This is the only way nature operates -- against itself."

Nature seized as something other than itself becomes a resource for the creation of second nature, the landscape that collective labour makes for itself out of what it seizes as a resource. History becomes an endless 'advance' in which nature is seized as an object, and made over in the form that suits subjective interest. But because subjective interest is always a class interest, the transformation of nature into second nature produces freedom from necessity only for the ruling class and its favourites. For subordinate classes, it produces new necessities.

Class society, our second nature, becomes so natural that nature itself comes to be represented in its terms. Class is represented as what is natural; nature is represented as if it were just like class society. Like every representation, this double displacement is a play of the false, or in this case, of the falsification of the false. Only the recovery of the history of class society, as the transformation of nature into second nature in the image of commodified competition, makes possible a recovery of the nature of nature, as itself a history which encompasses this class history, but does not of necessity conform to its representation, nor of necessity impose its necessities on human history.

Neither the appropriators of nature in the form of property, nor the dispossessed who struggle for public property as compensation for their dispossession, have an immediate interest in nature as nature. Theirs is a struggle over second nature. Nature itself disappears in its transformation. It reappears as a limit to its endless exploitation only to the extent that it is appropriated as property. It reappears to both exploiting and producing classes as an inventory of property running out. But while the exploiting classes, whose rule is based on property, have no option but to see nature as property, and thus as limit, the producing classes express in their productive nature nature's own productivity, if only it could be freed from its representation as a thing and its exploitation to the point of scarcity.

The subordinate classes of the overdeveloped world discover an interest in nature's preservation at the point at which the development of second nature has in some degree

freed them from nature's necessities. But this discovery of an interest in nature puts the subordinate classes of the overdeveloped world at odds with those of the underdeveloped world, for whom nature is still in the process of disappearance, and still appears as grim necessity. Property produces both the appearance of the scarcity of nature for some, and the scarcity of second nature for others; the necessity of arresting second nature for some; the necessity of accelerating it for others. The producing classes as a whole can only reconcile their interests by freeing nature from the grip of property, which is what actually divides them.

Neither objects nor subjects exist in nature, but are an effect of the reduction of nature to property. Nature is increasingly objectified. At the same time, nature is subjectified, and represented in the image of what is human. Since nature knows no objects, no subjects, and no representation, its appearance in representation as object or subject is a false appearance. Yet it is only in its falsity that it can be apprehended in class society, which produces the relation between nature and second nature as an objectified relation. But to rediscover nature as difference, rather than falsity, requires the transformation of a society only capable of sustaining itself only by objectifying nature.

To the extent that nature exists even in its disappearance, it exists as expression. Not as the other of collective human action, but as the multiplicity of forces that the human in concert with the nonhuman articulate and express. In differentiating itself from nature, human agency does not alienate itself from nature, it merely brings into being yet one more aspect of nature's multiplicity. Rectifying the exploitation of nature does not mean a return to a representation of it prior to its transformation, which can only appear as a false image, as it too is produced by the very transformation experienced as alienating. Rather, out of the multiplicity of natures, collective human agency can join its productive energies with those that affirm nature's own productivity. "We are not in the world, we become with the world."

Nature does not reveal its true nature when represented either as land, capital or information. The division of land into private holdings, the extraction from nature of material resources, the representation of nature as complex informational processes, all of these abstractions of nature abolish it in their representation of it, and yet are partial expressions of its multiplicity. Education instils in its victims a model of nature that corresponds to the property form of the day -- land, capital, information. Each appears as more true than the last at the point at which the form of property from which it derives has become second nature. Liberating nature from its representation is thus at the same time the liberation of knowledge from education.

To the hacker, nature is another name for the virtual. It is another way of representing

the unrepresentable multiplicity from which the hack expresses its ever renewable forms. There is an interest that the hacker class has in nature, but it is not in a fixed representation of nature, that nostalgia that may be comfortably indulged in first world comfort. It is an interest in another nature altogether. In that nature which expresses the limitless multiplicity of things, and from which any and every hack derives. The hacker interest in nature is not in its scarcity, but in its multiplicity.

In the overdeveloped world, the total transformation of nature into second nature does more than complete the disappearance of nature as nature and lead to its return as the representation of that nature that desire lacks. The transformation of nature into second nature becomes the transformation of second nature into third nature. This latterday transformation is driven in no small part by the desire to reconstitute nature at least as an image of a lost desire. Third nature appears as the totality of images and stories which provide for second nature a context, an environment within which it comes to represent itself as a natural order.

Third nature emerges, as did second nature, out of the representation of nature as property. Seized as information, not merely as physical resource, the genetic makeup of the whole biosphere can be seized as property, be it as public or private property. This may indeed be the last frontier in the struggle to appropriate the world as a resource.

Third nature, in its very totality, its all encompassing spectacle, becomes an ecology of images which may yet become an image of ecology. Third nature relentless enfolds the subject in images of the world as its object. But in its very ubiquity, it dissolves the particular relations of subjects to objects, and represents subjects as a whole with the image of an objective world as a whole. In its very falsity, it represents the relation between subject and object as a false relation, but nevertheless as a relation. Third nature reveals its own nature to be something produced.

Third nature reveals itself as something not only produced, but productive. Information appears as expression, not just as representation, as something produced in its difference from the world. The world appears as something produced through the expression of collective action. Third nature may come into existence to render quantities of objects to subjects as if they were qualities, but it ends up revealing the qualitative production of production itself. Or at least, this virtuality hovers over third nature as its promise. There may be no return to nature, but as third nature extends itself in time and space, it becomes the medium of expression of the production of a fourth nature, a fifth, nature to infinity, natures which may overcome the destructive limits of the second nature produced by class society.

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## **Production**

Production produces all things, and all producers of things. Production produces not only the object of the production process, but also the producer as subject.

Hacking is the production of production. The hack produces a production of a new kind, which has as its result a singular and unique product, and a singular and unique producer. Every hacker is at one and the same time producer and product of the hack, and emerges in its singularity as the memory of the hack as process.

The hack as pure hack, as pure production of production expresses as a singular instance the multiplicity of the nature out of which and within which it moves as an event. Out of the hack as singular event comes the possibility of its representation, and out of its representation as production.

The hack as pure hack is social in origin, but differentiates itself from the social in its production. The recuperation of the hack for sociality takes the form of its representation to and within the social as property. Which is to say, its recognition and communication. But the hack, in and of itself, is always distinct from its appropriation for production.

Production takes place on the basis of a prior hack which gives to production its formal, social, repeatable and reproducible form. Every production is a hack formalised and repeated on the basis of its representation. To produce is to repeat; to hack, to differentiate.

Production transforms nature into objective and subjective elements that form a social ensemble, in which a second nature emerges. This second nature consists of a sociality of objects and subjects which may enter into relations of production for the further, quantitative, development of second nature.

The qualitative transformation of second nature, however, requires the production of production, or the intervention of the hack. The degree of dynamism or openness of a society is directly proportional to its capacity to hack.

A society which develops, and institutionalises as a form of intellectual property, the phenomena of the hack will at one and the same time experience an exponential growth

in its productive capacity, but also in its qualitative tendency for transformation and differentiation.

The hack produces both a useful and a useless surplus, although the usefulness of any surplus is socially and historically determined. The useful surplus goes into expanding the realm of freedom wrested from necessity. The useless surplus is the surplus of freedom itself, the margin of free production unconstrained by production for necessity.

The production of a surplus creates the possibility of the expansion of freedom from necessity. "The true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself, begins beyond it, though it can only flourish with this realm of necessity as its basis." But in class society, the production of a surplus also creates new necessities. Surplus producing societies may be free societies, or they may be subject to domination by a ruling class or coalition of ruling classes.

Class domination takes the form of the capture of the productive potential of society and its harnessing to the production, not of liberty, but of class domination itself. The ruling class subordinates the hack to the production of forms of production that may be harnessed to the enhancement of class power, and the suppression or marginalisation of other forms of hacking.

When the pastoralist class dominates, it suppresses any hack that may lead to the development of non-agricultural production. Production remains land based and dedicated to the valorisation of land.

When the capitalist class dominates, it frees the hack for the production of new forms of useful production. But it subordinates the hack to the accumulation of capital. Hacking that leads to the production of new types of consumable object and consuming subject are the only kind not marginalised. So while the capitalist class provides resources and encouragement for the hacker class, it is under the condition of subordination to commodification.

When the vectoralist class dominates, it frees the hack for the production of many kinds of useless production, and thus is often seen as an ally of the hacker class. But the vectoralist class act only out of self interest. For they extract a profit from the commodification, not just of production, but of the production of production. Their goal is the commodification of the hack itself.

