Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age II

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The Territories of the Contemporary

Edited by

Rafael Pinilla and
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The radical, universal equality of "all or none" only exists if political equality is thought in aesthetic terms, from the equality of *force*. Political equality is an aesthetic thought.

Christoph Menke, *The Force of Art*

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INTRODUCTION

In October of 2015, the Research Group *Art, Globalization, Interculturality* of the University of Barcelona organized the Second International Congress with the subject *Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age*, two years after the first one[1]. The objective was to address —or in a certain way, to return to— questions that from our academic viewpoint are crucial to approach art, visuality, cultural policies and the main global paradigms of contemporaneity; a commitment that, as the name of the congress underlines, is based on critical positioning.

Unlike the first congress, the second one opted for a greater focus especially in spatial and material reality, considering cultural praxis and global processes as inseparable from its physical dimension. This is why we began with a threefold framework that related to the interests of the Research Group: territorial dimension, artistic practices and labour transformations are central issues, with a particular emphasis in this case on feminism due to its impact on material production and the construction of the socially shared space.

Obviously, territory is not viewed as a two-dimensional space that can be abstracted into a map; it rather emerges as a multidimensional place of proximity and difference, of consensus and conflict, of hegemonies and dissent. It expands —in social terms— from the private space of domestic labour to the public field of politics; rather than treating them as separate fields, they are viewed as a complex continuum, where the narratives of displacement, dissent and utopia are being interwoven. In order to understand its multiple dimensions and problematics (cultural, political, social), we have favoured an interdisciplinary approach, that extends beyond art theory and aesthetics, into the realm of economics, geography and political theory. In this way, the three panels of the congress, reflected in the general chapters of this book, are formulated under this approach: *The Geoasthetic Hypothesis: Constructing and Deconstructing Territories*; *Creativity and Dissent: The Future as a Contested Territory*; *Value, Labour and Gender: Spaces of (Un) Recognition.*

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[1] For the First International Congress, see Nasheli Jímenez del Val and Anna Maria Guasch, eds., *Critical Cartography of Art and Visuality in the Global Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

This interdisciplinarity became the common ground that fomented a dialogue among social theorists, researchers and artists, who brought their background and experience to the table. The discourse was further enhanced by an "intergenerational" dialogue among young researchers at the beginning of their careers with established academics whose trajectory has received significant critical recognition. In this way, the meeting also acquired a "pedagogical" dimension in its own organizational configuration, based on the selection of the different interventions and projects that made up the main panels. It is for this reason, that we have decided that this kind of academic heterogeneity —discursive and formal— should be reflected in the same structure of this book.

It should also be said that in this type of events, trajectories tend to coincide with different interests and presentations that break free from formal guidelines. The "tone" that results from varied approaches was welcomed by the editors; it reflects our position that an excessive theorization of art often results in predictable discursive formats, with little regard to visual experimentation. This is why it would also be fair to point out that this "openness" was materialized thanks to some of the interventions that cannot always be closely reproduced in the publication format.

In any case, we believe that what can be reproduced —or evoked— are the ideas, proposals and artistic works of all those who for two days came from different universities of the world to the University of Barcelona and the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona to think critically on art and the cultural complexity of our contemporaneity. The intention of this publication is to give an account, as much as possible, of much of what happened at that meeting bearing in mind its link with concrete coordinates —spatial and temporal— that have already taken place. As editors we hope that the exciting debates of those days will be reflected in the selection of texts that follow: seen retrospectively we are convinced that this is the case.

Rafael Pinilla Sánchez
Christina Grammatikopoulou

Barcelona, September 2017

CHAPTER ONE

THE GEOASTHETIC HYPOTHESIS: CONSTRUCTING AND DECONSTRUCTING TERRITORIES

OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL TERRITORIALITIES: FROM EMPIRE TO ANTI-GLOBALIZATION

ANNA MARIA GUASCH

The fact that the concept "global" and its neologism "globalisation" have positioned themselves with such force since the 1990s in political, social, economic, and cultural debates, leads us to think that we are witnessing a vastly ambitious process which would equate the notion of globalisation to an epistemological concept that understands history and capitalism within the same dynamic, with all that this implies in terms both of hope towards an uncertain and unknown future (hence the concept of utopia), and of closing down unfulfilled promises. As Pablo Dávalos argues, the discourse of globalisation is entering the terrain of philosophy as a notion that creates a field of meanings about reality, the human being, and its possibilities of social transformation.[1] A notion that reframes the old concept of "totality" tied to the theoretical body of Marxism and to a concept of reality understood as a structured and dialectical whole in which any act can be understood conceptually.

