



(V)empirical
Structures
and Roses in
Reginastraße:
After
Dialectics
by Loren Britton
and
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Talking back around to us from the future, and advising on real estate, on *REALTY*, Suhail Malik advises “Get out of London!”—and suggests to invest in the municipalities as a way to get into the “new” future. Purely oppositional, necessary but not enough.

The easiest way to resist is dialectic: if one is pushed, one pushes back in the opposite direction. If there is globalisation and empire, the way to resist is to create localisations and monadic communities.

In martial arts oftentimes a fight relies not on the clash of the forces but on re-working, recycling the energy of the opponent. Utilising the momentum that is already given in the other’s movement: one doesn’t produce so much of a resistance but rather directs the velocity of the other’s movement. The resistance here is nothing but a subtle reworking. A reworking that makes a difference.

Retooling the Spectacle in the warm glow of Annie Sprinkle’s *Retooling the Speculum*. Annie’s work finds fun in sex and play. Have you seen a cervix recently? She showed you hers. And she held a microphone near your mouth while you were looking, so you can speak. Annie is connecting through that which is hers, and that which she is sharing with effort.



Judo Throw, illustration of: Harai Goshi
Artist Unknown

Empires hate parasitic, symbiotic creatures. Empire is a vampire but it cannot stand its own blood being slowly sucked out. [Empires hate mosquitoes.] Empires cannot stand creatures that have learned how to survive in collaboration with others. The empire just cannot stand Annie and her love for the personal becoming political through simple and efficient gestures.

But Empire-Capitalism is also a cancerous, parasitic body itself, say Deleuze and Guattari. It doesn’t break—it bends. It subsumes and appropriates. Takes delicate bodies within its porous transforming self.



Miyazaki, 2001
Spirited Away, No Face.

Definition:
Diffraction refers to various phenomena that occur when a wave encounters an obstacle or a slit. It is defined as the bending of light around the corners of an obstacle or aperture into the region of geometrical shadow of the obstacle.



Perhaps opening up to a rainbow. (Carolee Schneemann, *Eye Body: 36 Transformative Actions for Camera*, 1963/2005.)

Empire cannot open up to feeling. Empire is not an entity. It is a structure. It is an *infrastructure*. We need to stop thinking about these entities having any kind of human face. We can pretend it does (like Hobbes’ Leviathan) but that is a fiction. As long as we think about it as personalised (embodied in discourse, in the faces of political leaders), we will be unable to resist it, it will always escape and metastasize because its operations are not like that of a person, not like that of a monarch. We could facialise it, but it is much more computational, dispersed, structural than any one face can capture.



Mario Klingemann,
@quasimondo, 2016.
image from: FastCompany.com

What is a face?

—asks Mario Klingemann, Machine Learning Artist in Residence at the Google Cultural Institute in Paris. This is a face,—says machine learning algorithm that performs facial recognition.

Infrastructures have no space for feeling. But infrastructures allow for the transmission of affective forces.

*[who are we] [what are we translating]
[who can understand this performative translation]*

Collective politics and communities hold space for feeling. But might stifle the flow of affect.

How do you do things with the (v)empire?

In the early 1970's Felix Guattari wrote the text "Everybody Wants to Be a Fascist." Franco was still ruling in Spain. WWII had ended, being a communist was the politically appropriate way to be. And there comes Felix, speaking about the fascism of the Left, the little fascist in each of us, and the impossibility of clear-cut lines of resistance.

How do we get outside of reflexive emotionality that generates emotion, almost nearly for emotion's sake? This can become the end experience of witnessing, as opposed to sparking any sort of actual structural change.

What are the (v)empiric ways of knowing?

*Lenin in the streets,
Dostoyevsky in the sheets
Baby are you ready for
this cold war?*



Katya Zamolodchikova,
the drag queen

According to Leonid Grossman, Dostoyevsky wanted "to introduce the extraordinary into the very thick of the commonplace, to fuse... the sublime with the grotesque, and push images and phenomena of everyday reality to the limits of the fantastic."

And Mikhail Bakhtin called him the inventor of polyphonic novel, where multiple voices co-exist. Perhaps we need more Dostoyevskys on the streets. And more Katyas in politics.

In "The Promises of Monsters" (1992), Haraway suggests something similar. Looking for structures that allow us all to become Monsters (monstrous, frankenstein, Susan Stryker, the delightful end of purity), in this text, the physical and imagined are ripe and ready to be mapped as a journey through a fertile landscape. Nature is expanded and joyfully so—the limits of imagination are free to connect.

Let us not know in advance if what we are working on will work out.