The vectoralist class at one and the same time encourage free production, but also

commodify it. No kind of information is too useless, too esoteric, to escape the vectoralist agenda of privatisation and commodification.

Whereas under pastoralist or capitalist rule, the free and useless hack is suppressed or marginalised, but otherwise retains its own gift economy. Under vectoralist rule, it is actively encouraged and courted, but only under the sign of commodified production. For the hacker, the tragedy of the former is to be neglected, of the latter, not to be neglected.

Production produces not only objects which appear as commodities, but subjects, who appear as the consumers of these objects, but are in fact their producers. Under vectoralist rule, society becomes indeed a 'social factory' which makes subjects as much as objects out of the transformation of nature into second nature. Capital profits from the producing class as producer of objects. The vectoralist class profits from the producing class as consumer of its own subjectivity in commodified form.

The producers of commodities, be they farmers producing primary goods out of the land, or workers producing secondary goods out of material capital, or tertiary workers producing intellectual products out of information, are themselves the product of production. But this objective existence is lived in its objective form, as product, not its subjective form, as agents of production.

Where the hacker class under vectoralist society is alienated from its capacity for free production, and knows it, the farming and working classes are also alienated but do not know it. Or rather, know it intuitively, in their periodic revolts against vectoralist society, but do not have direct experience of free production.

What the farming, working and hacking classes have in common is an interest in freeing production from its subordination to ruling classes who turn production into the production of new necessities, who wrest slavery from surplus. What the farming and working classes lack in a direct knowledge of free production the hacking class has from direct experience. What the hacking class lacks is the depths of an historic class memory of revolt against alienated production. This the farming and working classes have in spades.

Having produced the surplus out of which free productivity may yet be hacked, it remains only to combine the objective existence of the working and farming classes with the subjective capacity of the hacker class to produce production as free production. The



elements of a free productivity exist already in an atomised form, in the productive classes. What remains is the release of its virtuality. The vectoralist class knows this, and does its best to reduce productivity to consumption, information to property, expression to representation, nature to necessity.

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## **Property**

"Property is theft." It is theft abstracted, the theft of nature itself from itself, by collective social labour. Property is not naturally occurring. It is not a natural right but a social production, product of a powerful hack of ambivalent consequences.

To make something property is to separate it from a continuum, to mark it or bound it, to represent it as something finite. At the same time, making something as property connects it, via a representation of it as a separate and finite object, to the subject who owns it. What is cut from one process joins another process, what was nature becomes second nature.

When a relation is produced as a relation of property, then the things designated within that relation become comparable and relatable as if in the same terms and on the same plane. Property constitutes an abstract plane upon which all things may be things with one quality in common, the quality of property. This abstraction in which things are detached from their expression, represented as objects, and attached via their representations to a new expression, makes the world over in its image, as a world made for and by property. It appears as if property forms the ways and means of nature itself, when it is merely the ways and means of second nature.

As property becomes an abstract relation, rather than a particular one, the conflict property causes also becomes abstract. It becomes class conflict. Owners of property arise and range their interests against non-owners. As the abstract property form evolves to incorporate first land, then capital, then information, owners of each form, and the non-owners of each form are brought face to face with the possibilities of class alliance as well as conflict. But just as property cuts through other stakes in conflict, so too does ownership or non-ownership of private property abstract and simplify the grounds of conflict, in the form of the contention between the ruling and producing classes.

The conflicts upon which the development of vectoral society hinges become conflicts over property, and thus class conflict. Conflict over the form of property, the ownership

of that property, over the surplus produced via property, over the limits to the property relation per se. The division of property, the abstraction of things as property, produces conflict by producing the separation of subjects and objects, and assigning objects to some subjects over others, and hence the separation of one group of subjects for another.

Property comes in many forms, and there are antagonisms between these forms, and yet one form of property may be exchanged for another as all forms of property belong to the same abstract plane. Conflict between classes thus becomes the struggle to transform one form of property into another. The ruling classes fight to turn all property from which they might extract a surplus into private property. The productive classes struggle to socialise some forms of property, upon which the reproduction of their existence depends, via the state. The ruling classes then struggle again to privatise this social component of property.

The conflict between private and public property advances into each domain that property claims as its own. As property claims more and more of the world, more and more of the world construes its interests and its being in terms of property. The struggle over property goes to first one class or class alliance then the other, but property is only entrenched as the form in which the struggle is conducted. As property itself becomes more and more abstract, so too does the embedding of development in the property form and of the property form in development.

Land is the primary form of property. The privatisation of land that is a productive asset as property gives rise to a class of interest among its owners. These owners are called pastoralists. Pastoralists acquire land as private property through the forced dispossession of peasants who once shared a portion of it in a form of public ownership. These peasants, who once enjoyed reciprocal rights with their feudal landlords, find themselves 'free' -- from any right at all. They are free to be exploited as farmers, but also find themselves in many parts of the world violently expropriated, enslaved, indentured -- exploited.

The exploitation of the landless farmer is a crude, violent and wasteful business, when the farmer is not given incentive to work land efficiently. But when the farmer has an interest in productivity, necessitated by one property relation or another, but most usually as a freeholder who must pay the pastoralist rent, then the increasing extraction of a surplus is possible. A surplus on the back of which all other production takes place.

The instrument of rent puts land into play as a form of property that has a degree of abstraction inherent in it. All land becomes comparable on the basis of this abstract

plane of property. However, land is in more or less fixed supply, and by definition is fixed in place, so the abstracting of land as property is a limited form of vectoral abstraction. And one particularly subject to the formation of monopoly. The owners of the best lands face no effective competition, land being ultimately in fixed supply. The gradually extend their ownership, and thus their ability to monopolise the surplus, if not held in check by resort to the state by other classes.

Capital is the secondary form of property. The privatisation of productive assets in the form of tools and machines and also of working materials gives rise to a class of interest among its owners, the capitalist class. Dispossessed peasants, with nothing to sell but their capacity to work, create this vast stock of capital as private property for the capitalist class, and in so doing create a power over and against themselves. They are paid in wages, but the returns that accrue to the owners of capital as property is called profit.

The instrument of profit puts capital into play as a form of property that has a greater degree of abstraction inherent in it than that of land. All physical resources now become comparable on the basis of this abstract plane of property. However, capital, unlike land, is not in fixed supply or disposition. It can be made and remade, moved, aggregated and dispersed. An infinitely greater degree of potential can be released from the world as a productive resource once the abstract plane of property includes both land and capital, such is capital's 'advance'. Where land arises in part out of natural scarcity, the scarcity of things made by productive industry require the abstraction of property as an artifice to maintain and reproduce scarcity. The possibility of revolt against scarcity becomes a viable proposition at this point in the abstraction of property.

Capital as property also gives rise to a class interest among its owners, sometimes opposed, sometimes allied, to that of pastoralists. Capital threw its political energies into the overthrow of the patchwork feudal class relations, but also found itself sometimes opposed to the pastoralist class which consolidated the feudal property system into the abstraction of land. What capital opposed was the pastoralist ability to exploit its monopoly over land rent to secure the lion's share of the surplus.

Development moves forward when the capitalist class liberates itself from the pastoralists. The capitalist class recognises the value of the hack in the abstract, whereas the pastoralists were slow to appreciate the productivity that can flow from the application of abstraction to the production process. Under the influence of capital, the state sanctions forms of intellectual property, such as patents and copyrights, that secure an independent existence for hackers as a class, and a flow of innovations in culture as

well as science from which development issues. Capital represents private property to itself as if it were natural, but comes to appreciate the artificial extension of property into new, productive forms under the impact of the hack.

Information, once it becomes a form of property, develops beyond a mere support for capital and for a pastoralist class belatedly aware of the value of increased productivity for its rent rolls. It becomes the basis of a form of accumulation in its own right. Just as farmers and workers find themselves confronting a class owning the means of production, on which they are dependent, so too the hacker class find itself confronting a new class of owners, in this case of the means of producing, storing and distributing information, the vectorialist class.

Each of these ruling classes in turn develops out of the productivity of the hack. The pastoralist class out of the productivity of private land ownership, a legal hack. The capitalist class out of the productivity, not just of private property, but out of technical innovations in power and machinery. The vectorialist class develops out of further technical innovations in communication and control. Each in turn competes with its predecessors. Each struggles for the capacity to extract as much of the surplus of total productivity as possible for their own accumulation. Each competes with the productive classes over the disposition of the surplus. But that there is an ever expanding surplus to compete over is the product of the application of the hacker's abstraction, to the invention of new forms of production, or new desires for consumption, all within the framework of property.