As the discourse of globalisation has evolved —raised up by new telematic technologies, among other things— it has incorporated various conceptual lines, some of which point to "utopias of globalisation", to those cultural processes that approach times and spaces (and which would take account of concepts such as "deterritorialisation", "liquid culture" or "glocalism"), while others, allude to its contradictions and limits (movements of social and citizen resistance to a society without utopias and a history as "no place"). These and other "territorialities" related with contemporary (and global) culture we will seek to address in the following pages.

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[1] Pablo Dávalos, "Utopia and utopia in globalization", in *Alai, América Latina en movimiento*, online at: http://alainet.org/active/5681&lang=es.

Empire and Multitude

If deconstruction was one of the major *ethos* of postmodernism in its disaffection towards grand narratives and its support for fragmentary discourses, then without doubt it is deterritorialisation that supplants deconstruction within the framework of the global: overcoming the concept of the centre, as was already shown by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their decisive essay *Empire* (2000), that which dominates now are deterritorialised spaces, peripheral spaces, displaced spaces: the places of the new geographies of the global —and also global capitalism—, which invite us to draw an artistic panorama dominated by some new cartographies in which that which dominates are journeys, displacements, migrations and diasporas. And all this under a fundamental impulse: that of differences.

Geography, ethnography, memory, and translation are some consequences of this "global effect" which, despite having its most notable manifestations in the first years of the twentieth-first century, nonetheless follows a genealogy that traverses the final years of high modernity, years dominated by the leading role of attitudes and processes beyond formal positioning, as well as the moment of postmodernism and postcolonialism, marked by the irruption of the posing of the differences that question the hegemony of the monocultural discourse, ethnocentrism, and the Western gaze.

In this new state of the global, a decisive role was played by Hardt and Negri's 2000 reflections when, in the face of irreversible globalisation in the area of economic and cultural exchange and the energising of contemporary geographies, they defined our actual times with a renewed concept of Empire which has nothing to do with the old colonial domination. Hardt and Negri ask: What does Empire mean? Empire is understood as a new global form of sovereignty, made up of multiple national and supranational organisms that invite decentralisation and deterritorialisation in the context of the global economy. In contrast to imperialism (the imperial form of government), Empire does not establish a territorial centre of power —the Empire would be there where capital is accumulated in Singapore, Wall Street, or the most remote part of Black Africa— and thus there is already no hegemonic centre or fixed barriers in the new "cartography of the non-place":

> We think there is no place of centralization of the empire, that it is necessary to speak of the no-place, as a metaphor of multiple and undifferentiated places […]. But the places of command cross everything, there where there are new hierarchies and new forms of exploitation. It might appear as if the United States were the new Rome, or a cluster of new Romes: Washington

(the bomb), New York (money), and Los Angeles (ether) […]. But the places of command cross everything, there where there are new hierarchies and new forms of exploitation.[2]

In a new work in 2004, *Multitude,* Hardt and Negri contributed a renewed concept of "multitude", which no longer presented the negative connotations of the "masses" who would never be able to act on their own initiative and who would be extremely vulnerable to all kinds of external manipulation, but rather involves a social component of great activity: the multitude encloses a great internal diversity, characterised by communal life and guaranteeing a considerable individual freedom within its own cultural differences. The multitude would not be a mass of people, but rather it would be composed of a heterogeneous jungle of ideas, things, actions, and singular attitudes. Multiple attitudes: the multitude would transcend the national borders of the nation-state, it would be a category closer to an intercultural set of people, of conventions, of actions, while the nation would assume a unique identity.[3]

Following this line, Paolo Virno in his *Grammar of the multitude* (2003)[4], developed the concept of multitude in a different way from that of Hardt and Negri. He sees the multitude as the result of the process of post-Fordist production: just as today's consumer is a by-product of the transition of advanced capitalism from a market of products towards a market of symbols, the multitude is the product of the transformation of the process of production. In contrast to Fordism, aspects such as flexibility, language, communication, and emotional relationships have acquired considerable importance in numerous activities. And these, as Pascal Gielen claims, are the components to which the multitude responds. And, finally, what Virno does share with Hardt and Negri is the same way of understanding the multitude as something flexible, hybrid, in constant flux, and deterritorialised. On the other hand, and following Pascal Gielen, the multitude would feed a permanent feeling of "not-feeling-at-home": technological developments such as the internet and low-cost travel create a real and virtual mobility that allows the multitude to move all around the world and to be everywhere at any time: "The exercise of power, hitherto

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[2] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).
[3] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude. War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004).
[4] Paolo Virno, *Grammar of the multitude. For an analysis of the forms of contemporary life* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004).