Those dispossessed by the capture of a resource, and its definition as a resource by private property, nevertheless come to conceive of their interests in terms of property. They may struggle individually to become owners of it, or they may struggle collectively to socially own a portion of it. Either way, property becomes the stake in the struggle for the producing classes as much as for the property owning classes.

Land, capital and information all present themselves as domains of struggle between possessors defending or extending the claim of private property, and the dispossessed, who struggle to extend or defend public property. Farmers struggle against their landlessness. Workers struggle against their dispossession, for a social wage. Hackers struggle to socialise a portion of the information stocks, flows and vectors on which the hack depends.

For the hacker class, which has some margin of ownership conferred on it by the instrument of intellectual property, finds its rights challenged again and again by

vectoralist interests. Hackers, like farmers and workers before them, find that their ownership of the immediate tools of production is compromised both by the market power of the possessing class confronting them, but also by the influence that class can have over the state's definition of the representations of property. Thus hackers as individuals are obliged to sell out their interests, and hackers as a class find their property rights diminished.

That hackers as a class have an interest in information as private property can blind the hacker class to the dangers of too strong an insistence on the protection of that property. Any small gain the hacker gets from the privatisation of information is compromised by the steady accumulation of the means of producing information in the hands of the vectoralist class. Since information is the primary means of production of production, of the hack itself, the privatisation of information is not wholly in the interests of the hacker class. To maintain their autonomy, hackers need some means of extracting an income from the hack, and thus from intellectual property as a form of private property. But because information is an input as well as an output, this interest has to be balanced against an interest in the free distribution of information.

Hackers must calculate their interests not as owners, but as producers, for this is what distinguishes them from the vectoralist class. Hackers do not merely own, and profit by owning information. They produce new information, and as producers need access to it free from the absolute domination of the commodity form. If what defines the activity of hacking is that it is a free productivity, an expression of the virtuality of nature, then its subjection to private property and the commodity form is a fetter upon it.

The hacker has an interest in maintaining a mixed property form, which includes private as well as public forms of information ownership. Where the farmer suffered the enclosure of the pastoral commons, the hacker must resist the enclosure of the information commons. Hacking as a pure, free experimental activity must be free from any constraint that is not self imposed. Only out of its liberty will it produce the means of producing a surplus of liberty and liberty as a surplus.

Without an information commons, all classes become captives of the vectoralist privatisation of education. This is an interest the hacker shares with farmers and workers, who demand the social provision of education. Hackers, farmers and workers also have a common interest in an information commons with which to maintain a vigilant eye on the state, which is all too often subject to ruling class domination. Even the pastoralist and capitalist classes can sometimes be allies in limiting the subjection of information by the vectoralist class to commodification. The vectoralist interest grasps at

a monopoly power over information, and puts extracting a surplus from it ahead of a common social interest.

The hacker class must think tactically about property, balancing public and private property in the scales of class interest and class alliance, but in the knowledge that the privatisation of information is not in its long term interest as a class. Part of its strategy may be the enlistment of other classes in an alliance for the social production of information. But another strategy may be to extend and extend another kind of property altogether -- the property that is the gift.

Both the private and socialised forms of property are property in which subjects confront objects as buyers and sellers, via the quantitative medium of money. Even socialised property does not alter this quantification, not just of the object as commodity, but the subject who confronts it. The commodity economy, be it public or private, commodifies its subjects as well as its objects. The gift as property is pure qualitative exchange.

Private property arose in opposition not only to feudal property, but also to traditional forms of the gift economy, which were a fetter to the increased productivity of the commodity economy. Qualitative, gift exchange was superseded by quantified, monetised exchange. Money is the medium through which land, capital, information and labour all confront each other as abstract entities, reduced to an abstract plane of measurement. The gift becomes a marginal form of property, everywhere invaded by the commodity, and turned towards mere consumption. The gift is marginal, but nevertheless plays a vital role in cementing reciprocal and communal relations among people who otherwise can only confront each other as buyer and sellers of commodities.

As vectoral production develops into its vectoralised form, however, the means appear for the renewal of the gift economy. The vectoral form of relation allows for an abstraction of qualitative exchange that may become as vast and powerful as that of quantitative exchange. Everywhere that the vector reaches, it brings into the orbit of the commodity. But everywhere the vector reaches, it also brings with it the possibility of the gift relation.

The hacker class has a close affinity with the gift economy. The hacker struggles to produce a subjectivity that is qualitative and singular, in part through the act of the hack itself, but only in part. The hack reveals to the hacker the qualitative, open and virtual dimension of the hacker's immersion in nature, but it does not reveal the hacker as hacker to other hackers, or to the society at large.

The gift, as a quantitative exchange between singular parties allows each party to be recognised as a singular producer, as a subject of production, rather than as a commodified and quantified object. The gift expresses in a social and collective way the subjectivity of the production of production, whereas commodified property represents the producer as an object, a quantifiable commodity like any other, of relative value only. The gift of information need not give rise to conflict over information as property, for information need not suffer the artifice of scarcity once freed from commodification.

The gift relation of vectoralised information makes possible, for the first time since the rise of vectoral society, a new abstraction of nature. Nature need not be objectified. It need not appear as something separate from its subjects in a relationship of ownership or non-ownership. Nature appears in its qualitative, rather than quantitative aspect. The unsustainable paradox of limitless productivity based on scarcity, both natural and enforced, need not run on and on to its seemingly inevitable end. Within the gift relation, nature appears as endlessly productive in its differences, in its qualitative, not its quantitative aspect. The possibility emerges of putting nature's finite resources to work for the virtuality of difference, rather than for objectification and quantification. The latter finally appear as partial abstractions, as falling short of the abstraction of abstraction. All property is theft. It is theft, in the first instance, from nature. The gift has the capacity to return nature as itself to itself.

The vectoralist class contributed, unwittingly, to the development of the vectoral space within which the gift as property could return, but quickly recognised its error. As the vectoral economy develops, less and less of it takes the form of a social space of open and free gift exchange, and more and more of it takes the form of commodified production for private sale. The vectoralist class can grudgingly accommodate some margin of socialised information, as the price it pays in a democracy for the furtherance of its main interests. But the vectoralist class quite rightly sees in the gift a challenge not just to its profits but to its very existence. The gift economy is the virtual proof for the parasitic and superfluous nature of vectoralists as a class.

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## **Representation**

There is nothing to be gained by the critique of representation. The politics of information, of knowledge, advances not through a critical negation of false representations but a positive politics of the virtuality of expression.

All representation is false. A likeness differs of necessity from what it represents. If it did

not, it would be what it represents, and thus not a representation. The only truly false representation is the belief in the possibility of true representation.

The critique of representation becomes itself what is most in need of critique, for it assumes an access to the true that it cannot ground. Every critique of representation attaches itself to an even more ludicrous representation, which is the sole basis for the affectivity of its critique.

It is critique itself which is the problem, not the solution. Critique is a police action in representation, of service only to the maintenance of the value of property through the establishment of its value. The problem is always to enter on another kind of production altogether, the production of virtuality, not criticality. The role of critique is to critique criticism itself, and thus open the space for affirmation.

The critique of representation always maintains an artificial scarcity of interpretation, valorising some but excluding all others. Or, what is no better, it maintains an artificial scarcity of interpreters, who are licensed by the zero sum game of critique and counter critique to peddle the infinite.

What a politics of information can affirm is the virtuality of expression. The inexhaustible surplus of expression is that aspect of information upon which the class interest of hackers depends. Hacking brings into existence the inexhaustible multiplicity of all codes, be they natural or social, programmed or poetic. But as it is the act of hacking that composes, at one and the same time, the hacker and the hack, hacking recognises no artificial scarcity, no official licence, no credentialling police force other than that composed by the gift economy among hackers themselves.

The critique of the politics of representation is at the same time the critique of representation as politics. No one is authorised to speak on behalf of constituencies as properties or on the properties of constituencies. Even this manifesto, which invokes a collective name, does so without claiming or seeking authorisation, and offers for agreement only the gift of its own possibility.

Politics expresses collective interests, it does not represent them. The expression is always different from interest, while being at the same time its only means of existence. Whatever classes may be, they are not identical to their representation.

Representative politics takes place on the basis of the charge of false representation. An



expressive politics accepts the falseness of expression as part of the coming into being of a class as an interest. Classes come into being as classes for themselves by expressing themselves, differing from themselves, and overcoming their own expressions.