localizable because it was based on territory, is moving to a space that is in constant flux."[5]

After the postmodern period in which vertical mobility was used to try to deconstruct the difference between high and low cultures, now it would be more about a horizontal mobility that drives us to distinct artistic and cultural experiences and in which the world of art feels particularly implicated. Gielen refers to an artistic multitude that, although dependent on subsidies from national governments —at least in Europe— is finding a good number of alternatives both abroad and in the country of origin, which allows the escape from the "ghettos" of national governments: "It is precisely in this dependence on the many" —Gielen points out— "that the individual artist can afford even more singularity, and thus be absorbed together with countless peers into the murmuring multitude."[6] Following Pascal Gielen, who in turn shows his proximity to Virno's theories, the central quality of our days is: mobility, flexibility in work, communication and language, detachment, and adaptability. In other words, the immaterial worker can be connected in any place and at any time. And it would no longer be so much physical as mental mobility.

The Theory of Spheres

It is within the framework of the global, where what counts is another type of negotiation between the local and the global, in which a new model of the network was imposed that was closer to the concept of the sphere — as suggested by Peter Sloterdijk in "Foreword to the Theory of Spheres"— than to that of the network.[7] Thus, while networks and their philosophical derivative, the rhizome, are good for describing unexpected long-distance connections from local points, spheres are useful to describe local

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[5] Pascal Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude. Global Art, Memory and Post-Fordism* (Amsterdam: Antennae, Baliz, 2009), 16-17.

[6] Gielen, *The Murmuring of the Artistic Multitude. Global Art, Memory and Post-Fordism*, 17.

[7] According to Bruno Latour who in turn cites Peter Sloterdijk, while the concept of the network presents the defect of being "anaemic" or "anorexic", the concept of "sphere" suggests a complex ecosystem in which different forms of life define their immunity thanks to the design of walls of contention and elaborate systems of "air conditioning". See Bruno Latour, "Some Experiments in Art and Politics", in *e-flux Journal* 23 (March, 2011), online at: http://e-flux.com/journal/view/217.

atmospheric conditions, fragile and complex.[8] While networks are good for underlining borders and movements, spheres are good for matrices and coverings.

Beside the "anaemic and anorexic" character of networks, spheres are not anaemic but rather complex ecosystems in which life forms define their "immunity" by means of creating protecting walls, inventing elaborate systems of "air conditioning". And while both networks and spheres are indispensable ideas for understanding globalisation —an empty term that can be defined only from localities and through the connections that the global can generate— it is certain that, as Peter Sloterdijk argues, there is a clear connection between the phenomenon of globalisation and what the author calls "spherology" (*Sphärologie*) or "theory of the spheres".

Following Sloterdijk in response to Jean-Christophe Royoux, in his opinion electronic and telemetric globalisation represents a "third way" in globalisation: it is the final stage of a process that began in the era of Greek cosmology. But, at the same time, it is the product of a radical disagreement thanks to which human beings had to abandon the privilege of inhabiting a true cosmos, which is to say, a comfortable and closed world. The cosmos, as conceived by the Greeks, was imagined in the form of a huge and symmetrical bubble. Aristotle and his disciples were responsible for this idea of the cosmos composed of concentric and celestial spheres of increasing diameter: a model of the world that would no longer be operational. With respect to whether the spherology proposed by Sloterdijk implies a reconceptualisation of space that would allow the improvement of relations between human beings and the whole, Sloterdijk defends the idea of contemporary man as a kind of "curator" who plans the exhibition space in which he himself will live. Each man or woman has become a curator of a museum. And, in this sense, we could conclude that the art of installation is the common profession that everyone is obliged to practise: the innocence of the traditional habitat is lost forever. In the face of the destruction of so many things, every inhabitant —regardless of which apartment, city or country he or she comes from— will end up becoming a kind of planner of his or her own space. Each person in this sense is not only born free and equal but is also condemned to watch the space in which he or she lives to ensure the inhabitability of his or her environment. And this goes for both private and public space.

And if the main error of phenomenology was to submerge the individual in the "universal pool" that is the world —following Heidegger's *dictum*—

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[8] See Peter Sloterdijk, "Foreword to the Theory of Spheres", in Melik Ohanian and Jean-Christophe Royoux, eds., *Cosmograms* (New York and Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2005).

Sloterdijk wants to show that this same immersion can be reproduced on the small scale at the moment in which a new-born child enters into contact with a toy in his or her crib:

> The toy already possesses this capacity to support the existential ecstasy of the newcomer. And that's all it takes to guarantee an initial opening to the world. The opening is at the same time always also a concentration, and this concentration necessarily possesses the qualities of a relative closing —a closing for which a reopening is promised. Being-in-a-sphere is exactly this movement; it's the formatted *ek-stasy* of being outside of oneself but never immediately in the Whole. In truth, human beings are not naked existences in a global ecstasy. We are always endowed with and surrounded by a certain number of objects, by references that stand out against a horizon, but the opening of this horizon shouldn't obscure the fact that it also produces for us a relative closing. The horizon is an open circle that allows me to live in a sort of ecstatic interior. It's a half-open container. And in my opinion this half-opening can be more convincingly expressed by a spherological discourse than in a phenomenological language.[9]

The sphere is then a "relative world", formatted by its inhabitants, a world riddled with islands that should be understood as models of worlds within the world, miniatures of the world: "In my opinion" concludes Sloterdijk, "all human beings are necessarily and above all island dwellers."[10]

Compositionist Manifesto

In the same epistemological perspective of Peter Sloterdijk about spheres[11], the philosopher Bruno Latour developed a new concept, that of "composition" (from the Latin *componere*, to compose), which would allow us to connect from spheres to networks in the sense of returning to put things together without losing their heterogeneity, sharing a certain common vocabulary, but without any hierarchy:

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[9] Sloterdijk, "Foreword to the Theory of Spheres", 12.

[10] Sloterdijk, "Foreword to the Theory of Spheres", 16.

[11] "Spheres and networks might not have much in common, but they have both been elaborated against the same sort of enemy: an ancient and constantly deeper apparent divide between nature and society". See Bruno Latour, "Spheres and Networks. Two Ways to Reinterpret Globalization", in *Harvard Design Magazine* 30 (Sustainability) + Pleasure I, online at:
http://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/issues/30/spheres-and-networks-two-ways-to-reinterpret-globalization.

It is my solution to the modern/postmodern divide. Composition may become a plausible alternative to modernization. What can no longer be modernized, what has been postmodernized to bits and pieces, can still be composed.[12]

As Bruno Latour argues, repeating some of the concepts developed in his essay *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes: Essai d'anthropologie symétrique*[13]*,* although a manifesto cannot be of great use in today's times, nonetheless the idea of writing the "Compositionist Manifesto" would consist in recovering an antiquated genre starting with something like:

A specter haunts not only Europe but the world: that of compositionism. All the Powers of the Modernist World have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter.[14]

The term composition would also tend to concern art, painting, music, theatre, dance, choreography, and set design and could be seen as a synonym of the word "constructivism", although the important thing, Latour explains, is not whether an object is constructed or not but whether it is well or badly constructed; and above all what remains after the deconstructive processes that have been so promoted by postmodern thinkers. Dialectic now functions between the processes of "decomposition" and "recomposition". And it is from this perspective that Latour seeks to "recompose" three of the great pillars that had sustained the discourse of modernism: that of criticism, that of nature, and that of progress. But perhaps the most interesting thing is how, through the concept of composition, Latour develops an alternative to both the modernism of unique truths and to the postmodernism that is plagued with relativisms. Composition would thus be an alternative to the critical spirit of modernity when it comes to discrediting prejudices, casting light on notions, and urging on minds, and also to its universalism. Within

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[12] Latour, "Some Experiments in Art and Politics"

[13] Bruno Latour, *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes: Essai d'anthropologie symétrique* (Paris: La Découverte, 1991). In this essay conceived as an "anthropology of science", Latour after assuming that the modern discourse and with it the idea of progress has ended, tries to connect that natural and social worlds (separated during modernity) arguing that the modern distinction between nature and culture has never existed. Latour advocates a new "parliament of things" in which natural and social phenomena and discourses about them are not seen as motionless objects to be studied by specialists but as hybrids based on the public interaction of people, things, and concepts.

[14] Latour, "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'", in *New Literary History* 41 (Summer 2010), 473.

his particular philosophy, Latour advocates a new ontology in which universalism and relativism live together without hierarchies, in which discourses about sustainability and ecology cohabit with cultural discourses, in which the speculative gives way to the material, to the objective as the opposite of the subjective, aesthetic, excessive and superfluous. The questions of change and agency are neither radical nor revolutionary, they are quotidian and often imperceptible:

> We need to have a much more material, much more mundane, much more realist, much more embodied definition of the material world if we wish to compose a common world. […] forcing all of us —scientists, activists, politicians alike— to compose the common world from disjointed pieces instead of taking for granted that the unity, continuity, agreement is already there.[15]

Hence the need to resort to —as Marx and Engels had done in the *Communist Manifesto*— a new manifesto, the "Compositionist Manifesto":