The ruling classes know this only too well. It knows itself be nothing but its expression and its overcoming of its expression. And thus it overcomes itself, splitting and mutating and transforming itself from a pastoralist to a capitalist to a vectoralist expression.

The productive classes, meanwhile, get caught up in their own expressions as if they were representations, making the representation the test of the truth of its own existence, rather than vice versa. Or worse, the subordinate classes get caught up in representations that have nothing to do with class interest. They get caught up in nationalism, generationalism, various bigotries.

Even when representations serve a useful function, in identifying nonclass forms of oppression or exploitation, they still yet become means of oppression themselves. They become the means by which those best able to be the object of the representation refuse recognition to those who differ most obviously from its identity.

The politics of representation is always the politics of the state. The state is nothing but the policing of representation's adequacy to the body of what it represents. That this politics is always only partially applied, that only some are found guilty of misrepresentation, is the injustice of any regime based in the first place on representation.

Even in its most radical form, the politics of representation always presupposes an abstract or ideal state that would act as guarantor of its chosen representations. It yearns for a state that would recognise this oppressed ethnicity, or sexuality, but which is nevertheless still a desire for a state, and a state that, in the process, is not challenged as an expression of class interest, but is accepted as the judge of representation.

And always, what escapes effective counter in this imaginary, enlightened state is the power of the dominating classes, which have no need for representation, which dominate through owning and controlling production, not representation. Which eventually come to accept any and every claim on the state to accept as legitimate a claim on representation, when there is a profit in it.

And always, what is excluded even from this enlightened, imaginary state, would be

those who refuse representation, namely, the hacker class as a class. To hack is to refuse representation, to make matters express themselves otherwise. To hack is always to produce a difference, if only a minute difference, in the production of information. To hack is to trouble the object or the subject, by transforming in some way the very process of production by which objects and subjects come into being and recognise each other by their representations.

A politics that embraces its existence as expression, as affirmative difference, not as negation, is the politics that can escape the politics of the state. To refuse, or ignore, or plagiarise representation, to refuse to give it what it claims as its due, is to begin a politics, not of the state, but of statelessness. A stateless politics. A politics which refuses the state's authority to authorise what is a valued statement and what isn't.

This politics is always temporary, always becoming something other than itself. It can never claim to be true to itself. Any stateless expression may yet be captured by the authorised police of representation, assigned a value, made subject to scarcity and commodification. This is the fate of any and every hack that comes to be valued as useful.

Even useless hacks may come, perversely enough, to be valued for the purity of their uselessness. There is nothing that can't be valued as a representation. There is nothing that can't be critiqued, and thereby valued anyway, by virtue of the attention. The hack always has to move on.

Everywhere dissatisfaction with representations is spreading. Sometimes it's a matter of breaking a few shop windows, sometimes of breaking a few heads. But this dissatisfaction does not always rise above a critique that puts revolt squarely in the hands of some representative or other, offering only another state as an alternative -- even if only a utopian one.

So-called 'violence' against the state, which rarely amounts to more than throwing rocks at its police, is merely the desire for the state expressed in its masochistic form. Where some call for a state that recognises their representation, others call for a state that beats it to a pulp. Neither is a politics that escapes the desire cultivated within the subject by the educational apparatus.

Sometimes direct democracy is posited as the alternative. But this merely changes the moment of representation, from the election to the decision. It puts politics in the hands of claimants to an activist representation, in place of an electoral one.

Even at its best, in its most abstract form. on its best behaviour, the colour blind, gender neutral, multicultural state just hands the value of representation over to the commodity form. Rather than recognising or failing to recognise representations of the subject, the state validates all representations that take a commodity form. While this is progress, particularly for those formerly oppressed by the state's failure to recognise as legitimate their ethic, religious, generational, linguistic, gendered or sexual identity, it stops short at the recognition of expressions of subjectivity that refuse the objectification in the commodity form and seek instead to become something other than a representation that the state can recognise and the market can value.

Sometimes what is demanded of the politics of representation is that it recognise a new subject. Minorities of race, gender, preference demand the right to representation. But soon enough they discover the cost. They must now police the meaning of this representation, and police the adherence of its members to it.

But there is something else. Something always hovering on the horizon of the representable. There is a politics of the unrepresentable, a politics of the presentation of the non-negotiable demand. This is politics as the refusal of representation itself, not the politics of refusing this or that representation. A politics which, while abstract, is not utopian.

In its infinite and limitless demand, it may even be the best way of extracting concessions in the class war, precisely through its refusal to put a name -- or a price -- on what revolt desires. See what goodies they will offer when those who demand do not name their demand, or name themselves, but practice politics itself as a kind of hack. A hack which may deign to unmask itself, to acquiesce to representation, only long enough to strike a bargain and move on. A politics that reveals itself as anything but pure expression only long enough to keep the meaning police guessing.

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## **Revolt**

The revolts of 1989 are the signal events of our time. In the east and in the far east, the productive classes rose up against tyranny and boredom in all its forms. Farmers and workers, workers, in both material and immaterial trades, all formed alliances against the most oppressive and tedious forms of the state. Mixed in amongst them were hackers, hackers of all kinds, including not a few, borne of the struggle, who were hackers of politics itself.

In Beijing and Berlin, Manila and Prague, Seoul and Johannesburg, alliances rose up that could turn the vectoral flows of information against states all too used to policing representations by cracking the heads that disputed them. The cracking of heads confronted the hacking of codes, and the hack won out.

If only for the moment. What the revolts of 1989 achieved was the overthrow of regimes so impervious to the recognition of the value of the hack that they had starved not only their hackers but also their workers and farmers of any increase in the surplus. With their cronyism and kleptocracy, their bureaucracy and ideology, their police and spies, they starved even their pastoralists and capitalists of innovative transformation and growth. The revolt of 1989 put an end to all that.

It did not succeed everywhere. In the four most populous states, in China, Russia, India and Indonesia, there was no successful break with the old order. India took a reactive turn toward Hindu nationalism. Russia sank in kleptocracy and control by the secret police. Indonesia saw a bold but fragile and incomplete democratic revolt. In China, the Goddess of Democracy stood briefly in Tiananmen square, before becoming a global expression of a fugitive movement.

In the 'frontline states' of the old cold war, the forces of revolt were more successful. In Taiwan, Korea, Thailand and the Philippines; in the Czech Republic, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and the Baltic states, the forces of revolt pushed the old ruling class order toward a new state form, in which further pushes towards abstraction at least have a fighting chance.

In Latin America, the so-called 'transition' produced mixed results, undermining authoritarian states, but also undermining the socialised property of the productive classes through privatisation and 'austerity' budgets. In Africa, democratic movements rarely made much headway against the tidal forces of ethnic division, that poisonous legacy of colonialism, or against the new colonialism of vectoral power. South Africa was a signal exception, and inspiration to the world. In the Middle East, the ruling classes mostly used the state as a bulwark against an opening to the world, at the price of increased repression and under development, or corruption in those states where oil clouds the waters.

The revolts that group around that noisy year of 1989 achieved mixed results. But they the state on notice everywhere that in the vectoral age, any state that cannot recognise the value of the hack, that cannot incorporate transformation into its being, will soon be

forced to find more and more extreme diversions for the desires of the productive classes.

The people have seen what the world has to offer, and they want it all. There is no stopping them. Whatever qualms the good people of the overdeveloped world may have about the bounty of the vector, the good life of consumption and equivocal liberty that everyone now sees upon its screens, the rest of the world is coming to get it, ready or not.

The revolts of 1989 overthrew boredom and necessity. At least for a time. They put back on the world historical agenda the limitless demand for free expression. At least for a time. They revealed the latent destiny of world history to express the pure virtuality of becoming. At least for a time. Before new states cobbled themselves together that were able to claim legitimacy as representations of what revolt desired. Oh, what a time we had.

The revolts of 1989 opened the portal to the virtual, but the states that regrouped around this opening soon closed it. What the revolts really achieved was the making of the world safe for vectoral power. The opening was in the end a relative, not an absolute one. The failed state-capitalism of the east and klepto-capitalism of south may have been overthrown by a limitless desire, but that desire soon had to confront the actuality of becoming a free trade zone for an emerging global alliance of ruling classes, and a dumping ground for the consumable images of the vectoral economy.

The so-called anti-globalisation protests of the 90s are a ripple caused by the wake of these signal events, but a ripple that did not know the current to which it truly belonged. This movement of revolt in the overdeveloped world identifies the rising vectoral power as a class enemy, but all too often it allowed itself to be captured by the partial and temporary interests of local capitalist and pastoralist classes. It did not quite grasp how to connect its desires to those of the underdeveloped world, to which in some ways it was an impediment.