> Why do I wish to reuse the oversized genre of the manifesto to explore this shift from future to prospect? Because in spite of the abyss of time, there is a tenuous relation between the Communist and the Compositionist Manifesto. At first sight, they seem utterly opposed. A belief in critique, in radical critique, a commitment to a fully idealized material world, a total confidence in the science of economics —economics, of all sciences!— a delight in the transformative power of negation, a trust in dialectics, a complete disregard for precaution, an abandon of liberty in politics behind a critique of liberalism, and above all an absolute trust in the inevitable thrust of progress. And yet, the two manifestos have something in common, namely the *search for the Common*. The thirst for the Common World is what there is of communism in compositionism, with this small but crucial difference: that it has to be slowly composed instead of being taken for granted and *imposed* on all. Everything happens as if the human race were on the move again, expelled from one utopia, that of economics, and in search of another, that of ecology. Two different interpretations of one precious little root, *eikos* [sic][16], the first being a dystopia and the second a promise that as yet no one knows how to fulfill. How can a liveable and

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[15] Latour, "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'", 487.
[16] *Editors' note:* We have kept Latour's original text, despite the language error. From the context, it becomes obvious that what Latour actually means is oikos (οἶκος), the Greek word for home, which is the root for ecology, economy etc. (οικολογία, οικονομία). He mistakenly spells it as eikos (εἰκώς), which is the past participle of the verb ἵημι (to set something in motion, to throw, to drop).

breathable "home" be built for those errant masses. That is the only question worth raising in this Compositionist Manifesto.[17]

This step from economy to "ecology" through a materialist and ontological lens —and a new faith in a future which Bruno Latour defines as "prospective"[18]—, constitutes the theoretic base of a good number of recent theoretical projects, such as those of Alain Badiou, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, who start from Latour's approach to develop complex views of some sectors of contemporary thought, such as the philosophical movement called Speculative Realism, which has a growing presence in artistic discourse, and the philosophical current of New Existentialism[19], tied to a renewed notion of objectivity, which add new reflections to the field of anthropology centred —in certain contexts— on a political appropriation of the notion of the Anthropocene.

The Speculative Realism movement took its name from a symposium held at Goldsmiths College at the University of London in 2007 which featured interventions from, among others, the French philosopher Quentin Meillassoux[20] —a disciple of Alain Badiou— and the US philosopher Graham Harman —closer to Bruno Latour—, who contrary to the dominant forms of post-Kantian philosophy, defended a new approach to objects from the revival of a metaphysics that understands the "real" as a new ontology

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[17] Latour, "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'", 488.

[18] "What makes the times we are living in so interesting […] is that we are progressively discovering that, just at the time when people are despairing at realizing that they might, in the end, have "no future," we suddenly have many *prospects*. There is a strong, ever so modernist, temptation to exclaim: "Let's flee as before and *have our past future back*!" instead of saying: "Let's stop fleeing, *break for good* with our future, turn our back, *finally*, to our past, and explore our new prospects, what lies ahead, the fate of things to come." Quoted by Latour, "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'", 486.

[19] In April 2014, a symposium entitled "The New Existentialism" was held in The Kitchen in New York with the presence of Emily Apter, Patricia Falguières, Tristan Garcia, John Kelsey, and Patrice Maniglier, as a meeting ahead of the publication of the text by Tim Griffin, ed., *The New Existentialism* (Paris: Les presses du réel, 2014).

[20] See Quentin Meillassoux, *Après la finitude. Essai sur la nécessité de la contingence* (Paris: Seuil, 2006). In this text, the philosopher proposes a new term —"correlationism"—, based on the theory that human beings could not exist without the world, nor the world without human beings. According to this thinker's point of view, there is a kind of "dishonest manoeuvre" in the field of philosophy which allows it to evade the problem of how to describe the world as if it were anterior to the human being.

in which even human beings become "objects", together with fire, cotton, or a tree.[21]. This symposium was followed by another held at the University of the West of England in Bristol in 2008 entitled "Speculative Realism/Speculative Materialism", the immediate antecedent of exhibition projects such as *Blowup: Speculative Realities* (V2 Rotterdam, 2012-2013)[22], which proposed discussions about the non-human that which is beyond the human and other aspects of the New Materialism, and that held at the Kunsthale Fridericianum in Kassel in September 2013, *Speculations on Anonymous Materials*[23], which tried to create a new ontology for objects in line with the "Object-Oriented Philosophy" (OOP) of Graham Harman, which seeks a new place for objects within "radical philosophy" and liberates them from their condition of being mere surface outside any in-depth approach to reality. The author reclaims the return of the object (all things, both physical and fictitious, would be equally objects) as a new form of realism, which beyond the factual and the thing-oriented, does not give up its speculative dimension. There is no direct relationship but rather an absolute rift between knowledge and the real, and between the real and the real in itself, which leads Harman to call his Ontology Realism without Materialism."[24]

In addition, the magazine *Texte zur Kunst* dedicated its March 2014 issue to the topic *Spekulation/Speculation*[25], bringing together contributions from theoreticians such as Steven Shaviro, Armen Avanessian, Suhail Malik, and Sophie Cras, who put forward different assessments from the artistic, theoretical, and curatorial point of view about the rise of speculative models in philosophy, art, literature, and the market.

The Modern and the Liquid

After his analysis of globalisation, in which Zygmut Bauman came to the conclusion that it was characterised as much by the freedom of

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[21] See Levi R. Bryant, Nick Srnicek and Graham Harman, *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne: Re-Press, 2011).

[22] *Blowup. Speculative Realities* (Rotterdam, V2, 8 December 2012-12 January 2013).

[23] *Speculations on Anonymous Materials* (Fridericianum, Kassel, 23 December 2013-26 January 2014).

[24] See Graham Harman, *Towards Speculative Realism* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2010).

[25] See Steven Shavito, "Speculative Realism –A Primer", in *Texte zur Kunst 93: Spekulation / Speculation* (March 2014).

movement of people as the unrestricted mobility of capital[26], the author advanced his thinking in a new text of 2000 —*Liquid Modernity*— in which he used the notion of fluidity as a metaphor to establish the end of a stable world, and the rise of a world marked by the "revolutionary" dissolution of all traditional paradigms.[27] According to Bauman, fluids and their facility to "run out", "spill", "splash", and "leak" would constitute the appropriate metaphor for understanding the actual phase in the history of modernity, overcoming all "sedentary" habits and opting for nomadism, the lack of a fixed address, and not belonging to a state: "we are witnessing the revenge of nomadism over the principle of territoriality and settlement. In the fluid stage of modernity, the settled majority is ruled by the nomadic and exterritorial elite."[28]

Hence the existence of a planet crossed in all directions by "information motorways" in the sense that nothing which happens in any single part can, at least potentially, remain in an intellectual "outside". Thus, in a planet open to the free circulation of goods and merchandise, anything that happens in one place has repercussions in others. Nothing remains in a material "outside". Nothing remains intact and without contact. A unity of humanity —alluding to the succinct expression of Milan Kundera— as that generated by globalisation means that "no one can escape anywhere."[29]

In place of settlements, national economies, or political entities, in place of the city as a symbol of containment of the transitory, in place of the necessary order and discipline, the liquid phase of modernity —which would be equivalent to postmodernity— would undrawn frontiers, unmake boundaries, even arriving at the core areas of our experience: our perception of time and space, individuality, work, and community. Liquid would also be an adjective that would reflect the effects of globalisation, migrations, nomadism, tourism, the Internet, and mobile telecommunications: that is to say, the great possibilities offered by information technology. But also, for the sociologist Bauman, the move from the solid to the liquid begins with the end of the historical avant-garde and today's art, which he localises in a series of creators from the 1960s and 1970s: Gustav Metzger, an artist for whom the destruction of a work was already predicted in the moment of its creation, or Jacques Villeglé, with his works based on tearing, taking on the

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[26] Zygmut Bauman, *Globalization. The Human Consequences* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

[27] See Zygmut Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000) and *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

[28] Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 13.

[29] Bauman cites Milan Kundera, *The Art of Novel* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 21.

fact that history is a factory of waste. More than creation or destruction, learning or forgetting, in Villeglé's case, history would be a living proof of the futility of these distinctions: "Nothing is born here to live long and nothing definitely dies."[30] And, as Bauman holds:

> [These artists] are representative artists of the liquid modern era. […] Time *flows* —it no longer "marches on". There is change, always change, ever new change, but no destination, no finishing point, and no anticipation of a mission accomplished. Every lived-through moment is pregnant with a new beginning *and* the end: once sworn antagonists, now Siamese twins."[31]

Culture-World

It is from this perspective that we believe it necessary to work in a sort of cartography with new concept-places and their renewed relations with art, culture and economy. Economy and culture as symptoms of the new times or of what Gilles Lipovetsky and Jean Serroy call the culture-world, the culture of techno-capitalism which assumes a planetary vocation and invades all sectors of society. As Lipovestsky and Serroy argue, the fixed cosmos of unity, of the final meaning, of hierarchical classifications is no more, replaced by that of networks, flow, fashion, the market without limits or a centre of reference: "In hypermodern times culture has become a world in which the circumference is everywhere and the centre nowhere."[32]