But this revolt is in its infancy. It has yet to discover the connection between its engine of limitless desire and free expression, and the art of making tactical demands. It has yet to discover how and when, and in whose interest, to mask its faceless free expression with a representation of interests that corresponds to the broadest coalition of class forces for a free and just future. Or rather, to rediscover, as all this is already known in the secret history of revolt. That other knowledge and knowledge of the other.

There are two kinds of politics, both of which can be found in the class struggle within

nations and the imperial struggle between nations. One kind of politics is regressive. It seeks to return to an imagined past. It seeks to use national borders as a new wall, a neon screen behind which unlikely alliances might protect their existing interests in the name of a glorious past. "Their method is to oppose movement." \_ The politics it opposes is the politics of movement. This other politics seeks to accelerate toward an unknown future. It seeks to use international flows of information, trade or activism as the eclectic means for struggling for new sources of wealth or liberty that overcomes the limitations imposed by national coalitions.

Neither of these politics corresponds to the old notion of a left or right, which the revolutions of 1989 have definitively overcome. Regressive politics brings together luddite impulses from the left with racist and reactionary impulses from the right in an unholy alliance against new sources of power. Progressive politics rarely takes the form of an alliance, but constitutes two parallel processes locked in a dialogue of mutual suspicion, in which the liberalising forces of the right and the social justice and human rights forces of the left both seek non-national and transnational solutions to unblocking the system of power which still accumulates at the national level.

Contrary to a popular myth, the revolts of 1989 dealt a blow to the right, not the left. The collapse of Stalinism removed the once external force that kept the regressive and progressive forces of the right together. The political forces of the right, which represent in their purest form the compromises acceptable to the ruling classes, have had to reassemble from the ruins of the cold war the elements of their compromise within which the more extreme expressions of populism, nationalism and racism can be tamed -- but retained -- in the service of the ruling class.

The political forces of the left, which stretch wide to accommodate every interest the producing classes must embrace to achieve some grasp upon state power, has experienced no such clarifying moment. The left does not yet know that it faces a choice between progressive internationalism and regressive nationalism. It has not yet articulated an alternative global democracy that can secure democratic support. It has not yet found the formula for containing and defusing jingoistic and regional particularism. The left, when in power, zig zags anxiously between tactical concessions to one side or the other, whittling away its broad support from both ends at once.

'Globalism', as the transcendent power of the vectoralist class over the planet is hardly a palatable option; but neither is conceding to the unjust demands of local and particular interest, which refuses the call of a global justice and hunkers down behind the neon screen that surrounds the state. Since that screen is also the property of the vectoralist

class, this is hardly an alternative, simply the same ends reached by means of the objectification of another desire. It's not much of a choice: accelerated progress into hell, or the permanent purgatory of arresting the current balance of injustice.

There is a third politics, which stands outside the alliances and compromises of the post-89 world. Where both progressive and regressive politics are representative politics, which deal with aggregate party alliances and interests, this third politics is a stateless politics, which seeks escape from politics as such. A politics of the hack, inventing relations outside of representation. Since representations inevitably fail to live up to their promises in actuality, there's not much to lose from a politics beyond it. Rather than a representative politics, representing advocacy of movement or opposition to movement, an expressive politics that escapes representation.

Representative politics is a politics that struggles to secure for the classes allied in struggle command of property, be it public or private. Expressive politics is a struggle against commodity property itself. Expressive politics is not the struggle to collectivise property, for that is still a form of property. The collectivist mode of state administered property was show to be bankrupt by the revolutions of 89, as was the kleptocracy of the far east, where state and private ruling interests were one and the same. Expressive politics is the struggle to free what can be free from both versions of the commodity form: its totalising market form, and bureaucratic state form.

What may be free from the commodity form altogether is not land, not capital, but information. All other forms of property are exclusive. The ownership by one excludes, by definition, the ownership by another. But information as property may be shared without diminishing anything but its scarcity. Information is that which can escape the commodity form.

The vectoralist class sees in the development of vectoral means of production and distribution the ultimate means to commodify the globe through the commodification of information. But the hacker class can realise from the same technical opportunity, that the means are at hand to decommodify the greater part of information, to make private ownership of information a minor, rather than the dominant form.

Politics can become expressive only when it is a politics of freeing the virtuality of information. In liberating information from its objectification as a commodity, it liberates also the subjective force of expression. Subject and object meet each other outside of their mere lack of each other, by their desire merely for each other, by desire as managed by the state in the interests of maintaining the commodity form.

Expressive politics becomes a viable politics only at the moment when a class arises which can not only conceive of freedom from property as in its class interest, but can propose to society as a whole that it is in the interests of society as a whole. That class is the hacker class, which invents the abstraction of the subject and of the object, in which both meet outside the constraint of scarcity and lack, and meet to affirm each other in new forms of expression, rather than in the sad dance of unfulfilled lack.

This expressive politics does not seek to overthrow the existing society, or to reform its larger structures, or to preserve its structure so as to maintain an existing coalition of interests. It seeks to permeate the existing states with a new state of existence. It spreads the seeds of an alternative practice of everyday life.

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## **State**

It is the state that manages records and verifies the representation of subjects and objects, citizens and their property. At the empty heart of the state, its camera obscura, is the primary act of violence by which it establishes the separation of objects from subjects, and its own prerogative in policing the plane upon which they may meet.

The vectoral state, which employs every technology for the refinement of this most abstract plane upon which objects and subjects meet, produces the most pervasive and subtle terrain of conflict and negotiation for the contending classes. The state brings classes into being in the form of representative politics, and the politics of representation. All classes struggle or collude with each other directly, but their direct contract is partial and particular. It is their contact upon the plane of abstract representation created by the state that is abstract and formal.

The state is not only a machine for defining forms of property and arbitrating competing claims to property, it also transfers property through taxation and transfer. The productive classes struggle to socialise property through the state, while the property owning classes seek to limit the state's redistributive powers. They struggle, in the first place, over which classes are taxed and at what rate, and also over the transfer of tax revenue by the state to classes or class fractions.

The state constitutes the plane upon which classes come to represent their interests as class interests, but also where classes seek to turn local and particular conflicts not of a class nature to their advantage. Through its disposition of the share of the surplus it



appropriates through taxation, the state both gives expression to existing interests. There may be representatives of collective regional interest, the interests of generations or genders, ethnicities or industries. The state may also create interests through its transfers of socialised property, such as pensioners or the military. Thus the state, besides constituting the plane of abstraction for class conflict, adds to that conflict added dimensions of possible conflict and alliance by providing resources and recognition for other interests and desires. Whatever desire exceeds or falls short of the commodification of desire, seeks a home in the state.

All of these other representative interests have the power to limit the capacity for action of the state, or even to destroy its capacity to function. Yet it is only the interests of classes that determine the positive dynamic of state and society. Other representations may capture the state, causing the state, in turn, to capture development and retard it. Only class interests prod and push the state toward the production of a surplus and the production of production.

As a class finds an abstraction that suits its interests, that allows it to develop and turn the general development to its advantage, it seeks through the state to represent this interest as if it were the general interest, and to use the state to head off the development of abstractions that do not enhance and affirm its power. Through its ability to police representation, the state often acts as a brake on new expressions which fall outside what the state recognises as licit relations between objects and subjects. But when the state recognises intellectual property, it gives licence to a far wider representative power, which has the capacity to accelerate the development of abstraction, and undermine any given class or class alliance which dominates the state.

The vectoral class may yet capture the state by depriving other classes of the free flow of information with which they may contest its representations of the collective interest. The vectoral interest seeks to capture information flows within the profitable form of the commodity perverts the free flow of information into commodified information. This deprives the hacker class a considerable part of its capacity for free expression and forces it into a subordinate relation to the vectoralist interest.

The state polices the rights of subjects as well as the properties of objects. The state may be an abstract state or it may be a particular state. A particular state is one in which some subjective representations have superior rights to others. While all states exclude some representations, and make claim to their power through this capacity to exclude, the abstract state embraces the widest range of representations as holding equally valid claims and does not question them as to their truth value. The particular state arises out

of the exploitation of non-class antagonisms for class ends. The ruling class exploits ethnic, religious or gender differences among the producing classes to divide and rule. A rule purchased at the price of the suppression of some part of the productive capacity of the subordinate classes.

The abstract state will always be the most just and efficient vehicle for managing representations, but there is always something that is beyond its ken. There is always some hack that eludes or escapes its representational net. The hacker interest is with the abstraction of the state. Only once the state has accepted without question the most obvious differences of race, gender, sexuality or faith is there space for expression free from the sanction the policing of representation.