A culture-world in which the humanist universal gives up its leading role to the concrete and social universal (no longer the ideal of the citizen of the world but the world without borders of capital and the multinationals, of cyberspace and consumption), and in which the economy-world acts according to a single set of norms, values, and aims: the *ethos* of the techno-capitalist system. A culture-world that takes on questions and problems of global dimensions such as ecology, the economic crisis, immigration, poverty, and terrorism; but also questions of an existential character, such as identity, belief, and the crisis of feeling, or personality problems; a world, ultimately, which becomes a culture: culture which becomes world, as Lipovetsky and Serroy assert. A culture-world without territorial, economic, or territorial borders which overflows in all its principles the limits of the cultures derived from classical humanism. A culture-world that is neither

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[30] Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*, 40.
[31] Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*, 41.
[32] Gilles Lipovetsky and Jean Serroy, *La Culture-monde. Réponse à une société désorientée* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2008), 8.

mirror nor reflection of societies but the principle that begets them, that constructs them, that models them, and that makes them evolve.

And if in the modern era the cultural sphere had been driven by the dynamic of individualist ideology with its demands for liberty and equality, in the "hypermodern" era —which would correspond to globalisation— it is the economy and its power which is imposed as the first instance of cultural production. And it is this "hyperculture" that abandons the traditional binary oppositions such as high/low culture, anthropological culture/aesthetic culture, material culture/ideological culture, and opts for a planetary constellation in which techno-scientific culture, the culture of the market, and that of the individual intertwine, via the cultures of media culture, networks, and ecology. A constellation that would generate a new type of creator/recreator/manipulator/communicator of images which we continue to call —out of inertia, or because we have not found an alternative name— an artist.

The artist who takes on this culture-world is defined as an inhabitant of the global world and a participant in this micro-world: an artist interested in social discourse —not of class but of territories— not so much the creator of images as the investigator of them, who brings together, creates, questions, relates, and exhibits iconic or other information about subjects of a universal character in a format that Western society or "we" has validated as "art". An artist who uses that information not as a single object of analysis but as one more instrument, but privileging its status "as art" in order to unmask and denounce things that are censored, humiliated, violated, or harmed in today's world: democracy, justice, otherhood, migration, rootlessness, and diaspora. Subjects which rarely or never concern forms of life but rather expendable life ousted from the world, reduced to survival; the "bare life" that Giorgio Agamben proposes in his theory of marginalisation[33]; a life relegated to the margins of the social, merciless in the political, the legal and the biological; a life that alienates, when it does not eliminate, citizens, whom it deprives of their rights as such, whom it abandons in the filth of corrupt legal systems, which turns the human being into the *homo sacer*: into an exile from all order and all benefit of society, handed over to non-existent "gods", and whose mere presence "stains" society.[34]

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[33] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[34] See Anthony Downey, "Zones of Indistinction. Giorgio Agamben's Bare Life and the Politics of Aesthetics", in *Third Text* 23, 2 (March 2009), 110.

Anti-globalisation

A year before Hardt and Negri published *Empire,* which can be considered as the "Bible" of globalisation —and, according to Slavoj Žižek, as the "Communist Manifesto for the Twenty-First Century"[35]— the anti-globalisation movement was born and with it a cycle of protests and mobilisations was initiated, with Seattle at the head[36], based on a model of a high intensity of social divisiveness that was going to dominate a whole decade. Manuel Castells is perhaps one of the theoreticians who has known best how to reflect faithfully these two faces of globalisation: the "utopian" (globalisation as an objective and multidimensional process that affects the economy, science, technology, culture, communication) and the "diatopical" (anti-system) which, facing the loss of social and political control over a globalised decision-making system, favours the emergence of the anti-globalisation movement, communicated and organised via the internet and centred on symbolic protests.[37]

Beneath this anti-system, anti-capitalist, and anti-state wish, one can discern a clear renovation with ideological ties to the anarchist tradition that would enter the twenty-first century with more energy than the Marxist tradition, tainted by the historical practice of Marxism-Leninism during the twentieth century. As Barbara Epstein[38] argues, many radical activists, above all those at the centre of the anti-corporative and anti-globalisation movements, describe themselves as anarchists although, more than anarchism per se, it would involve a certain "anarchist sensibility". Unlike the radical Marxists of the 1970s who devoured the writings of Marx and Lenin, for the anarchist activists, anarchism is a decentred organisational structure, rebelling against hierarchy and authority, based on ad hoc groups and associations and on taking decisions by consensus. For them, anarchism is important, above all, as an organisational structure and as a commitment

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[35] See Slavoj Žižek, "Have Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri rewritten the Communist Manifesto for the Twenty-First Century?", in *Rethinking Marxism* 13 (2001).