The abstract state which does not impede the free expression of difference is the state most conducive to hacking, and in every sense. But while there may be an interest for hackers in preferring certain kinds of state to others, the state is still always a vehicle that is caught up in the wars of representation and counter representation, upon which flows of resource or liberty may hinge, but which is ultimately only in existence to help or hinder the establishment of a productive relation between classes.

Even when the state does not hinder the productive relation between classes, it may foster a productive relation that leads to the capture of surplus by a class and the production of production that meets the class demand of that class only. So it is not enough that the state be freed from particular representations. It is not enough that the state be abstract. It is not enough that the state fasciate a productive relation between classes that produces a surplus. The state may still distort the free expression of the virtual by harbouring a class or class alliance to capture surplus and direction the production of production.

The domination of society by any one form of property is not conducive to the interests of the hacker class. Where the gift relationship dominates, in traditional societies, reciprocal obligation in predetermined forms renders the hack reactive and particular. It rarely reaches its fully abstract form. Where private property dominates, as in vectoral societies, it accelerates the hack by recognising it as private property also, but there by channels the hack into the relentless reproduction of the commodity form. Where collectivised state property dominates, the hack is impeded by the direct dependence of the hacker on the bureaucratic form of capitalist and pastoralist domination.

The hacker interest is not just in an abstract state, but a state that maintains a plurality of property forms: private and social, but also the property of the gift. Out of this

plurality of property forms, the hacker class is best able to produce and reproduce itself and its interests. It escapes the constraint of each property form by seeking refuge in the others. The hacker class as a class has at its disposal all of the elements of the property form in all its guises, out of which may be found an abstraction beyond property itself.

The hacker class, if it looks deeply into itself, knows that while it exceeds every representation, and expresses the virtuality of matter and information in its innovation, is also potentially the producer of a host of dangers. The hack may be as destructive as it is productive. It is not hackers who poison the waters or manufacture the plutonium, genetically modify the crops, or inculcate the dangerous creeds. But it is hackers who hack these bright new possibilities in the first place.

The class interest of the working and farming classes, which is in the production of a surplus, the wresting of freedom from necessity, and the class interest of hackers, in the free and open expression of virtuality, converge in a state form that is at once abstract in relation to representation, and plural in relation to forms of property. Yet this is the bare beginnings of what the combined productive classes may desire. They desire a state that is abstract enough, plural enough, virtual enough to create openings beyond scarcity and the commodity.

The state has its limits. It may be everywhere and nowhere, impressed in the very pores and particles of its subjects through its management of education and culture, but still it has its limits. One limit is the violence with which it founds its claim to be sovereign over the laws of representation. Testing this limit merely affirms the injustice at the heart of the state, without in any way escaping from it.

The other limit is the limit of representation itself. The class that can express its desires, rather than represent them, is the class that escapes the violence of the law and the law of violence. That which cannot be named, cannot be identified, cannot be charged, cannot be convicted. Abstraction without authority or authorisation opens the free virtuality outside the law. For contrary to the repetitive chant of the state's witting and unwitting apologists, there is always something, and something other than violence, outside its law.

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## **Subject**

The experience of subjectivity is not universal, in space or time. Just as it came into

being with the vectoral state and the commodity economy, it can pass with the overcoming of these limited and partial abstractions.

Class society produces, piece by piece, the armour of subjectivity. This armour is a hollow shell, separating the nothing that is the self from the nothing that is the means external to it by which it comes to believe it exists.

The subject is nothing but the ghostly residue of separation, opening the possibility of appropriating from the self the objective existence it labours to create, and presenting the subject with the objective world as something that it lacks. This lack can then be filled by the object. The subject comes to feel its existence only through its lack of the object, a lack never quite satisfied by any particular object. The subject comes into existence as an abstract lack.

This abstract subject develops incrementally, but develops apace with the objectification of the world. The history of the production of the world as a thing is at the same time the history of the production of the subject, which is to say, the production of the self as a thing that produces itself and its world as things.

The pastoralist class merely laid claim to the farmer's labour, and at first got limited access even to that, not least because farmers retained some access to property, in the form of their immediate means of production. The farmer experiences subjectivity only as external constraint imposed by the demands meeting the rent and producing the necessities of life.

The seeds of subjectivity as a general condition are already present under pastoralist domination, however, in the form of the total and limitless demand that the spiritual state of the church makes on its victims. Theology presents the subject to itself as what it lacks, but it presents lack as spiritual, not material, as infinite, rather than finite. As such, the church acted a fetter upon the development of a productive subjectivity.

Organised religion merely expresses the needs of the ruling class in the form of a demand upon the subject. That demand changed as class rule changed. Lack no longer appears as infinite, but finite, and the means to fill it, material, not spiritual. Or rather, the spiritual lack was held to be filled by the attention to material lack. The theology of the soul became the observance to worker's attitude and disposition. It brought down to earth the limitless debt of spiritual usury and forced upon the worker a subjectivity that viewed work as a debt owed at one and the same time to God and Mammon. But at least

outside of working hours the worker was free, and eventually most workers lost the habit of devoting free time to working off yet another, more ethereal, debt.

Outside the west, other organised spiritual institutions have undergone similar transformations, to meet the needs of new class interests in the production of the subject of work and consumption. These other beliefs sometimes appear in the west in their archaic form as resistance to the commodity, but in the east and in the south, they have for the most part been transformed in the image of capital, but it a Confucian capital, an Islamic capital, or a Hindu or Buddhist capital. As with every belief, what matters are the concrete relations they present in a mystified form, not the beauty of the mysteries.

Capital merely claims the body of the worker for the duration of the working day. The worker's struggle to limit the working day was thus a struggle against capital. The vectoralist class found the means to assert a claim to every aspect of being, by the ability to designate any part of that being as a resource. The struggle of the working day, while salutary as a means of freeing the body from commodity labour, no longer frees the worker from the commodity, but merely releases the subject as producer for its increasingly more important task of being the subject as consumer.

Vectorialisation captures the body and mind and indeed soul of the dispossessed as never before. It comes closer to dispossession perfected than any other form of property. The subject at work becomes producer of commodities, and outside of work, is set to work again recognising the worth of what the commodity represents, as its consumer.

Property invades time as well as space, and this is where its greatest impact on the subject is to be felt. Time was once a property that the subject disposed of as it pleased, provided it could meet its the to the pastoralist master. Then time became divided into work time and 'leisure'. Only the latter remained the property of the worker. But now all time belongs to property.

Time itself becomes the object of temporary outbreaks of revolt, ever since the farsighted communards smashed the time clocks in the workshops. But while there are temporary halts and interruptions to time in which the subject reclaims itself as something beyond the subject, the totality of property encroaches even upon revolt itself, which, like exotic religions, is offered to the subject in commodified form. What would otherwise be the history of the subject's struggle to overcome itself and revolt against scarcity, becomes instead the commodity of revolt, which affirms the subject merely in its lack of the very revolt the commodity memorialises in its collector's editions.

The abstraction of scarcity is based on the notion that subjective desires are infinite, but material goods are few. Therefore some power is called into being that allocates scarce resources. This is usually represented as a neutral objective principle, an 'invisible hand', when actually what allocates resources comes to be a class power. The theory of scarcity subjectifies desire and objectifies the means to desire's satisfaction. They are conceived as separate things that confront each other as if across a metaphysical chasm. It is as if all that is desired is an object, and all objects exist to be consumed in the name of desire.

It is the propagation of the myth of scarcity itself that creates the abstraction of objectified wants and subjective desires that can only be met in commodified form. It is only in the theory of scarcity that desire need be thought of as having an object, and that this object need be thought of as the commodity. True desire is desire for the virtual, not the actual. Desire is a property neither of subjects nor objects, but of productivity itself. Productivity is desire, the desire for becoming in the world. The struggle to free the productive classes from the commodity is the struggle to free desire from the myth of its lack. As Deleuze says, "All of this constitutes what might be called a right to desire." \_

Subjects are obliged to work to produce themselves as themselves, and this production of the subject necessitates the production of objects that meet the subjects needs. But it is not the object that is what the subject desires, it is merely a means to maintain or enhance the subject's own experience of itself. Nothing is desired, but experience.

The theory of scarcity redirects the subjects experience of its own desire from the desire for its own becoming and affirmation of itself, and towards objects that appear to negate the subject's powers, and taunt the subject with its limits. These are false desires, calling upon the subject to experience itself as the lack of an object rather than as its own surplus of productive will and capacity for becoming.