[36] In the series of demonstrations that took place in Seattle at the end of November and beginning of December 1999, radical young activists blocked access to the meetings of the World Trade Organization, confronted the police, and captured the attention of the media to a mobilisation that, had it not been thus, would have passed unperceived outside of the left.

[37] Manuel Castells*, Redes de esperanza e indignación* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2012).

[38] Barbara Epstein, "Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement", in *Monthly Review* 4 (September 2001), 1-14.

to egalitarianism: "It is a form of politics that revolves around the exposure of the truth rather than strategy. It is a politics decidedly in the moment."[39]

Starting out from the theories of Murray Bookchin[40], it would be necessary to distinguish between "social anarchism" and "personal anarchism" (or "lifestyle anarchism"): the first would be tied to the socialist tradition and the search for a transformation of society towards a more egalitarian post-capitalist order, while the second presents the phenomenon of anarchy as a state of being that can and should be confronted by the individual here and now —with an unbridgeable gulf separating the two perspectives. And it is precisely this "personal anarchism" —which understands anarchy as a matter of creating anarchic spaces, even in a provisional way, within existing social structures— that would find an echo in the spirit of certain anti-globalisation activisms for which politics and the sense of classical organisation gives way to the imagination, desire, and ecstasy, towards a growing fascination with the everyday.[41]

Anarchism would thus be the perspective that would dominate the anti-globalisation movement, a movement made up of activists who have little to do with the theoretical debates between anarchists and Marxists that took place at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century and have more points in common with the libertarian socialism defended by Noam Chomsky than with the canonical writings of Bakunin. Today's anarchist activists would derive their ideas from a side of politics with a moral tint, committed to egalitarianism and anti-authoritarianism, and their anarchism would combine ideology and imagination to express its fundamentally moral perspective through actions that try to make power visible and undermine it. Hence the leading role played by small groups which combine forces on an ad hoc basis in what Naomi Klein[42] calls a "swarm of mosquitoes": a form of organisation that allows that the movement includes different styles, tactics, and aims, and that the internet is the medium par excellence to link up distinct groups.

This renewed anarchist drive allowed Sidney Tarrow, in his text *The New Transnational Activism*[43], to develop the concept of "protest cycles", which would explain the exhaustion of a model of unified global action

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[39] Epstein, "Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement", 2.

[40] Murray Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm* (Edinburgh / Oakland: AK Press, 1995).

[41] Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm*, 4.

[42] Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Picador, 2007).

[43] Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

(both in the field of protest, where the biggest exponent was People's Global Action, and in that of the proposal, where the reference was the World Social Forum) and would give meaning to a greater dissemination of collective action, of the global response (albeit diluted in diverse rebellious networks and in a wide repertoire of transnational activism in networks). Because as Tarrow argues, we are witnessing the move from a classic model of anti-globalisation struggle to another more focused on the connections generated between thematic and geographical spheres of action.[44] An activism that permeates collective actions not only at the global level but also in their local struggles, through symbolic and material constructions that go beyond the nation-state. And which, according to Tarrow, would connect directly with the debate about a "rooted cosmopolitanism", related both to the availability of rapid forms of personal communication and cheap international flights and to a wide knowledge of the international language of English and new experiences of mobilisation gained through local activism.

According to Tarrow, the present time is characterised not so much by the fact of separating individuals from their own societies as by the production of a stratification of people who, in their lives and their activities, are able to combine the sources and the opportunities of their societies within transnational networks in what could be called "activism beyond borders." In this sense, transnational activisms emerge basically from local political and social activities, and only a small percentage of them become international. In fact, according to Tarrow, different case studies such as the Zapatista movement, indigenous peoples, radical Islamist groups, and labour activists would illustrate —from their places of origin— the relationship between transnational activism, national politics, and global changes.[45]

And this would encompass both those that make activist use of new technologies, especially the internet, to position themselves in the anti-

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[44] Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism*.

[45] See Audie Klotz, "Transnational Activism and Global Transformations: The Anti-Apartheid and Abolitionist Experiences", in *European Journal of International Relations* 8, 1 (March 2002), 49-76. In this text, the writer indicates that thanks to communication technologies one can envisage a new world where space and time take on new meanings. As a result of this, networks of non-state actors spread, which alters the functions of international organizations and create new pressures on states. And if in the past social activism attacked its agenda through and around national governments, now social forces and global norms affect states with vitality and independence.