The theory of the scarcity of objects of desire and the theory of desire as subjective lack are one and the same theory, and both serve the same class interest. They are means by which subjects are recruited for the production of objects and objects are presented as what desire lacks. Both distract from the production of free subjectivity, which not only frees the subject from objectified desire but frees the subject from itself as subject, into the absolute freedom of pure becoming as expression.

There are hackers of subjective desire just as there are hackers of the objectified world, and just as the latter hack toward the free expressivity of nature from which all objectifications arise, so too do the former hack beyond the constraints of the subject

limited to its apprehension of itself.

The producing classes may not aspire to pure becoming, but may yet come to grasp their class interest in freeing desire from the constraint of commodified objects and subjects. Indeed, the producing classes continually free themselves from particular objects of desire, and free themselves from subjectivities thrust upon them in the interests of enslaving that subjectivity to particular objects of desire.

But while the producing classes free themselves from particular commodified desires, they do not always take the next step, to the abstraction of desire itself from commodification. This is where hackers of both the objective world and of subjectivity can affirm their productive relation to the producing classes.

The abstraction of the objective and subjective worlds into information opens up the virtuality of desire and its liberation from commodification. Information knows no natural scarcity. Unlike the objectified products of land and capital, one's consumption of information need not deprive another of it. Surplus appears in its absolute form.

And yet the coming into being of vectors along which information flows freely, if not universally, around the planet appears to usher in a new regime of scarcity even more total than that of the reign of capital before it. Everywhere are signs presented as the commodified answer to desire; everywhere there are subjects impugned into thinking of themselves as negated by the signs they do not possess.

This abstraction of desire into commodified information is the handiwork of the vectoral class, who detach desire from its fetishising of the object, and attach it instead to the commodified sign. Subjects are detached, in part, from feeling the lack of material goods and teased and taunted instead by the signs and brands and names from which they are separated.

And yet there is a detectable air of desperation in the work of the vectoral class, a constant anxiety about the durability of a commodified regime of desire built on a scarcity that has no necessary basis in the material world. The producing classes come again and again to the threshold of perceiving themselves as capable of the self affirmation of their desires, and to a realisation that subjectivity merely binds them to the commodity, and that scarcity is the product of class rule, not an objective fact of nature.

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## Surplus

"The history of life on earth is mainly the effect of a wild exuberance", writes Bataille, "the dominant event is the development of luxury, the production of increasingly burdensome forms of life."\_ Necessity is always and everywhere just necessity. That humans fuck and eat and suffer and die is the eternal theme of the aphorists. That something over and above necessity emerges out of collective human endeavour produces not just history, but the production of history as a representation.

The accumulation of a surplus, the struggle over its disposition, its investment in war or feast or history writing, or back into the production of yet more surplus, this is struggle of history and the history of struggle. The gathering of a surplus implies the creation of an abstract plane upon which it is gathered, and upon which it is also possible to struggle over its disposition. This history is a secret history. The victor in the struggle for the distribution of the surplus commissions its history, and represents its history as being of its own authorship. But in the secret history of the surplus, it is the hack that produces the possibility of surplus through its abstraction, and the labour of its extraction and accumulation that constitutes history's surplus, carried over as a murmur, from one era to the next.

Class society in its abstract form emerges out of the accumulation of surplus, and represents a break from the dispersal of surplus in the form of luxury and the gift, and the ploughing back of the surplus into production itself. Henceforth, it will be production itself that will be in surplus, seeking always a surplus of desire to maintain its relentless accumulation of wealth in the form of things.

Theories that attempt to grasp in the abstract the productive development of human society may take one of two forms. They may be based on the concept of scarcity, and legitimise the rule of one or other class who must take charge of scarce resources. Or they may be based on the scandal of surplus, on the conviction that the productive classes in society produce more than their immediate needs, and may consider themselves deprived of this surplus.

That there is an oppressive experience of scarcity in the world at large is all too real, and so too is its attenuation by the vectorialisation of the world. As more and more of the resources of the world, both animate and inanimate, become quantifiable resources for commodity production, so the producing classes in the overdeveloped and underdeveloped world alike come to perceive the power the vectorial class has brought



into the world, the power to steer development here or there at will, creating sudden bursts of productive wealth and just as suddenly, poverty, unemployment, and scarcity.

Yet the same vectoral flows of information that chasten the productive classes with the knowledge of their own temporary grasp on a pay packet and the commodified bounty, also show again and again the immense productive resources the world possesses, and the artificial nature of this experience of scarcity. The vectors along which thread the information that knits objects and subjects together in the vast global dance of productivity, are the same vectors which show the world to be nothing but the spectacle of surplus.

The same vectoral connection shows the limitless virtuality of information itself, which again and again escapes the commodity form and flows as pure gift among the producing classes, only to be stuffed back into the objectified commodity form by the vectoral class and held apart from the producing classes as an artificial scarcity.

The vectoral class must maintain a surplus of subjective desire over and above the surplus of objective things. Desire must be pushed one step ahead, lest demand slacken and the useless profusion of things appear in the naked light of its futility. It's harder than it looks. The producing classes again and again create their own expressions of desire, desire outside lack and commodification, only to find that this collective expression of desire is appropriated from them, transformed into commodities and sold back as if the producing classes somehow lacked the productive energy that is its birthright.

The capitalist class maintained its rule of scarcity with some confidence, but for the vectoralist class, scarcity has to be maintained by increasingly artificial means, by the commodification of information as an object of desire, and by the commodification of that object under the sign of scarcity. The producing classes rightly take all commodified information to be their own collective production. They are the source of the images, the stories, the wild profusions of all that culture becomes. The vectoralist class wrestles all this into the commodified form, and the producing classes bootleg and pirate any and everything freely.

The vectoralist class enlists the efforts of hackers to produce ever new ways and means to commodify this productivity in order to maintain a surplus of desire and the scarcity of the desired object. But short of seizing hold of a monopoly on the vectors for producing and distributing information, the vectoralist class cannot entirely limit the free productivity of the hacker class, which continues to produce yet more fuel for the free

productivity of desire. New images and stories, new vectors with which to organise them, new technical means of perceiving and organising the world, new cultural means of producing experience: in its desperate need to encourage productivity, the vectoralist class induces the very productivity that exceeds the commodity itself.

The producing classes discover for themselves, independent of the commodified flows of information, that the hackers exist and are struggling to produce new abstractions on both the subjective and objective axes, which have the potential to liberate desire from the negativity of scarcity. They learn to adopt new abstractions for themselves, rather than in the commodified form in which the vectoralist class would sell virtuality to the masses.

The producing classes discover, with a little help from the hacker class, that information wants to be free, that its scarcity is maintained only by the artificial means of the commodification and the policing of information as property by the state. Initially, the producing classes discover the means to propagate information freely as a means to acquire what it desires. But the freeing of information, even in the margins of the net, breaches the economy of scarcity, and the separation of subject and object maintained by the object's scarcity. The producing classes are reunited with their own free productivity, at first inadvertently, but in such a way as to plant the seeds of a desire for desire outside of scarcity itself.

The vectoralist class discovers, ironically enough, a scarcity of scarcity. It struggles to find new 'business models' for information, but ends up settling for its only reliable means of extracting a surplus from its artificial scarcity, through the formation of monopolies over every branch of its production. Stocks, flows and vectors of information are brought together in vast enterprises, with the sole purpose of extracting a surplus through the watertight commodification of all elements of the process. By denying to the producing classes any free means of reproducing their own culture, the vectoralist class hopes to extract a surplus from selling back to the producing classes their own souls.

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## **Vector**

Once information has become the object of a regime of property, a vectoral class emerges who profit by the control of information. This class competes among itself for the most profitable ways to commodify information as a resource.

Even more than the pastoralist and capitalist classes before them, the vectoral class

depends on the advances hackers produce in order to maintain their competitive advantage and the profitability of their enterprises. Where owners of land and capital may dominate through the sheer level of investment required, the vectoral class relies on a form of property subject to constant creative hacks that create qualitatively new forms of production and devalue the old means of production.

The vectoral class invest the surplus they appropriate in hacking to an unprecedented degree, and base the fortunes of their enterprises on intellectual property. Their investment in hacking is hardly disinterested. Their search is for ever new ways to vectoralise information in the form of a commodity.

"Language is a virus", as Burroughs says. In epidemiology, a vector is the particular means by which a given pathogen travels from one population to another. Water is a vector for cholera, bodily fluids for HIV. By extension, a vector may be any means by which information moves. A given media vector, such as the telegraph, telephone, or television, has certain fixed properties of speed, bandwidth, scope and scale, but may be deployed anywhere, at least in principle. The uneven development of the vector is political and economic, not technical.

With the commodification of information comes its vectoralisation. Extracting a surplus from information requires technologies capable of transporting information through space, but also through time. The storage of information may be as valuable as its transmission, and the archive is a vector through time just as communication is a vector that crosses space.

The vectoral class comes into its own once it is in possession of powerful technologies for vectoralising information. Information becomes something separate from the material conditions of its production and circulation. It is extracted from particular localities, cultures, forms, and marketed in ever widening circles.

The vectoral class may commodify information stocks, flows, or vectors themselves. A stock of information is an archive, a body of information maintained through time that has enduring value. A flow of information is the capacity to extract information of temporary value out of events and to distribute it widely and quickly. A vector is the means of achieving either the temporal distribution of a stock, or the spatial distribution of a flow of information. Vectoral power is generally sought through the ownership of all three aspects.

The vector not only abstracts information from the particular conditions of its

production, it abstracts every other relation with which it comes into contact. The expansion of the reach of markets, states, armies, cultures, from local to national to supranational forms is conditioned by the development of the vectors along which information travels to thread them together.

The irreversible abstraction of information comes at the point where vectors are hacked into being that free information from the velocity of movement of objects and subjects. Once information can move faster than people or things, it becomes the means by which people and things are to be meshed together in the interests of productive activity.

Telegraph, telephone, television, telecommunications: these terms name not just particular vectors, but a general abstract capacity that they bring into the world and expand. All are forms of telesthesia, or perception at a distance. Starting with the telegraph, the vector abstracts itself from the speed of other commodities, and becomes the speed according to which all other speeds are measured and monitored.

The vector abstracts from the geography of nature, and provides the axes along which collective human labour transforms nature into second nature. Second nature offers a new home in the world, in which freedom is wrested from necessity, but where class rule imposes yet new necessities on the producing classes.

The vector itself is an instance neither of nature of second nature, but constitutes a third nature, an information landscape. Just as third nature extracts itself from nature yet depends on it, so too does third nature extract itself from nature and depend on it. Third nature is not a transcendence or escape from nature, but merely the release the virtuality of nature into the world, in the service of collective human labour.

With the coming of telesthesia, the vector becomes a power over and above both nature and second nature. The vector intensifies the exploitation of nature, by providing an ever present third nature, within which nature is grasped as an object, as a quantifiable resource, to be commodified and exploited by the ruling classes.

Each ruling class of the vectoral era appropriates the world as it finds it, and transforms it into a world ripe for appropriation by its successor, deploying ever more abstract means. The pastoralist class appropriates nature as its property, and in the extracting a surplus from it. The capitalist class transforms it toward a second nature, a built environment in which the resistance of nature to productive use is mitigated, if not overcome. The vectoralist class appropriates second nature as the material conditions for

the reign of a third nature, in which resources both natural and social in origin may be represented as such.

The vector intensifies the setting to work of the producing classes, but in the form of commodity production. Not just nature is objectified and quantified, but so too is second nature. The producing classes find themselves transformed into objects of quantification and calculation. Third nature becomes the environment within which the production of second nature accelerates and intensifies, becoming global in its apprehension of itself. Second nature, in the grip of a third nature, is at the same time the workshop within which nature itself is appropriated in an objectified form.

Telesthesia allows the quantification of all things, their comparison, and the direction of resources according to the apprehension of the world simultaneously as a field of objects that can be brought into productive relation. Nature and second nature, objectified as resources, are simultaneously available for calculation and mobilisation. Space becomes subject to instantaneous command.

The vectoral class ascend to the illusion of an instantaneous and global plane of calculation and control. But as the productive classes of the world comes to know only too well, it is not the vectoralist class that comes to hold subjective power over the an objective world. The vector itself usurps the subjective role, becoming the sole repository of will toward a world that can be apprehended only in its commodified form. This emerging global plane is at once totalising and emphatically partial.

The vectoral class unleashes this third nature upon the world, and profits from it, either directly or indirectly. It profits from the producing classes, and also from the other ruling classes, to whom it sells the capacity to grasp the world in its objectified form.

The becoming-vectoral of this world is the release of the productive potential of all its resources, and at the same time the creation of a category of resource for any and every thing in it. The vectoral is not only the potential to conceive of everything as a resource but the potential to bring that resource into productive relation to any other resource whatsoever.

The reign of the vector is one in which any and every thing can be apprehended as a thing. That is, as something distinct, something of value, and which may be transformed at will into any other thing, which may be brought together with any other thing of value in the creation of a new value.

But having set third nature in motion, the vectoral class find itself increasingly unable to control its creation. Subjectivity resides not in the vectoral class, but in the cumulative product of its activity, the third nature that arises out of the proliferation of the vector. A third nature which moreover comes to represent to itself its own limitations. These limitations do not escape the attention of the productive classes, who must daily live with them. Third nature fails to allocate natural resources in such a way that second nature could ever be sustained. Sustaining nature is a mere byproduct of third nature's existence, which is predicated on commodification.

There may be cold comfort for the productive classes in this. They may not control the means by which information is extracted from their lives and returned to them in form of the commodity. They may not control the allocation of resources based on the instantaneous quantification of all things in the world, but the point may be reached where no class does. The vectoral class produces a means of domination over the world that comes to dominate even its own exertions and extortions.

The vector is a power over all of the world, but a power that is not evenly distributed. Nothing in the technology of the vector determines that it must be deployed here rather than there. All that is determined by the technology is the form in which information is objectified.

The whole of life in the most overdeveloped parts of the world presents itself as a vast accumulation of vectors. It is the proliferation and intensification of the vector that constitutes the 'advance' of the advanced parts of the world. Whether this be an advance toward the furthest regions of hell or not remains to be seen.

In the underdeveloped world, the vector becomes the means by which the transformation of nature into second nature is effected. But where, in the overdeveloped world, this process at least afforded the productive classes the opportunity of struggling against their own, local ruling classes, in the underdeveloped world, the productive classes must struggle against a global and abstract third nature. The resources, natural and social that are detected and appropriated there becomes the means for the further development of overdevelopment elsewhere.

Such is perhaps how it always was in the colonial dimension of vectoral development. But where once the underdeveloped world struggled directly against a forcible appropriation and commodification, now they struggle against an abstract and vectoral power, everywhere and nowhere. Once the colonies were ruled by battalions of soldiers,

now by a phalanx of bankers.

The vector perfected would be the relation that holds in that world which is, in every one of its aspects and moments potentially becoming every other world. That this world has not come to pass, yet is indeed the potential aspect of the actual world as we find it, leads to a questioning of the powers that limit this potential. Constraint is what must be accounted for, the constraint imposed by the direction of the development of the vector by commodification.

The hacker class seeks the liberation of the vector from the reign of the commodity, but not to set it indiscriminately free. Rather, to subject it to collective and democratic development. The hacker class can release the virtuality of the vector only in principle. It is up to an alliance of all the productive classes to turn that potential to actuality.

Under the control of the vectoral class, the vector proceeds by means of objectification. It concentrates subjective power in the vectoralist class in the first instance, but becomes as it progresses an ever more abstract means by which all of nature and second nature may be objectified.

The vectoral class struggles at every turn to maintain its subjective power over the vector, but as it continues to profit by the proliferation of the vector, some capacity over it always escapes control. In order to market and profit by the information it peddles over the vector, it must in some degree address the vast majority of the producing classes as subjects, rather than as objects of commodification.

It remains only for the producing classes, addressed as if they were subjects, to really organise themselves subjectively, and use the available vectors for a collective and subjective becoming. This struggle for class power on the part of the producing classes is a struggle for collective subjectivity. It joins with the planetary struggle for survival, in which the whole of nature, in all its dimensions, must appear as a multitude of living, subjective forces.

The great challenge to the hacker class is not just to create the abstractions by which the vector may develop, but the forms of subjective social democracy for the vectoral power, that may overcome the limits not just of commodification, but of objectification in general, of which commodification is just the most pernicious and onesided development. The hacker class virtualises, the producing classes actualise.

The interest of the hacker class in the production of production, in the abstraction of the

world, the expression of the virtuality of nature, must be brought into accord with the needs and interests of nature itself. But this too is only a step toward another history. One in which nature expresses itself as itself, as neither object nor subject, but as its infinite virtuality. A history in which the production of a fourth, or fifth nature, nature to infinity, affirms the nature of nature itself.

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